50 die, hundreds

missing in Pak

67 more killed in Iraq spate of violence

Rumsfeld's surprise visit to Baghdad

'Crossfire' kills 3 more

raising toll to 228

AFP, AP, Baghdad

US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's paid a surprise visit to Iraq yesterday, as the country was rocked by yet more violence, with 14 people killed by a car bomb near a Shia mosque that added fuel to fears of sectarian strife.

In lightning visits to training bases around the country, Rumsfeld told US troops they could "go home with honor" once Iraqi forces were able to defeat insurgents.

The latest insurgent attack underlined how vulnerable those forces still are.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

yesterday.

Three alleged criminals including a

regional leader of outlaws were

killed in 'crossfire' between their

accomplices and police in the

capital, Pabna and Chittagong early

killed in 'crossfire' between their

accomplices and Rapid Action

Battalion (Rab) and police rose to

A constable was also injured in

the shootout in the capital, and

some illegal arms and ammunition

The outlaw was killed in Pabna.

were seized, police sources said.

With this, the number of people

In Balad Ruz, some 65 km north-

east of the capital, Iraqi forces were lured into a death trap when they received a tip that a car bomb attack was being planned against the local Imam Hussein mosque.

"Security was deployed around the mosque to search for the car but, when they found it, another one went off," said officer Maher Salah. Nine civilians and three police-

men were killed, he said, adding that another body had not been identified and 23 more people were wounded.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but a similar attack against a Shia mosque in Baghdad three weeks ago was claimed by the

network of al-Qaeda's frontman in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

The deadly trap was sprung as the dust still settled in the lawless town of Salman Pak, some 33km southeast of the capital, following a spectacular attack Thursday by hordes of gunmen against police

A fierce battle, which lasted several hours and saw US gunships come into action, left 10 policemen and 20 insurgents dead, another 75 policemen wounded and some 45 police cars destroyed.

"When we arrived, the shops were shut and the empty streets SEE PAGE 11 COL 3



Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina, and leaders and members of professional bodies, ahead of a meeting at the Institution of Engineers yesterday, observe one-minute silence in memory of those killed in the Habiganj grenade attack.

Eminent citizens condemn 'killings in the name

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Khokan, 33, was killed in a gunfight One hundred and eight personalibetween his associates and police in Sarakunja Residential Area on the bank of the river Buriganga at about 4:00am, police said. of 'crossfire'. The cases against him, filed with

Hazaribagh and Lalbagh police stations, include one for murder and three under Arms Act. Constable Ali Hossain suffered bullet wounds in his leg and was

An accused in six criminal cases,

Rahimullah Khokan alias China

Rajarbagh under treatment at Police Lines Hospital.

Police seized a shutter gun, a SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

of crossfire'

ties from across the citizenry in a joint statement yesterday strongly condemned the killings in the name

Doctors, poet, artists, academics, journalists and other professionals in the statement described killings without trial as bestial acts and said the criminals must be brought to justice. The killings in 'crossfire' if go unhindered will severely undermine people's respect for the judicial

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Schoolboy 'murdered', another abducted Outlaws kidnap businessman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Police yesterday recovered the body of an abducted schoolboy in Chuadanga and rescued another abducted boy Thursday in Kushtia, while outlaws Sunday kidnapped a businessman.

Chuadanga police said they recovered the body of Ahmed Hossain, 13, son of Julmat Ali of Pirer Bazar village in Kaliganj in Jhenidah, from Nehalpur field

He seemed to have been stran-

Criminals Wednesday abducted him from Jhenidah but did not demand ransom for his release, the police added.

In Kushtia, Jamirul and Dulal, cadres of outlawed New Biplobi Communist Party, abducted Azmot Ali, 56, a businessman and retired schoolteacher. He was returning home at Chadat village in Khoksa upazila after withdrawing Tk 20,000 from the Sonali Bank's Khoksa

> Locals Tuesday held Jamirul and SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

BEA blasts govt for 'creating a climate of impunity'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Economists of the country mourning the killing of their fellow Shah AMS Kibria yesterday blasted the government for what they said was creating a climate of impunity that is allowing unabated murders of intellectuals.

Referring to the killings of Prof Mohammad Yunus of Rajshahi University and former finance minister Kibria in two months. the economists said elimination of SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

dam burst town of Pasni in southwestern Baluchistan province late Thursday,

At least 50 people were killed and hundreds missing in Pakistan after a dam burst and swept whole villages into the sea, officials said yesterday, as the death toll from a week of record rains hit 112.

A wall of melted snow and rainwater escaped from the ruptured Shadi Kor dam near the coastal

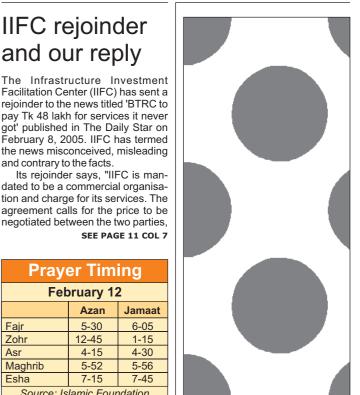
IIFC rejoinder

and our reply

washing away people, houses, cars and buses in its path. The 485-foot-long Shakidor Dam burst late Thursday near Pasni, a

remote village in Baluchistan province. Between 400 and 500 people were still unaccounted for, provincial Cabinet minister Sher Jan

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

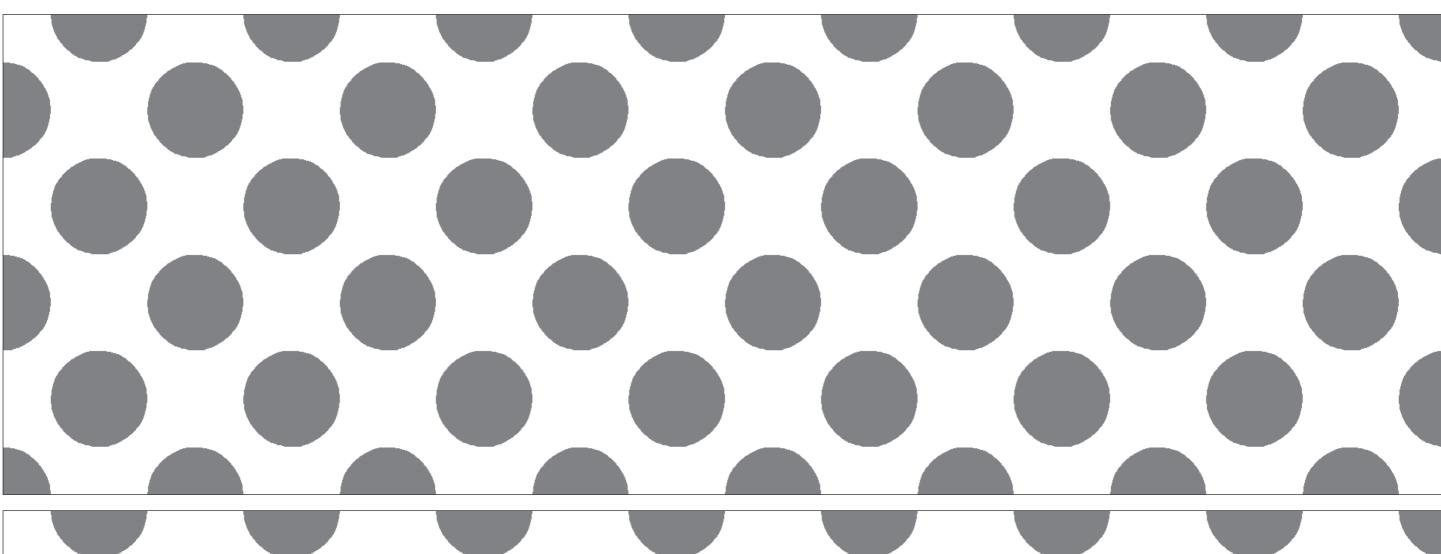


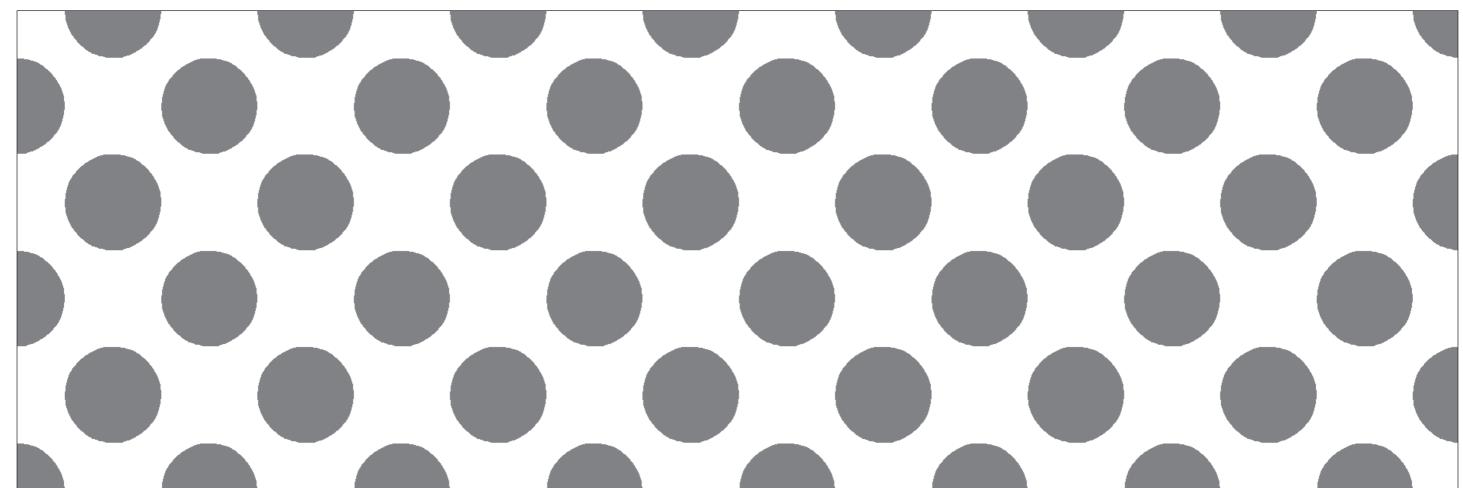
Facilitation Center (IIFC) has sent a rejoinder to the news titled 'BTRC to pay Tk 48 lakh for services it never got' published in The Daily Star on February 8, 2005. IIFC has termed the news misconceived, misleading and contrary to the facts. Its rejoinder says, "IIFC is man-

dated to be a commercial organisation and charge for its services. The agreement calls for the price to be negotiated between the two parties. SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Prayer Timing

| February 12 | | |
|----------------------------|-------|--------|
| | 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 | | |
| | | |





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