

BNP plans meet in wake of rifts in ranks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party is preparing for its divisional conventions from the second week of December following the 14-party opposition coalition's grand

Ensure newspaper office safety
BSP, Noab ask govt

UNB, Dhaka
Bangladesh Sangbadpatra Parishad (BSP) and Newspaper Owners Association of Bangladesh (Noab) have urged the government

Murder accused killed in Rab 'crossfire'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
An accused in college student Momin murder case was killed in a 'crossfire' between the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and his gang in city's Kafrul early yesterday.

Prayer Timing
November 16

	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	5-05	5-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-21	5-24
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

Universities to have same grading system

ASHIQR RAHMAN
University Grants Commission (UGC) has taken initiative to introduce a uniform grading system with provision for nine grades in all the public and private universities of the country soon.

"The matter of introducing a uniform grading system will be finalised in consultation with the vice chancellors of different public and private universities in the next UGC meeting supposed to be held in December," UGC Chairman Prof M Asaduzzaman said.

Under the new grading system, a

student will have to secure minimum 90% marks for grade A, 85% for A-, 80% for B+, 75% for B, 70% for B-, 67.5% for C+, 65% for C, 62.5% for C-, and 60% for D, a UGC source said, adding that there may be some changes in the draft of the system at the next meeting.

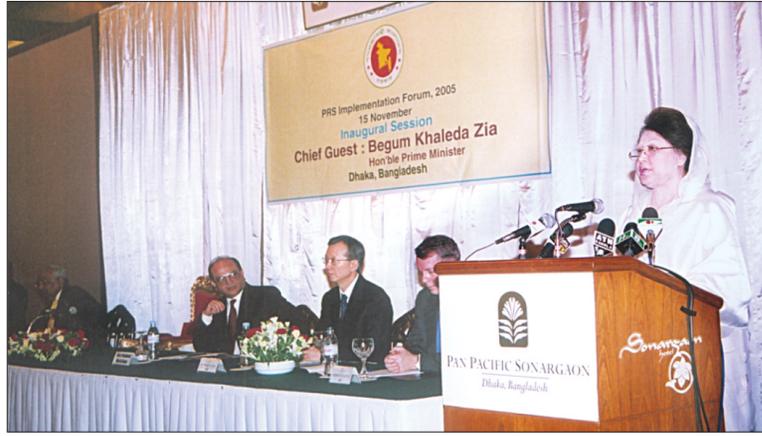
Expressing the hope that the new grading system will be effective from early next year, the UGC chairman said, "To overcome the present unbalanced situation due to various grading systems followed by private as well as public universities, University Grants Commission is going to introduce a common grading system for all."

A competent student of a public

university can hardly get 55 to 60 percent marks while a less competent student of a highly expensive private university can easily secure more than 80 percent marks, he said.

"It is very unfair that students of private universities, which generally are liberal in giving maximum marks to their students for commercial reasons, are given preference over the meritorious students of public universities in jobs," he observed.

Those with public university backgrounds having comparatively poor marks even have to be



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia addresses the inaugural session of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Forum 2005 at a city hotel yesterday.

3 held with M16 in Khulna, bomb found near TV station

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna
Intelligence wing of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested three people including two Jubo League leaders after they were bullet-hit in an "encounter" with Rab and seized a USA-made M16 rifle and four bullets from their possession.

Police recovered a bomb in Thakurgaon and a mortar shell in Chittagong.

Khulna Awami League (AL) has called a half-day hartal in the city today protesting the arrest of Jubo League leaders.

The arrested are Khulna district Jubo League President

Car bomb explodes near KFC in Karachi
3 killed, 15 injured

REUTERS, Karachi
A car bomb exploded outside a KFC fast-food restaurant in the Pakistani city of Karachi yesterday, killing three people and wounding 15 in an attack thought to have been carried out by Islamist militants, police and doctors said.

Some victims suffered severe burns in the bombing, which blew a metre-wide (3-foot-wide) hole in the street and engulfed it in a fireball that gutted six or seven other parked cars in the centre of the southern city, Pakistan's commercial hub.

"I thought it was an earthquake," said security guard Hassan Ali, being treated in hospital for head injuries and bandaged over his left eye. He said he had passed out during the blast.

Provincial authorities said they suspected Islamist militants might be to blame and cast doubt on a claim of responsibility by a separatist group from nearby Baluchistan province which said it had targeted an office of a state-run Pakistani oil company.

A small Suzuki sedan blew up just before 9am (4:00 a.m. British

BBC poll finds unemployment gravest ill

Essentials prices 2nd on problem list; people's trust least in cops

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Unemployment is the most harrowing problem in the country followed by high prices of essentials, transportation, population growth and illiteracy, according to the findings of a BBC opinion poll launched yesterday.

People's trust in the police ranked the lowest, with only 9 percent respondents agreeing with the statement that 'the police serve all Bangladeshis well'. Eleven percent respondents said they have trust in NGOs, 39 percent in

JMB threatens to blow up Patuakhali court

OUR CORRESPONDENTS, Patuakhali and Rangamati
The outlawed Islamic militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) threatened to blow up Patuakhali Judge Court, and a booklet sent by mail to the Rangamati municipality chairman urged the Muslims to establish Quranic Ayeen (Islamic Law) in Bangladesh, in separate incidents yesterday.

The JMB in a letter sent to the district and sessions judge of Patuakhali said, "your court will be blown up after or before Saarc Summit."

The letter without any date or name of the writer asked, "How long

will you continue your court procedures under police security."

The letter also claimed that the outfit has a training camp at Baufal in the district and named Dr Asadullah Galib as its leader and Abdur Rahman as its guru.

The judge, who asked for security Monday after the suicide bomb attack in Jhalakathi, received the letter at 2:00pm yesterday and informed the district police, district administrations and the home ministry about it.

A gunman was assigned to protect the judge after he received the threat.

Meanwhile, eight assistant judges, who are yet to have any police protection, fear attacks on them.

Govt blasted for failure to protect judiciary

Opposition parties prepare for grand rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The 14-party opposition coalition at a meeting yesterday demanded that the BNP-Jamaat alliance government should immediately stand down for its alleged "complete failure" to provide security for the judges and the court premises in the country.

The meeting, held in the central office of the main opposition Awami League on Bangabandhu Avenue in the capital, expressed strong con-