

60 opposition student activists picked up

DU CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday picked up at least 60 leaders and workers of a combine of six student organisations from Shahbagh, Matsya Bhaban, High Court and Doel Chattar in the city.

The leaders and activists were arrested as they were to start a procession from the Central Shaheed Minar to besiege the education ministry demanding cancellation of Moniruzzaman Miah Shikkha Commission report.

The arrestees include Bangladesh Chhatra Moitree General Secretary Mamunur Rashid, Vice-president Shariful Islam Shikder, Dhaka University (DU) unit convenor Bappaditya Bashu, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League DU unit President Mohammad Selim Hossain, Dhaka city unit General Secretary Saiful Islam and Bangladesh Chhatra Union Organising Secretary Asaduzzaman Khan Masum.

However, the combine brought out a procession, which police barred on way to the ministry at

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GRENADE ATTACK

'Email sender', three others remanded

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday remanded four persons in custody for five days each in a grenade attack case.

Metropolitan Magistrate Abdur Rouf Khan granted the remand prayer when Hannan, Abdur Rahman, Badsha Miah and Saibal Saha Partha were produced before the court at about 2:30pm yesterday.

The four persons picked earlier on different charges from different places in the city were shown arrested on Wednesday in the case filed by police on August 22, a day after the grenade attacks on an Awami League (AL) rally.

In the petition filed by the

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

City residents are getting accustomed to see boats plying on the streets side-by-side rickshaws and men tramping through the rain-induced floodwaters. The scene was snapped yesterday on Wayes Karani Road in Demra.

Militants kidnap 2 Americans, Briton in Iraq

Baghdad bomb blast kills 1

AP, AFP, Baghdad

Gunmen kidnapped two Americans and a Briton from a house in the heart of the Iraqi capital yesterday, the Interior Ministry and witnesses said.

The three were seized from a two-storey house surrounded by a wall in Baghdad's al-Mansour neighborhood at dawn, said Col. Adnan Abdel-Rahman, a ministry

official. Rahman had initially said the three were all British nationals.

He said they were employed by Gulf Services Company, a Middle East-based construction firm.

A US Embassy spokesman speaking on condition of anonymity could not immediately confirm the report but said officials were investigating. A British diplomat in Baghdad was also unable to confirm any details.

Tk 10cr rly land leased out for Tk 5,001 to BSEHR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The communications ministry yesterday leased out a railway land worth about Tk 10 crore to a human-rights organisation, founded by its minister and led by his wife, at a token price reportedly defying the prime minister's objection.

Mohammad Amjad Hossain, chief estate officer (East, Chittagong) of Bangladesh Railway (BR) signed the contract for BR and Advocate Alina Khan for Bangladesh Society for Enforcement of Human Rights

(BSEHR), said a press release of the Press Information Department.

The 10,720 square feet land to the west of the Osmani Uddyan was leased out at Tk 5001.

The BSEHR will build a 10-storey headquarters on the land.

The 25th meeting of the BR with the communications minister in the chair had decided in favour of the lease. Later, the proposal was sent to the Prime Minister's Office for approval, but to no avail, sources said.

The minister approved the

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WB keen to fund eastern by-pass

DFID to give Tk 360cr for post-flood road repair

BSS, Dhaka

The World Bank (WB) will provide financial assistance for the development of water supply, sewerage and drainage of Dhaka Metropolitan City.

The assurance came when a delegation of the WB led by its Country Director Christine I Wallich called on LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan at his secretariat office yesterday.

The delegation also showed keen interest to provide assistance for construction of eastern by-pass and urbanisation of the eastern parts of Dhaka to ensure different facilities to the people living in those areas.

Meanwhile, the British Department For International Development (DFID) will give Bangladesh Tk 360 crore for post-flood road communication repair and maintenance under periodic

maintenance programme of the Roads & and Highway Department, according to the UNB.

The DFID also agreed to provide Tk 39 crore more as an initial support for another post-flood emergency road communication restoration programme.

This was revealed during a meeting of the five-member trans-

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Iraq war illegal, says Annan

BBC ONLINE

The United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan has told the BBC the US-led invasion of Iraq was an illegal act that contravened the UN charter.

He said the decision to take action in Iraq should have been made by the Security Council, not unilaterally.

The UK government responded by saying the attorney-general made the "legal basis... clear at the time".

Annan also warned security in Iraq must considerably improve if credible elections are to be held in January.

The UN chief said in an interview with the BBC World Service that "painful lessons" had been learnt since the war in Iraq.

"Lessons for the US, the UN and other member states. I think in the end everybody's concluded it's best to work together with our allies and through the UN," he said.

"I hope we do not see another Iraq-type operation for a long time - without UN approval and much broader support from the international community," he added.

He said he believed there should have been a second UN resolution following Iraq's failure to comply

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Madrasa teacher held for cutting ear lobes of 17 students

UNB, Bogra

Police yesterday arrested Maulana Abdul Majid who allegedly cut the ear lobes of 17 students at a madrasa at Tiloch Shibbati in Adamdighi upazila on September 14.

Local sources said the cruel teacher, Abdul Majid, son of Ashraf Ali of Bagicha village in the upazila, cut the ear lobes of the students with scissors as they were reading the Quran in low voice.

Angered by maulana's inhuman act, locals beat him up. Hearing the news, upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) went to the madrasa, took the

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PHOTO: STAR

Unrelenting rainfall in the last few days has made this gaping ditch, a veritable snare for speeding vehicles, at the middle of a thoroughfare in Motijheel commercial hub of the capital.

Rahima's date with destiny

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

After a 14-month wait, 18-year-old Rahima Akhter was all set to finally step into her husband's house, but destiny had something terrible in store for her -- she had to return to her father's house yesterday, leaving behind her no fewer than 26 people dead.

The car driving bride Rahima and bridegroom Mohammed Iqbal to Anwara upazila returned to her father's Dhanialapara residence, halfway from Charpatharghata where one of their two bridal party buses with around 80 wedding guests on board slammed into a speeding truck. The terrible incident left at least 26 dead and around 55

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2 DU students expelled for assaulting BMA leader

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University (DU) authorities yesterday expelled two students and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists on charges of assaulting the acting president of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

The expelled are Abul Kalam Azad, first-year student of management, and Mehedy Hasan, masters student of public administration. They assaulted BMA President Dr Azizul Haque following an altercation at 1:00pm, sources said.

BMA members and DMCH staffs caught the two and handed them over to the DU authorities. The BMA also made complaint to DU acting Vice-chancellor Prof AFM Yusuf Haider against them.

Prayer Timing		
September 17		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-35	5-10
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-09	6-12
Esha	7-45	8-15
Source: Islamic Foundation		

Woman sews path out of poverty

SHAMIM ASHRAF

A petite woman in her mid-thirties concentrates on a sewing machine to make a petticoat with her desk strewn with dress materials. Some people stare at her with disbelief in their eyes since Kohinoor is busy working in a rural market, not at her house.

They all knew Kohinoor as one struggling to manage two meals a day for her bed-ridden husband and three daughters. But many of them do not know her trying time is over and her face now also reflects the changes she witnessed in the last few years.

Besides securing a space in the market five years ago, the once destitute woman now has a house of her own, and, above all, she is managing her family successfully. Through hard work and courage she won the battle against poverty.

"Hard days are gone and I don't want to recall those haunting moments," Kohinoor murmurs, sitting on a stool at her shop in Sabgram hat (market) in northern Bogra district.

Kohinoor is now taking part directly in economic activities breaking a long-standing tradition that deprives half the total population from being economically active. It was possible because of the assis-

tance she got from a voluntary organisation.

Born in a middle-class family of Isaidaha village in Bogra sadar upazila, Kohinoor was married off by her parents at the age of 15 to Badshah, a solvent farmer who owned some cultivable lands. And she gave birth to three girls.

Misfortune struck the family when Badshah lost his ability to work getting both his kidneys damaged. Failing to treat him well, Kohinoor's in-laws refused to pay anymore money for his treatment throwing her out with three young daughters and the sick husband.

Although a brother-in-law of Kohinoor gave them shelter, the hapless woman who never went to school suddenly found herself as the sole breadwinner of her family.

"I married off my eldest daughter Smriti at the age of 14 as I failed to manage regular meal for them and money to buy medicine for my husband," Kohinoor said.

She began to work as an assistant to a tailor, which did not help much to run the family. Then she rented a sewing machine to work at her home but failed to manage everything although her two daughters helped her a lot.

Even she was forced to work as a day-labourer. To her utter woes,

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