

## Finance adviser asks bankers not to harass clients

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Adviser Dr Mirza Azizul Islam yesterday asked bankers not to harass their clients by taking advantage of the sense of uncertainty triggered by the ongoing anti-corruption drive.

There have been numerous reports that the bank officials are discouraging disbursements of credit, which must not be done, he warned the banks while addressing a launching ceremony of a project titled "Remittance and Payments Partnership (RPP)" at Hotel Sheraton.

The three-year long project will be implemented by Bangladesh Bank and the UK Department for International Development with a

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## BOU VC Bari removed for corruption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Open University (BOU) Vice Chancellor Dr Ershadul Bari was removed yesterday following a University Grants Commission (UGC) report against his irregularities and corruption.

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed approved the removal order yesterday, sources said.

A probe committee led by UGC Member Prof Tareq Samsur Rehman held Dr Bari responsible for a series of irregularities and corruption and submitted the primary report to education ministry on Monday.

In the primary report, UGC recommended that the ministry

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## Detention of ex-minister Mosharraf declared illegal

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the government to explain in ten days why the detention of former health minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain should not be declared illegal.

After hearing on a habeas corpus petition filed by Mosharraf's son challenging the detention order, a division bench comprising Justice MA Wahhab Mian and Justice M Emdadul Huq passed the order.

The army-led joint forces arrested Mosharraf, also a BNP stalwart, at his residence in the

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Prayer Timing		
March 16		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-00	5-35
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-14	6-18
Esha	7-45	8-15
Source: Islamic Foundation		

# Qaeda man claims 9/11 responsibility

REUTERS, Washington

al-Qaeda suspect Khalid Sheikh Mohammed has claimed he organised the September 11 attacks on the United States and a string of others, according to the transcript of a military hearing at the US detention camp in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, released on Wednesday.

"I was responsible for the 9/11 Operation, from A to Z," Mohammed, speaking through a personal representative, said according to the transcript of the hearing on Saturday at the US military's Guantanamo Bay prison camp in Cuba.

Mohammed, a Pakistani national, also said he was responsible for a 1993 attack on New York's World Trade Centre, a nightclub bombing in Bali, Indonesia, an attempt to down two American airplanes using shoe bombs and other attacks.

During the hearing, held to determine whether he meets the US definition of an enemy combatant, Mohammed also seemed to indicate he had been mistreated in US custody.

Mohammed is among 14 prisoners identified by US authorities as "high-value" terrorism suspects and transferred to Guantanamo last year from secret CIA prisons abroad.

US officials have said Mohammed, arrested in Pakistan in March 2003 and handed over to US custody, was the mastermind of the September 11, 2001, attacks that killed nearly 3,000 people, destroyed the World Trade Centre and damaged the Pentagon.

Mohammed spoke both on his own and through his representative, a member of the US military.

"I was the operational director for Sheikh Usama (Osama) Bin Laden for the organizing, planning, follow-

up and execution of the 9/11 operation," he said through his representative.

Mohammed's full statement claimed responsibility for 28 separate attacks or plots. It also said he shared responsibility for three other plots, including one to assassinate

Pope John Paul in the Philippines and another to kill Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf.

The transcript of the closed hearing had been edited by US officials, a practice the Pentagon said was necessary to remove sensitive security information.

Mohammed, in a long statement in broken English, appeared to express some regret at the deaths caused by the September 11 attacks but suggested they were justified as part of a war against the United States.

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## Jt forces exchange views with local admin, leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The joint forces yesterday held meetings to exchange views with the civil administration, business leaders and newsmen on several issues including the spiralling price of daily essentials, recovery of grabbed government lands and problems in different government offices.

The joint forces held a meeting with Kulaura upazila administration at Kulaura upazila nirbahi officer's (UNO) office on Wednesday to solve different problems in government offices in the upazila, reports our Moulvibazar correspondent.

Presided over by Kulaura UNO Abdul Qayum and addressed, among others, by Army Captain Sakib, the meeting decided to mark the grabbed lands of different departments.

As per the decision, Bangladesh Railway will complete their marking by March 21 and the Roads and Highways by March 24.

Besides, grabbed forest department lands except those presently

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## Mobile courts fine food shops, restaurants

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mobile courts in the capital yesterday fined a number of food manufacturers, a restaurant, a hospital and a kerosene seller for a range of irregularities.

A mobile court led by Metropolitan Magistrate Abdur Rauf Khan raided Yakub Foods and Agro Ltd in Shyampur area, issued arrest warrants against its two owners and fined three of its officials Tk 50,000 each for multiple counts of violations of Pure Food Ordinance.

The violations included operating without BSTI approval, manufacturing substandard juice and pickles, employing child workers, workers handling foods without gloves, chemical ingredients stored in unlabeled containers and for not having any chemist.

The same mobile court fined Hirajhil Hotel in Motijheel Tk 20,000 after it found unhygienic

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# 2,600 acres of govt land freed from grabbers in 2 dists

### Recovered land include 2,000 acres of forestland

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The joint forces have so far recovered around 2,600 acres of government land worth Tk 122 crore, which were grabbed by influential quarters, in Mymensingh and Netrakona districts following the promulgation of the state of emergency.

Brigadier General Anwarul Azim of 77 Brigade said this at a views exchange meeting with journalists at Momenshahi Cantonment yesterday.

Anwarul said the joint forces recovered 500 acres of khas land worth around Tk 97 crore in Mymensingh district and around 29 acres of land in Netrakona worth about Tk 8 crore. He said over 2,000

acres of forestland have been recovered at Phulbaria upazila during the last week.

Progress and achievements of the ongoing drives of the joint forces were also discussed during the meeting. The army-led joint forces also conducted drives against land grabbers, hoarders, ringleaders, corrupt political leaders and businessmen.

Anwarul said arrear bills of gas, electricity, water supply and telephone bills worth around Tk 17 crore were also realised during the drives.

Major Shahidul Islam, Major Rahat and journalists from Netrakona and Mymensingh were present during the meeting.

## 2 Rab killing suspects killed in 'crossfire'

JU CORRESPONDENT

Two people who were suspected to have links with the killing of two Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel at Amin Bazar on March 3 were killed in crossfire during a shootout between their accomplices and members of Rab in Savar early yesterday.

The dead were identified as Adnan, 23, son of Abdul Sobhan of Sherpur, and Baset, son of Hares Ali of Borodeshi in Savar. Police sources claimed both were members of "Gangchil Bahini", a notorious criminal group of Amin Bazar.

The two were caught in the crossfire at Modhumoti Model Town around 4:00am yesterday when Rab-11, after having had their confessional statements, raided the area along with them to recover illegal firearms. As Rab personnel went there, accomplices of Adnan and Baset opened fire on the elite force. Rab members retaliated and a firefight ensued, sources said.

Adnan received four bullets in

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# Lankans cruise

SPORTS REPORTER

Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene and lynchpin Kumar Sangakkara thrived to score half-centuries on missed chances by debutants Bermuda in the opening game of Group B of Cricket World Cup at the Queen's Park Oval yesterday.

Opting to bat first, Sri Lanka rode on some poor fielding and insipid bowling to reach 194 for 2 in 34 overs.

Saleem Mukuddem removed the dangerous Jayasuriya - though that was thanks to the batsman's indiscretion, cutting uppishly to point - and should have had Mahela Jayawardene for a first-ball duck. He induced the airy drive but watched in anguish as Dwayne 'Sluggo' Leverock grassed a fairly regulation catch at first slip. Kevin Hurdle, standing almost

six-and-a-half feet tall and running in with an easy action, extracted steeppling bounce and jammed Sanath Jayasuriya's left index finger - but lost his run-up and direction soon after as he bowled fourteen deliveries in his second over.

Those were the only action in the morning but skipper Jayawardene (57) and Sangakkara (58) cashed in the loose bowling and fielding. Sangakkara struck three boundaries in his innings while his captain had struck four boundaries and a six.

The most disappointing factor of the match was the lack of enthusiasm from the locals as only a few hundreds showed up at the Oval.

Away in Jamaica, another debutant Ireland scored quickly but saw wickets tumble after being put in by Zimbabwe captain Prosper

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## Hindu rituals for success of Tigers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A social organization of Hindu youths in Moulvibazar will organise a "Jagyo," (oblation) today to seek divine blessings for the Tigers ahead of their World Cup match against India on Saturday.

Bangladesh meet India in a Group B encounter at the Queens Park Oval in Trinidad and Tobago and the match has sparked of excitement across both borders although the former world champions India are heavily favoured to prevail. However Bangladesh's victory over New Zealand in a practice match last week have made the public very hopeful about their chances.

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## World powers agree on new Iran sanctions

AP, United Nations

A proposed new package of sanctions against Iran for enriching uranium appeared headed to the UN Security Council after ambassadors for six world powers resolved remaining differences.

The six-nation show of unity would be unlikely to meet strong opposition from the other 10 members on the council, which must approve the measures. A vote was expected in the days to come.

"We have an agreement in principle based on some additional

changes that were introduced and presented today by some delegations," acting US Ambassador Alejandro Wolff said Wednesday.

He said the new elements still needed to be approved by government officials in the five countries that hold permanent council seats the US, Russia, China, France and Britain.

But he and other envoys expressed confidence the package would be presented to the council on Thursday with support from

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