

10 injured as bomb blows up at urs

BDNEWS, Narsingdi
Ten persons including a woman named Halima Begum, 50, were injured in a bomb explosion early Wednesday at an urs mahfil in Parulia Narsinghapur village under Jinardi union of Palash upazila.

Tiger kills fisherman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira
A fisherman was killed on Tuesday as a tiger attacked him while he was fishing in the Sundarbans.

UN forces strike back in Congo

Kill 50 accused of assassinating nine Bangladeshi UN peacekeepers

REUTERS, Bunia, Congo

UN peacekeepers killed at least 50 militiamen in a gunfight in northeastern Congo Tuesday, five days after nine Bangladeshi UN troops were killed there, the United Nations said yesterday.

Militia fighters opened fire on Pakistani peacekeepers hunting those responsible for attacks on civilians, wounding two of the UN soldiers and triggering a fierce battle involving helicopter gunships, UN officials said.

The clash in the mineral-rich but lawless Ituri province was one of the biggest involving UN troops deployed in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

"I can confirm 50 Congolese militiamen were killed," said Rachel

Eklou, a U.N. spokeswoman in Bunia, Ituri's main city. A senior source in the peacekeeping operation said the number of dead could be between 50 and 60.

Tuesday's clash happened at Loga, close to the area where the Bangladeshi peacekeepers were killed in the worst single loss suffered by the United Nations' peace mission since it began in the former Zaire in 1999.

The UN representative in Congo, William Lacy Swing, told the news agency there could be more such actions.

"We had a major operation at Loga yesterday that was conducted both by ground and air assets," he said. "I think you will see us moving in this direction more and more."

A UN military source said the

dead fighters were members of the Nationalist and Integrationist Front (FNI) militia.

The FNI is an ethnic Lendu-dominated militia which has been battling rival Hema factions in a conflict that has killed more than 50,000 people in northeastern Congo since 1999.

Under intense pressure from the United Nations and foreign states to track down the peacekeepers' killers, Congo's government said yesterday it had arrested an FNI leader and was investigating three Ituri warlords-turned-generals.

Another senior FNI commander surrendered to UN forces in Ituri, a UN spokeswoman said.

Militiamen roam vast swathes of the east of Africa's third-biggest

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Hafiz, Anu fired at Ahsanullah

Son tells court

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Slain Awami League (AL) lawmaker Ahsanullah Master's son Zahid Ahsan Sohel, a prosecution witness in the murder case told a court yesterday that Kana Hafiz and Anu fired gunshots at the dais where his father and others were present.

Judge Shahed Noor Uddin of the

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BCS (special) results

UNB, Dhaka

Results of the 26th BCS (special) under general education cadre were published yesterday.

About 5,463 candidates have initially qualified for viva voce for direct appointment in 1,034 posts.

Psychological test of the qualified candidates will be held on April 1 next. Those who will not appear at the psychological test will not qualify for the viva voce.

Dates for the psychological test and the viva voce will be published in newspapers in due time, said an official release.

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NCBs fail to cut credit growth, operating cost

Little progress in loan recovery as govt holds half the sum

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The four Nationalised Commercial Banks (NCBs) have failed to reduce their operating expenses and to control credit growth as per a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the central bank signed two years ago.

The banks, however, made small progress in increasing the recovery of default loans in the last one year but could not make any major break-

throughs as the government itself represents 50 percent of the top loan defaulters.

Sources said the central bank will soon hold a meeting with the NCBs on their MoU-based performance and the next set of directives.

The central bank first signed the one-year MoU to improve the NCB's performance back in 2003. Over a year, they made progress in some

areas but were still lagging in cost cutting and credit management. This prompted the central bank to extend the MoU by another year.

In May last year, the central bank asked the NCBs to reduce their expenses by 5 percent by December. This reduction will be compared with their expenses incurred in December '03.

The banks were also asked to

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Saddam tribunal judge shot dead

Blast outside army recruitment centre kills 13

REUTERS, Baghdad

Gunmen in Baghdad shot and killed a judge working for the Iraqi special tribunal set up to try Saddam Hussein and his top lieutenants, Interior Ministry officials said

yesterday.

Two car bombs in the capital killed 13 Iraqi soldiers and wounded dozens in the latest attacks targeting

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JU flouts rules to appoint 13

JU CORRESPONDENT

Jahangirnagar University (JU) authorities have appointed 13 teachers at archaeology and zoology departments against five posts allegedly in a show of nepotism and politicisation, prompting criticism from teachers of the university.

A special syndicate meeting Tuesday finalised the teachers' appointments following recommendations by two selection committees, ignoring objections by the teachers of the two departments, sources said.

The committees had recommended appointing five lecturers at

archaeology department and eight at zoology, violating the university rules and regulations.

According to the university rules,

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Prayer Timing table for March 3 with columns for Azan and Jamaat times for Fajr, Zohr, Asr, Maghrib, and Esha.