

AUG 21 BLASTS

Hasina points finger at Hawa Bhaban

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition yesterday alleged that the real perpetrators behind the August 17 bombings were getting away.

"If the government wants to capture the real culprits, 'Hawa Bhaban' and 'Khowab Bhaban' will have to be visited," she said addressing the concluding session of a conference of the 'Sufis' at the Engineers' Institute in the capital.

Bangladesh Sufi Majlish organised the programme.

Chaired by Sufi Majlish President Shah Sufi Muhammad Anisul Huq Chisti Al-Hossaini, the session was addressed, among others, by Shah Noor-e-Sureshwari, Shah Sufi

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Top Janajuddha leader captured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A top leader of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP- Janajuddha), who hid himself in the capital since last November, was arrested from a garments factory at Khilgaon in the capital yesterday.

The arrestee Bahadur Munshi, 27, the armed wing leader of Janajuddha, is the son of Mozammel Munshi of Tetultala at Botiaghata in Khulna. He is accused of murder in at least two murder cases including one for triple murder, police said.

Police from Botiaghata and

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Prayer Timing		
September 12		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-35	5-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-14	6-17
Esha	7-45	8-15
Source: Islamic Foundation		

OIL, GAS EXPLORATION

Third round bidding now in March-April

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The government is preparing to go for the third round bidding for off-shore oil and gas exploration in March-April next year for signing production sharing contracts (PSCs) with qualified international oil companies (IOCs) by July.

"We had the target to go for the bidding by December this year. But we had to defer it on logical grounds," Energy Advisor Mahmudur Rahman said.

Sources concerned said the

Energy and Mineral Resources Division (EMRD) has accepted the proposal of Petrobangla for floating tender for carrying out non-exclusive speculative seismic survey which will be conducted as part of preparations for the 3rd round bidding.

The EMRD has formed a committee to formulate the guidelines and got approval from the foreign ministry for determining international maritime boundary. The committee, headed by Ehsan ul Fattah, additional secretary of the

EMRD, has been asked to complete its works by the end of this month.

Petrobangla, the state-run oil, gas and mineral corporation, will float tender for non-exclusive speculative seismic survey by October 31.

The sources said after floating the tender for the non-exclusive seismic survey, the Petrobangla will initiate a step to withdraw the court's injunction on signing any new PSC.

At the same time, they said,

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6 more camel jockeys back to parents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six more children used as camel jockeys in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) were handed over to their parents at Barura in Comilla on Saturday through a programme.

The children are Al Amin Rabiul, 10, Al Amin Moyeen, 7, Zahed Abul Kashem, 7, Tareq Abul Kashem, 8, Lokman Shahjahan, 12 and Sajeeb, 10 -- all from Comilla.

The programme, held on Kasami Government Primary School premises at Barura, was a matter of great interest to the local people, mostly the children, as it was first such programme they had ever witnessed.

"I hope that this is the first and also the last of such type of

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Koizumi pulls off major polls win

AFP, Tokyo

Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi pulled off a major victory at the polls yesterday after gambling his career on an early election that doubters at first said was tantamount to political suicide.

Exit polls showed the 63-year-old maverick got the overwhelming mandate he sought from voters as his ruling Liberal Democrats (LDP) looked set to have a clear majority in government for the first time in 15 years.

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Junichiro Koizumi

Qaeda threatens attacks on LA, Melbourne

AFP, Washington

A suspected American member of al-Qaeda threatened attacks against Los Angeles and the Australian city of Melbourne in a videotape shown by ABC television yesterday on fourth anniversary of September 11.

The threat was made by Adam Gadahn, a US national who converted to Islam and became a radical supporter of Osama bin Laden, ABC said.

It said the 11-minute tape was sent to the network's office in Pakistan.

"Yesterday, London and Madrid. Tomorrow, Los Angeles and Melbourne, God willing," said the warning.

"At this time, don't count on us demonstrating restraint or compassion," the speaker added.

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Israel declares end to Gaza rule

Troop pullout imminent

AP, Jerusalem

Israel declared an end to its military rule in Gaza yesterday, clearing the way to complete its pullout and turn the territory over to the Palestinians on Monday after 38 years of occupation.

Their bases dismantled and the Jewish settlements they guarded in ruins, Israeli troops were poised for a swift withdrawal that will leave the Palestinians with a volatile testing ground for statehood.

"The cabinet has unanimously

approved ... the formal cancellation of the military government in Gaza," Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's office said in a tersely worded statement.

The last obstacle was cleared when the cabinet, in an emotionally charged debate, decided not to level 19 settlement synagogues, which will be the only buildings left standing in the 21 enclaves evacuated and demolished last month.

The Palestinian Authority had demanded the army tear down the synagogues, hated symbols of Israel's occupation of the coastal

territory where 1.4 million Palestinians live.

But the cabinet, including Sharon himself, reversed an earlier decision to raze the synagogues after rabbis said destroying them would be a greater sin than possible desecration by Palestinians.

Palestinians were watching the end of Israel's military presence, marking the first removal of settlements on land they want for a state, with a mixture of joy and scepticism.

They fear Sharon is trading the tiny

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PHOTO: STAR

A consumer rights organisation brings out a unique procession with non-motorised and traditional vehicles in Chittagong city yesterday protesting fuel price hike.

Unique march to protest fuel price hike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A consumer rights body yesterday protested the recent fuel price hike in a novel way, bringing out a procession of non-motorised vehicles, traditional modes of transports and even that for the disabled -- all requiring no fuel.

Hundreds of people from all strata of life boarding rickshaws, rickshaw vans, pushcarts, horse-drawn carts, bicycles, palanquins, and in trolleys and wheel chairs used by the disabled joined the unique procession.

The procession started from Chittagong Press Club premises at around 11:00am, paraded some major thoroughfares of the port city for about an hour and ended at Amtala in Reazuddin Bazar area. The participants carried placards with the slogan "Shall we go back to the non-mechanised and primitive age?"

Consumer rights' protection

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