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VOL. XV NO. 99

DHAKA THURSDAY APRIL 28, 2005

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BAISHAKH 15, 1412 BS

RABIUL AWAL 18, 1426 HIJRI

20 PAGES PLUS RISING STARS PRICE: TK 10.00

BSF kills one more, returns another body

STAR REPORT

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) yesterday morning gunned down a Bangladeshi man in Sathkira district and then took away the body, hours before it returned the body of another Bangladeshi who had shared the same fate in Lalmonirhat.

Sources said the persistently hostile attitude of BSF and its frequent assaults without provocation on often-innocent Bangladeshi nationals in the last few days have been fuelling panic, distrust and vengefulness at the border between the two next-door neighbours.

LATEST KILLING
Our Sathkira Correspondent reports: At around 6:00am yesterday, BSF shot down a Bangladeshi farmer at Gazipur Shashan Ghat near Bhomra Land Port under Sadar upazila of the southwestern district.

The victim, Mostafizur Rahman, 35, son of Syed Ali of Baliadanga village of the upazila, was going to his paddy field near subpillars 2 and 3 under main border pillar number

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Dhaka-Delhi ties dip to lowest ebb

Observe JS body members, suggest improvement

SHAKHAWAT LITON

A parliamentary body yesterday observed the diplomatic relations with India are at their lowest ebb and expressed grave concern over the boiling border tension.

The watchdog of the foreign ministry at a meeting held in camera asked the government to strengthen Bangladesh-India relations through confidence-building measures and bilateral discussions.

After deliberating on the issue for more than three hours, the parliamentary standing committee on foreign ministry decided to sit again on May 11 to suggest measures to cement relations with the next-door neighbour, meeting sources said.

Emerging from the meeting, the foreign minister, chairman of the

parliamentary body and others members declined to comment on the contents of the discussion as the committee decided not to disclose them.

But meeting sources said the committee members from both the ruling BNP and main opposition Awami League were almost similar in their views on the current state of Dhaka-Delhi relations and the escalating border tension.

"We have started reviewing the relations between Bangladesh and India to find out ways to strengthen the ties," Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan told reporters after the meeting held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhavan.

Committee Chairman Ziaur Rahman Khan told reporters that it was a camera meeting and that he

would not disclose the deliberations of the meeting. He only told them that they discussed Bangladesh's relations with the neighbouring states.

"I do not want to go further as discussions will continue," he said. At the beginning of the meeting, Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin, who was the Bangladesh High Commissioner in New Delhi before taking up the current job, briefed the committee members about the diplomatic ties with India.

The foreign secretary, commenting on the Indian attitude towards Bangladesh, said the Indian government may consider what Bangladesh is doing now in contrast to what India had done during the Liberation War, meeting sources said.

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Saarc future depends on political will

Says Morshed, calls for early summit

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan has called for early convening of the twice postponed 13th Saarc (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) summit on an acceptable date and said the forum's future depends on political will and commitment of the member states.

"Building South Asia's future will require an atmosphere of good will, mutual trust, respect and understanding. Such an atmosphere

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DEMARCATION OF CONSTITUENCIES

EC still sits idle, violates rules

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The Election Commission (EC) is violating the demarcation rules by not taking any step to demarcate the parliamentary constituencies for the coming general elections.

Demarcation has to be made after every census but the EC has been sitting idle since the last census conducted in 2001 before the eighth parliamentary election.

Sources said demarcation is necessary to balance the constituencies in terms of number of voters that varies from one constituency to another.

"The commission does not have any plan at this moment to demarcate the parliamentary constituencies. We do not initiate such steps. If anybody raises the demand, then we consider it," Election Commissioner M Munsif Ali told The Daily Star.

However, the Delimitation of Constituencies Ordinance 1976 says delimitation of territorial constituencies has to be made upon completion of each census for the purpose of general elections to be held after the census.

It is unlikely that the EC would take any initiative to demarcate the constituencies before the ninth general elections scheduled for

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7 killed, 50 hurt in highway crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Seven people died and 35 others were injured, 12 of them critically, in a head-on collision between two buses on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Fakirhat near Sitakunda upazila headquarters yesterday morning.

Police and witnesses said the accident occurred at around 7:30am when a Dhaka-bound bus from Chittagong collided with a Chittagong-bound bus from Basurhat of Feni, killing five people on the spot and injuring 37 others.

Police with the help of local people rescued the injured and sent them to Chittagong Medical College and Hospital (CMCH) and Sitakunda Upazila Health Complex. Of them, a child and a man aged about 42 succumbed to their

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JATRA BOMBING

Charges pressed against Galib, 5 others

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Gaibandha police pressed charges yesterday against five cadres of Islamist outfit Jamaat-ul-Mujaheedin and their leader Ashadulla Al Galib for their involvement in a bomb blast at the Takir bazar jatra show under Palashbari upazila.

The activists confessed their involvement in the bomb blast incident, and also declared Galib the chief of Jamaat-ul-Mujaheedin. Accordingly, Galib was shown as the main accused in the case.

The other five activists on the charge sheet are Harun-ur-Rashid, alias Mottaleb, Rownakul Islam Khushi, ATM Taibur Rahman, Raju Sarder and Habibur Rahman, alias Jabayer.

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Bandits loot Tk 10 lakh goods from bus in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bandits looted goods estimated at Tk 10 lakh at gunpoint from passengers of a Narayanganj-bound bus at Shyampur in the capital yesterday.

A group of six to seven bandits got on Borak Paribahan at about 3:00pm when it stopped at the Shyampur ticket counter near Ujala Match Factory. They took the passengers hostage and robbed them of gold, cash and other valuables before fleeing away, Mohammed Harun, a passenger, said.

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PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Homes of many families in the city's Basila hang perilously on the eroding bank of the Buriganga river, as the monsoon rears its angry head amid unkept government promises to check the erosion. The river devoured around 50 Basila homes last year.

SCBA to boycott CJ's court if Faizee is not withdrawn

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) yesterday threatened to boycott chief justice's court if additional judge Faisal Mahmud Faizee is not withdrawn from judicial functions.

It also said if Faizee sits in the High Court bench on Saturday, the lawyers will bring out a black-flag procession on the Supreme Court premises.

SCBA President Advocate Mahubey Alam announced the programme at the end of a human chain organised by Sammilita Ainjibi Samannay Parishad (SASP) to protest "politicisation of judiciary and conspiracy to destroy the image

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

37 die as train rams into bus in Lanka

REUTERS, Polgahawela, Sri Lanka

Thirty-seven bus passengers were killed and dozens injured when a train ramed into the crowded vehicle at a level crossing in Sri Lanka yesterday, crushing it and setting it ablaze, officials said.

None of the passengers and crew on the train was hurt, a railway official said, but it was one of the island's worst accidents in years.

Doctors said the death toll was likely to rise as many survivors were in a critical condition, particularly 10 people who had been shifted to a Colombo hospital.

Police and rescue workers had earlier said that around 50 people had been feared killed but revised

the figure later to 37, including two passengers who died in hospital. The bus was said to have been carrying 70 to 100 people.

"The signal was green and the level crossing gates were closed," train driver H.A. Sirisena told Reuters at the site of the crash in central Sri Lanka.

"Then I saw the bus trying to cross ... and the next thing I knew was the engine hitting the rear of the bus."

"After the first impact, the bus spun around and hit the train again. I have been in this job for 41 years and this is the first time something like this has happened," said the balding 59-year-old, with tears in his eyes.

The bus, which was dragged for about 300 meters (yards) on the track after the collision, lay in a mangled heap of metal, with its middle torn open.

Luggage, glass and children's clothes were strewn on the track and on the embankment, a few meters away from a road running parallel to the track in Polgahawela town, about 60 km (40 miles) northeast of the capital, Colombo.

Some clothes were also stuck to the rail engine, the front of which was badly dented and some parts twisted.

"I was sitting at the very back of the bus. I saw flames coming from the front. There was little time to do

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BALU, BELAL KILLINGS

Khulna journos reject both chargesheets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna journalists have rejected the chargesheets in the cases for the murder of journalists Humayun Kabir Balu and Shaikh Belaluddin, saying they do not contain the names of the masterminds and financiers of the killings.

In a joint statement yesterday, the presidents and general secretaries of Khulna Union of Journalists (KUJ) and Khulna Press Club alleged that police pressed charges against

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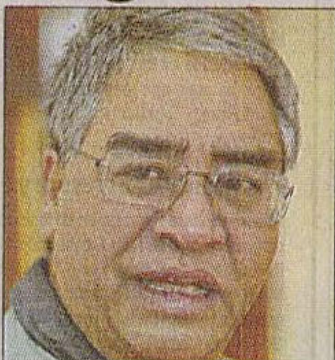
Ex-Nepal PM held on graft charges

REUTERS, Kathmandu

Former Nepal Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba was arrested yesterday for refusing to appear before an anti-graft panel to answer charges of corruption, police said.

The arrest came just four days before the scheduled end of emergency rule imposed by King Gyanendra after he sacked Deuba's government on February 1 for failing to quell a nine-year-old Maoist rebellion which has left over 11,000 people dead.

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Sher Bahadur Deuba

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