

EDEN COLLEGE

Guardian sues Pintu for murder attempt

DU CORRESPONDENT

A guardian of an Eden College student yesterday filed an attempted murder case against ruling BNP lawmaker Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu, former principal of the college Prof Feroza Begum, the chief of college hostel supers, and 11 college unit leaders of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD).

Hasina Momtaz, wife of Abu Laise of Joginagar Road in the capital and sister-in-law of a student of the college, filed the case with the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Outlaw killed in 'shootout' with cops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kusthia

A regional leader of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-ML) was killed during a "shootout" between his accomplices and police at Machpara village in Sadar upazila early yesterday. Police arrested Anar Uddin alias Manju, 45, at a village under Harinakundu upazila of Jhenidah district Tuesday morning. He was later brought to the Islamic University (IU) Police Station for quizzing.

On his confessional statement,

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Kuwait okays \$35m for Karnaphuli bridge

UNB, Dhaka

Kuwait Fund yesterday approved \$35million for the construction of a third bridge over the Karnaphuli in Chittagong, said Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan.

"Director General of Kuwait Fund Abdul Wahab Al Badr communicated the decision to Bangladesh Ambassador in Kuwait Nazrul Islam Khan," said the foreign minister while talking to a group of reporters at his office yesterday.

He said the Kuwaiti funds will cover about 70 percent of the estimated construction cost of the bridge.

Prayer Timing		
March 30		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-45	5-20
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-20	6-25
Esha	7-45	8-15
Source: Islamic Foundation		

BCL NATIONAL COUNCIL

Non-students vie for central posts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least two-thirds of the candidates for the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) central committee office-bearers to be elected by the April 3-4 national council are near 40 in age and left behind their student life long ago.

The student wing of Awami League (AL) has held only three national councils in the last 12 years, saturating itself with a huge number of aged and non-student 'student leaders', sources said. As a result, there is now a severe leadership crisis at all levels, from the centre down to the grassroots units, of the country's leading student body.

Sources said since the formation of the present BCL central committee four years back, no more than 30 out of its 201 members have remained active in student politics to date.

They also said most of some 50 'student leaders' vying for the top five powerful posts--president, vice president, general secretary, joint secretary and organising secretary--are not regular students any more and aged between 30 and 40 years.

Many of them, who were busy with moneymaking and other personal or professional affairs, have now returned to the organisation's pavilion ahead of the council. They are lobbying BCL units, leaders and workers, and AL offices and leaders,



L to R : Nazmul Huda, minister for communications, Stephen Sackur, the presenter of Hardtalk of the BBC World Service, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, political secretary to the Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina and Tarek Masud, a renowned filmmaker, at a BBC-sponsored debate at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre yesterday.

Political blame game must end to sustain democracy

Observe participants in BBC debate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh needs to overcome political deadlock and the culture of blaming each other in politics, and to ensure accountability of the government to sustain democracy, participants in a BBC-sponsored debate observed yesterday.

The country is now plagued with corruption and lack of tolerance. If democracy does not succeed in the country, there might be attempts to

plant it from outside, they noted.

The participants in the debate on "Bangladesh --- Can Democracy Deliver?" said mismanagement in the successive governments made the administration slow and dysfunctional.

Two panels of discussants in Dhaka and London simultaneously participated in the debate through satellite.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Dhaka, Islamabad to host Saarc body meets next month

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka and Islamabad will host three important meetings of different Saarc bodies next month to finalise the Safta implementation arrangements, modalities of Saarc funds and the terms and conditions for new membership and observer status of the association.

Of the three, Dhaka will host the meeting of Saarc Standing Committee on April 10-12 and South Asia Free Trade Area (Safta)

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

MANAGING DISASTERS

World can learn from Bangladesh, says Clinton

UNB, Dhaka

Former US President Bill Clinton has said the world can learn from Bangladesh many things about disaster management.

Clinton said this while addressing the inaugural session of the Third International Conference on Early Warning System in Bonn, Germany, on Monday, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Grounded Biman airbus returns to Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The airbus of Biman, which was grounded for mechanical glitches at MAG Osmani International Airport in Sylhet Tuesday night, returned to the capital yesterday evening.

Some 168 passengers had remained stranded in Sylhet for several hours. They were flown to the capital at midnight by another airbus sent from Dhaka at about 11:30pm Tuesday.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Thousands march against Thaksin

Force shutdown at Bangkok's key retail district

AFP, Bangkok

Thousands of protesters trying to oust Thailand's Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra shut down one of Bangkok's key commercial centres yesterday, causing massive traffic jams, as they stepped up their campaign four days before troubled elections.

Police diverted traffic around one block of the busiest streets in Bangkok, where a crowd they estimated at 20,000 people waved Thai flags and chanted "Get out Thaksin!"

Demonstrators parked giant trucks in front of Siam Paragon, a sprawling shopping mall that claims to be the biggest in Southeast Asia and sits at one of the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



A view of the partly covered sun during yesterday's solar eclipse. The photo was snapped from Gabtoli at the outskirts of the capital.

Revenue spending to be slashed by 10pc

UNB, Dhaka

The government will slash by 10 percent the revenue spending as part of austerity measures being pursued amid much higher expenditure than budgeted for the current fiscal year.

"We have already instructed various sectors and ministries to rationalise and economise spending... they should be extremely cautious in spending money," Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman told reporters yesterday, a day after he announced a plan of 8 percent cut in ADP.

"Save at least 10 percent (from the budgeted expenditure)," he directed the authorities in a meeting at his secretariat office, taking stock of revenue earning only a quarter before the next budget for fiscal 2006-07.

The consultation started with the high officials from the NBR as per schedule, but the minister summoned the commissioners from different zones halfway through the meeting as he felt the urgency of greater revenue earning in view of the higher expenditure that put a strain on the exchequer.

The minister instructed the field officers to intensify their collection drive as per budget instructions.

Saifur told reporters that the government would have to cut ADP by 8 per cent amid resource constraints due to excessive spending on fuel oil.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Criminal case filed against chief whip's son

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A criminal case was filed yesterday against chief whip's son Khondaker Akhter Hamid Paban and four others on charges of extortion and attempts to grab the complainant's house using forged documents.

The other accused in the case are Masud, Fancy Sohel, Harun-ur-Rashid and Awalur Rahman Hassan.

Paban, however, has denied the charges brought against him.

On hearing, Metropolitan Magistrate Syed Mohammad Mujibul Haq directed the officer-in-charge (OC) of Kotwali Police Station in Dhaka to register the case on investigation.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4