

Iraqi vote count gets underway

Transport plane crash kills 10 British soldiers

AFP, Baghdad

Iraqi election workers yesterday were counting ballots from the country's first free election in half a century after millions braved insurgents' bombs, mortars and threats to cast their vote.

The election commission said a majority of voters took part in the

election in most provinces, in what Prime Minister Iyad Allawi described as a victory over terrorists.

"We still don't have a final number but we can say it was better than expected. The final percentage could be between 60 and 75 percent," said Harith Mohammed Hassan, deputy chief of the

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Hasina doubts govt's security for Saarc leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition and Awami League (AL) chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed her doubt about the government's ability to ensure security for heads of the government of Saarc (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) countries during the summit scheduled to be held in Dhaka on February 6-7.

At a press conference held at the party's Dhanmondi office, the AL

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60-hour hartal ends with stray clashes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 60-hour countrywide hartal called by the Awami League (AL) and its allies ended at 6:00pm yesterday paralysing life for the third consecutive day and stray incidents of clashes between rival political activists and police baton charge on demonstrators took place in the capital and elsewhere in the country.

The shutdown disrupted economic activities, road communication and train service.

A number of flights were also delayed or suspended due to the hartal.

Police action left dozens injured, including several journalists in Jessor.

In Dhaka, police kept Muktangan cordoned off from morning to afternoon apparently to prevent holding of any opposition rally.

The law enforcers also barricaded the central AL office at Bangabandhu Avenue, Russell Square and Bangabandhu Museum area yesterday.

AL leaders and workers however brought out small processions in the areas braving police barricades.

The main opposition party and

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PHOTO: STAR

Policewomen scuffle with Awami League leader Matia Chowdhury after intercepting a pro-hartal procession at Moghbazar in the capital yesterday.



Aftab Ahmed kisses the trophy after his brilliant 81 not out steered Bangladesh to win the final ODI against Zimbabwe at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Bangladesh clinched the series 3-2.

PHOTO: STAR

KIBRIA KILLING

India to take up issue on summit sidelines

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India yesterday hinted it would take up with Bangladesh the issue of assassination of former finance minister and front line Awami League leader SAMS Kibria on the sidelines of the 13th Saarc Summit.

Asked whether the incident would affect the Saarc Summit, External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh told reporters here that "I hope it will not".

On India's taking up the issue with Bangladesh, he said: "When we get to Dhaka, inevitably, reference will be made to the killing of SAMS Kibria. We will have to take up the issue with the Bangladeshi side."

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2 outlaws die in 'crossfire'

STAR NEWS DESK

Two leaders of underground outfits were killed in 'crossfire' between their accomplices and police in Jhenidah and Pabna early yesterday.

Our Magura correspondent reported that Abdul Karim alias 'Tiger Madhu', a regional leader of Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) Janajuddho faction, died in a shootout between his accomplices and police at Zianagar village under Jhenidah Sadar upazila at about 4:00am.

Acting on a tip-off, a police team from Jhenidah Sadar Police Station cordoned off a bush at the village where Karim was reportedly holding

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Prayer Timing

February 1

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-52	5-56
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

Rare treat for book lovers

Scripts as old as 350 years are on display at Public Library

SURAJIT DEBNATH

Rare book lovers are in for a treat when they enter the Central Public Library, where hundreds of books published as long ago as 350 years

Puran and Encyclopedia of World Art went on display yesterday during the first day of a three-day rare book show.

The exhibition brings together a wide range of aging manuscripts and documents, from scripts like Baisnab Toshini, Mahapurana and

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CTG PORT

Container jam reaches record high for hartal

SHAHIDUL ISLAM, CTG

further over the next few days as the opposition parties have called another spate of hartals on February 3, 5 and 6.

The Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) yesterday took a number of

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