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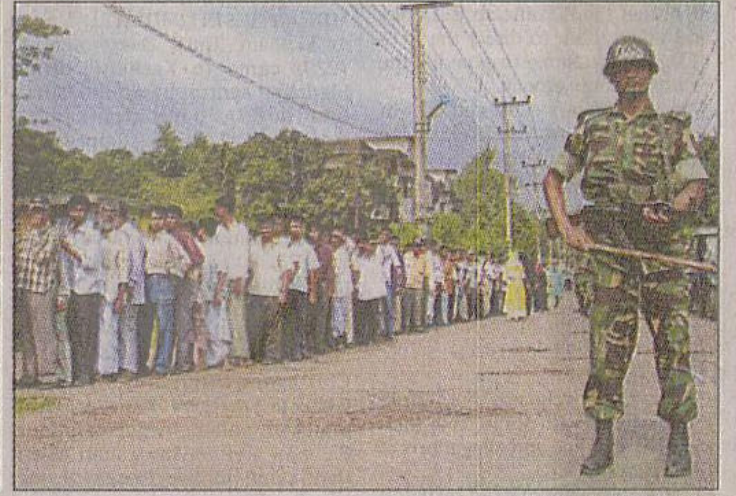
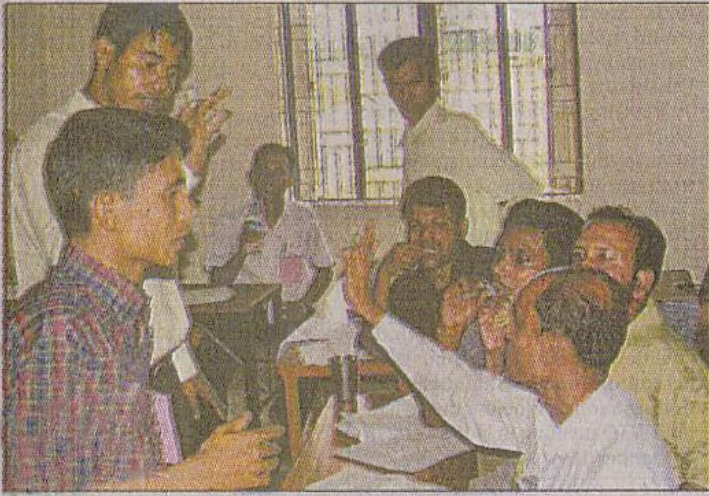
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SNAPSHOTS OF CCC POLLS



From left to right, army men beat up a man for casting false votes; rival polling agents furiously argue over false voting; minority voters complain to journalists after pro-government hooligans herded them out of the polling centre; and an army personnel stands guard near a long line of voters at a polling centre.

Man killed by cops despite his claim of innocence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The youth killed by a police patrol team on Sunday night at Agargaon in the city was shot despite his repeated claims to be innocent, the rickshaw-puller, who was carrying the victim, said yesterday.

The police on Sunday described the youth as a mugger, and said they shot him only after he and his three cohorts, challenged in an act of mugging, had hurled bombs at them.

The slain, Mohammad Sobel, was identified by his father Shamsul Haq Talukdar at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital yesterday.

MA Halim, an advocate who knows the rickshawpuller named Benazir, said he learnt the story when he hired his rickshaw at about 10:00pm Sunday from Ibrahimpur. Halim took Benazir to a clinic at

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

US offensive in Iraq kills 75

8 American soldiers, 4 Iraqis slain in bomb attacks

AP, AFP, Baghdad

US forces have launched an offensive against insurgents in western Iraq near the Syrian border, and about 75 militants were killed in the first 24 hours while eight US servicemen and 4 Iraqis were killed in separate bomb attacks, the military said yesterday.

It said the offensive, being conducted with US air support in a desert area of Anbar province north of the Euphrates River, was targeting a sanctuary for foreign insurgents and a smuggling route.

The brief US statement didn't say

when the offensive by Marines, sailors and soldiers had begun, how many were included, or whether there had been any American casualties.

The Chicago Tribune reported Monday that more than 1,000 US troops supported by fighter jets and helicopter gunships had attacked villages in and around Obaidi, a city near the Euphrates River in western Iraq not far from the Syrian border, on Sunday.

The report, by a journalist embedded with the US forces, said the offensive "was seeking to uproot a persistent insurgency in an area

that American intelligence indicated has become a haven for foreign fighters flowing in from Syria."

It said the offensive was expected to last for several days. Recently, US troops appear to have stepped up their attacks on suspected insurgent strongholds, including some near the Syrian border, where foreign militants may be entering the country to attack coalition forces.

For instance, on Sunday, coalition forces killed six insurgents and detained 54 suspects in raids targeting terror group al-Qaeda in Iraq in

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

25 bullet-hit as fleeing robbers open fire

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Twenty-five people were shot yesterday when robbers fleeing a burglary opened fire on locals at Fatullah in Narayanganj.

About 14 armed robbers snuck into the house of Shahjahan Mian at Sastapur at 3:30am, tying up guard Mizan.

When Shahjahan's family, becoming aware of the robbers, raised an alarm, locals rushed to the house and cordoned it off.

The robbers then fled, but the locals chased them for about 2 kilometres, braving a hail of bullets as the gang opened fire on them.

Masum, Jewel and Afzal sustained serious injuries and were rushed to Dhaka. Among the other injured, Yasin, Soleman, Golap, Joynal, Momen, Aman, Hridoy,

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

WTO MEET BRIEFING

Altaf blank about Paris outcome

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Commerce Minister Altaf Hossain Choudhury yesterday held a press briefing on the just concluded World Trade Organisation (WTO) ministerial meeting, which he had attended, but said nothing pertinent to the event.

The meeting in Paris on May 4-5 has reached a consensus on conversion of specific tariffs on agricultural goods that has blocked for years the Doha round negotiations.

But Altaf at the briefing at his ministry's conference room told reporters for more than an hour about his unofficial meetings, leaving aside the Paris meet.

"I had 16 meetings with different trade ministers and Bangladeshis expats in Paris and London," Altaf said, adding, his meeting with Bangladesh Caterers Association in London was fruitful.

But international media reports hailed the Paris meet of the WTO for reaching a consensus in tariff reduction formula.

"After months of deadlock, the Doha round of global trade talks has taken a big step forward, thanks largely to an abstruse but important deal over agricultural tariffs," said The Economist on its May 5 issue.

On May 4, negotiators from the US, the European Union, Brazil, India and Australia hammered out a

formula for converting specific tariffs on agricultural goods, such as 10 cents per pound in weight, into percentage tariffs, The Economist reported.

Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Amorim told reporters on the fringe of the Paris meet they had an accord on the AVE conversion. The AVE conversion is a method for converting tariffs based on imported quantities into ad-valorem equivalents (AVE), that is, tariffs based on the price of the product.

Establishing the AVEs is a precondition for addressing the tariff reduction formula that is a central pillar of ongoing agriculture negotiations.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

Home ministry for creation of 171 new SB posts

REZAUL KARIM

The home ministry has recently placed a formal proposal to the establishment and finance ministries asking them to create 171 new posts in addition to the existing 557 personnel in the protection unit of the Special Branch (SB) of police.

The Ministry of Establishment has already approved creation of the 171 posts, but the Ministry of

Finance approved only 95 of them, home ministry sources said.

Of the 557 existing personnel, 130 are engaged in the prime minister's security, 94 for the president, 12 in the state guest house Jamuna, six in Sudha Sadan (residence of the leader of the Opposition) and 16 on sweeping duty.

Besides, 223 are attached for security of VIP/VIP and important

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8



Chiefs, from right to left, of Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Janata League Kader Siddiqui, Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, Gono Forum Dr Kamal Hossain and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal Hasanul Haq Inu listen to a speaker at a discussion in the capital marking BDB's first founding anniversary yesterday.

BDB demands caretaker govt, EC reforms

Observes first anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) on its first launching anniversary yesterday called upon all progressive political parties to demand reforms in the caretaker government system and the Election Commission to ensure free and fair elections.

BDB President Badruddoza

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

PM to attend Doha summit on June 16

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will attend the South-South Summit in Doha, Qatar, on June 16, a senior official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told the news agency yesterday.

The summit will be held ahead of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) session to focus on the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

Rocca talks Nepal, Bangladesh issues with India

Flies in Dhaka tomorrow

BDNEWS, Dhaka

US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Christina Rocca yesterday met senior Indian officials in New Delhi and discussed developments in Nepal and Bangladesh.

Rocca, who arrived in the Indian capital yesterday morning, held talks with S Jaishanker, joint secretary (America), Ranjit Rae, joint secretary (Nepal) and other officials in the external affairs ministry before leaving on a visit to Kathmandu and Dhaka, according to a report by Hindustan Times quoting the Indo-Asian News Service (IANS).

"We have for some time now developed a system of close consultations on developments in our neighbourhood and her visit was part of this process," a senior official told the IANS.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

JUBO DAL LEADER KILLING 11 AL men given life term

Cops assault AL MP on court premises

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced 11 leaders and activists of the Kapasia upazila unit Awami League (AL) to life imprisonment for killing Moktar Hossain, a Jubo Dal leader of Kapasia upazila of Gazipur, in October 2001.

Following the verdict, police

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Two killed in 'encounters' with Rab

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Two outlawed party leaders were killed in separate incidents of "crossfire" and "shootout" between the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and the associates of the two in Barisal and Pabna yesterday.

Jalal Bepari, 40, regional leader of Kamrul group of the outlawed Sarbahara Party, was killed in a "shootout" between the Rab and his

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

10-yr girl raped in the city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 10-year-old schoolgirl was violated by a youth inside a school at Badda in the capital yesterday.

"An unknown youth took me to the first floor of the school, offering to give me a biscuit, and forcibly tortured me," the victim, a class four student of South Badda Alatumnesa High School, told The Daily Star at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Before the incident, just after the

SEE PAGE 15 CO 3

Prayer Timing

	May 10	
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-34	6-38
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

KIBRIA KILLING Chargesheet in blast case accepted

BDNEWS, Habiganj

A Special Tribunal here yesterday accepted the charge sheet in the explosive case involving the killing of former finance minister and

Awami League (AL) leader Shah

AMS Kibria.

Terminating the investigation incomplete, the complainant urged the court to investigate the source of

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

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- মানিক-রচনাবলী
- বিভূতি-রচনাবলী
- জীবনানন্দ-রচনাবলী

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