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3 bombs seized from school

UNB, Jessore
Police seized three powerful hand bombs from a classroom of Boromegla High School in Kotwali Police Station Thursday morning. Police suspect criminals kept the bombs there the previous night. None was arrested in this connection.

BNP, Jamaat men ransack League worker's house, attack police van

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur
Activists of ruling BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami ransacked the house of a Jubo League worker and vandalised a police van in Birganj upazila Thursday night. They also barricaded Dinajpur-Thakurgaon highway for about five hours.

25 injured in JCD-BCL clash in Rajbari

BDNEWS, Rajbari
At least 25 students were injured yesterday in a clash between Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) at Rajbari Government University College. The clash erupted when the BCL and JCD college units brought out simultaneous processions on the campus to welcome the admission seekers in undergraduate courses, college sources said. At one stage, activists of JCD, the student wing of ruling BNP, swooped on the Awami League-backed BCL procession triggering the clash. Police were deployed on the college campus.

JCD, BCL clash with Shibir, 13 hurt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna
At least 13 students were injured in two clashes between activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) on the one side and Islami Chhatra Shibir men on the other yesterday on and around the campus of Government Azam Khan Commerce College in the city. The injured included three JCD activists, two BCL workers and a Shibir leader and an activist. They were admitted to Khulna General Hospital and a local clinic. Witnesses said a clash broke out first at around 9:30am when activists of the ruling BNP-backed JCD prevented Shibir activists from entering the campus.

Pakistani held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi
Police in separate incidents yesterday arrested a Pakistani national and seized two bombs in Ekdala and Sripur in Bagmara upazila. On receiving information about an Urdu-speaking man, police arrested Omar Faruk, 30, son of Abdur Rashed of Pakistan, from Ekdala village. Faruk said he came to Bangladesh 12 days ago from Karachi with valid travel documents. He told police that Mosharrar, a former worker of his late workshop in Pakistan, took him to his (Mosharrar's) village home in Rajshahi but disappeared with his documents and Pakistani Rs 28,000 Wednesday. He admitted that he also knows madrasa teacher Shams of Ekdala and Rezaul of Gopalpur. In Sripur village, police seized two bombs with timers, batteries and switches. A few boys found the bombs while fishing in a ditch near the spot where Jagrata Muslim Janata, Bangladesh cadres killed an Awami League leader in January. Police have asked authorities for army assistance to examine the bombs.

9 small overpasses for vehicles planned

RAFIQ HASAN
The government plans to ease traffic congestion in the capital by constructing at least nine small overpasses for vehicles at the busiest intersections in addition to the proposed 20-kilometre elevated expressway, said a communications ministry source. The Jurain Rail Crossing, Topkhana Road, Matshya Bhaban, Elephant Road, Bijoy Sarani, Gulshan-1, Gulshan-2, the Banani Rail Crossing and the Shyamoli Crossing have all been tentatively selected as sites for the overpasses. None of the intersections falling on the route of the proposed motorway from Gulistan to the newly built flyover at Mohakhali would among the sites, added the source. Communications Minister Nazmul Huda recently told The Daily Star that the government would build the overpasses at its own expense, but would seek financial assistance from Thailand to build the elevated expressway. The roads and highways department has already prepared a project concept paper (PCP) for the overpasses. The proposal will soon be submitted to the planning commission for approval, added the source. Frequent intersections are one of the major causes of traffic congestion in the city. The overpasses, if built, would improve the traffic situation at the intersections, the paper noted. According to the draft PCP, the overpasses, which will help vehicles to quickly pass the intersections, would be smaller in size and relatively inexpensive when compared to flyovers. The proposed overpasses would be constructed at a height of 4.4 metres from the existing roads. According to a preliminary survey by the roads and highways department, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue and Mirpur Road, the city's main thoroughfares, are the backbone of Dhaka's transport system. About 7,000 vehicles travel on these roads every hour during rush hours. According to the survey, Dhaka City has about 62 kilometres of primary roads, 116 kilometres of secondary roads, 220 kilometres of connecting roads, and about 900 kilometres of access roads. As most of these are single carriageway, the city suffers snarl-up at all intersections, it said. Besides, traffic signals remain ineffective due to improper operation of the signalling equipment, lack of co-ordination among the traffic personnel, and the tendency of drivers to flout the traffic rules, the survey added.



From left, two poodles, a bulldog and a Dalmatian displayed by their proud masters at the annual dog show organised by Bangladesh Kennel Club in Basundhara Residential Area in the city yesterday.



Mother of Farhad Hossain of Joypara, Dohar holds a picture of her son, who among 11 Bangladeshi youths met a tragic end last month in a boat on the Mediterranean trying to reach Spain illegally from Morocco.

3 more dead on sea en route to Spain identified

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The identities of three more of the 11 Bangladeshi youths who died while drifting on the Mediterranean Sea trying to reach the Spanish shores illegally were known yesterday, reports BDNews. Farhad Hossain, Sohel Rana and Amir Hossain were among the 26 Bangladeshis who chose the irregular and risky route to Spain in quest of a more affluent life. Instead, the three, along with eight others, met tragic ends at the sea. With these three, the identities of five victims have been known until yesterday. Of the dead, the bodies of 10 were thrown into the sea while the remaining one died in an Algerian hospital. Meanwhile, Bangladesh's envoy to Spain Anwarul Alam told the BBC Bangla Service yesterday that in the last two years there has been a growing trend among the Bangladeshis to go to Spain by boat. A section of Bangladeshi travel agents in Spain somehow arranges visas from some African countries like Morocco, Mali and Mauritania or Albania for them and then gets them on a boat bound for Spain, he said. The Spanish government of late has taken an initiative to legalise the irregular migrants who had arrived in the country by August last year and were recorded with the municipalities. But the crooked agents skewed the information, spreading it among the Bangladeshis that if they could reach the Spanish shores they would be naturalised, Alam said. "But in reality, even those who came before August last year but were not recorded with the municipalities, will not be legalised," he said. When asked what they will do to send the illegal Bangladeshis back, he said.

Germany offers dialogue to make next JS polls free and fair

UNB, Dhaka
Germany considers the next parliamentary election in Bangladesh as very 'crucial' for its development and has offered a dialogue with the authorities on how best the polls can be held. "To make the elections free and fair, the matter lies with the people and the authorities of Bangladesh. This is not a matter for anybody from the outside. But this is a tremendous task and there are difficulties in ensuring that. To overcome the difficulties, Germany, like all other partners, is ready to enter into dialogue with the Bangladesh authorities on how to ensure free and fair elections," German Ambassador Dietrich Andreas told UNB yesterday. He said it is an offer of support and co-operation, which of course needs response from the Bangladesh authorities. He also observed that such things as "the by-election in the Dhaka-10 constituency did not contribute to the feeling that elections in Bangladesh are held in a free and fair way under any circumstances." Calling the next elections crucial for the democracy of Bangladesh and for the country's future development, the German envoy said it is essential that the government recognises its importance and that all parties should work together to achieve that end. Andreas, who attended last month's donors' meeting in Washington, said there are difficulties relating to law and order and governance -- a view widely shared by the public in this country. "We're not interested in accusing somebody, but we discussed these problems trying to find a common approach to support the government in overcoming them" in the Washington meeting. While appreciating the progress made in different fields, the ambassador said Bangladesh's development partners believe that governance issues are very crucial to further the country's development. About terrorism -- a common problem in the present-day world scenario -- Andreas said the recent developments like bomb attacks and a climate of insecurity caused great concerns and are 'detrimental' to Bangladesh's development and image abroad. Saying that terrorist threat is worldwide and there is no reason to

India in charge

REUTERS, Mohali
Fast bowler Lakshmi Prasad Balaji and leg spinner Anil Kumble combined to help India push towards victory against Pakistan on the fourth day of the first test on Friday. The experienced Kumble claimed the big wickets of captain Inzamam-ul-Haq for 86 and Younis Khan for 68 after their record 139-run fourth wicket stand had helped Pakistan recover from 10 for three. Balaji rocked the top order and claimed first innings top-scorer Asim Kamal (48) late in the day to grab three for 67 and a match-haul of eight wickets on his injury comeback. Pakistan were 257 for six in their second innings at stumps, just 53 runs ahead with Abdul Razaq on 22 and wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal on nine. India took command after amassing 516 all out in the morning to take a crucial 204-run lead in reply to Pakistan's first innings 312 all out. Leg spinner Danish Kaneria led Pakistan's bowling on a good batting pitch, capturing six for 150 to claim his ninth five-wicket innings haul. Kaneria, 24, claimed all four wickets after India resumed on 447 for six, bowling a marathon 54 overs on a good batting pitch. Pakistan showed better fight in the second innings but were let down by another disappointing top-order display. Captain Inzamam did his best to rally his troops hitting his second successive fifty following his first-innings 57 and was ably assisted by Youhana. Their partnership was the eighth triple figure stand between the pair, surpassing the seven century partnerships for the wicket between Australia's Steve Waugh and Mark Waugh. Inzamam hit 10 fours and a six in his 105-ball knock spanning two-and-a-half hours but fell when Kumble trapped him lbw with a straight delivery for the second time in the match to reduce Pakistan to 150 for four at tea. Left-hander Kamal was dropped twice by slip fielder Rahul Dravid edging Kumble on nought and two as he joined Youhana to add 44 runs. The leg spinner then bowled the unlucky Youhana at the other end, the ball deflecting off a defensive bat and pad and rolling off his back foot to hit the stumps. Balaji had earlier removed left-hander Tauseeq Umar (4) caught and bowled and dismissed vice-captain Younis Khan for one as Pakistan made a terrible start. Opener Salman Butt (5) was out next in bizarre fashion, deflecting a short delivery from Pathan behind the stumps as he ducked with his bat held up.

Suicide bombing on Iraqi funeral kills 50

AFP, Reuters, Mosul
Iraq's religious leaders called for calm yesterday amid fears of revenge attacks one day after a suicide bomber killed 50 Iraqis and wounded more than 80 in a packed Shia funeral tent in Mosul. Grieving families cancelled a planned public funeral procession for the victims in the northern city after a mortar shell early on Friday slammed into the site of the carnage 24 hours earlier. Sunni Muslim leaders, fearful of reprisals, urged calm in the city, Iraq's third largest and one of its most ethnically and religiously diverse. "It was terrorist attack meant to spark civil war but I think the Sunnis and Shias will not succumb," said Nureddine Hayali, a spokesman for the Islamic Party. Iraq's Shia clerics urged cool heads after the latest calamity. The office of Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the spiritual guide for Iraq's Shias, said the revered cleric was calling for "unity and solidarity among all Iraqis despite the attacks targeting the innocent." Sistani has consistently denounced vigilante justice against Iraq's Sunnis, perceived as fuelling the insurgency, with the 15-million strong Shia majority blames for many attacks carried out against it. In some sections of Baghdad, Shia individuals and militias have started taking action against suspected insurgents, ranging from making arrests to killing individuals, although the incidents are still isolated. The bomber struck on Thursday as mourners gathered next to the Sadreen mosque, where a service was being held for Hisham al-Araji, Iraq's MP.

AL working on proposals to reform interim govt, EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
An expert committee of the main opposition Awami League (AL) is working to formulate a set of proposals to reform the caretaker government system as well as the Election Commission (EC) in order to ensure a free and credible general election under a 'non-party and neutral' interim government. "Once the proposals are finalised, the party will make them public and launch a campaign to mobilise public opinion in their support," said an AL leader involved in the brainstorming. Barrister Amir-ul-Islam, chairman of the AL Advisory Committee on Law Affairs, Advocate Rahmat Ali MP, Chairman of the Election Affairs

Nizami alleges conspiracy to split coalition

UNB, Dhaka
Industries Minister Matiur Rahman Nizami, also the ameer of ruling coalition partner Jamaat-e-Islami, yesterday alleged that a conspiracy is on to drive a wedge between the components of four-party alliance as well as damage Jamaat's friendly relations with Islamic parties. "The leaders and workers of the four-party alliance must be alert to the conspiracy of Awami League," he told a regional conference of party representatives from six districts in greater Comilla and Noakhali at Comilla Town Hall. Nizami rejected the AL's proposal to reform the caretaker government system as illogical. He said three consecutive elections were held under caretaker governments.

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Prayer Timing
March 12

	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	5-20	5-55
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-03	6-07
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

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