

Polls within 2008
Reiterates chief adviser UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday said the general election could be held within 2008 as per the chief election commissioner's announcement for the possible time requisite for preparing voter ID card or voter list with photographs.

He spoke about the tentative timeframe for the polls while talking to Canadian High Commissioner Barbara Richardson when she made a courtesy call on him at his office.

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Ex-BNP MP Abul Hossain sent to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Barisal Divisional Special Tribunal yesterday sent Abul Hossain Khan, Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal vice-president and former BNP law-maker, to jail for failing to deposit the ammunition of his pistol within the government stipulated timeframe.

Sources said as per government instructions Abul Hossain Khan surrendered his licensed pistol, without the ammunition, at Bakerganj Police Station on

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Rejoinder, our reply

Power Development Board (PDB) has sent a rejoinder to a news item published in The Daily Star on May 13 under the headline '16 town power distribution project, PDB spends Tk 271 crore without approval'.

The rejoinder said the revised Development Project Proforma (DPP) was approved for the project on April 26 last year with a revised cost of Tk 426.23 crore, and Tk 300 crore had been spent till May 13.

It said the Ecneec, as per recommendation of the Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Department (IMED), approved

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Prayer Timing		
May 21		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-40	6-45
Esha	8-00	8-30
Source: Islamic Foundation		

DEATH OF YOUTH IN RAB ACTION

Torture marks found on victim's body, protests go on

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Thousands of locals brought out a procession at the Rajshahi city suburb of Chhotobongram Purbopara yesterday as the body of Quamrul Islam Majnu, who was allegedly tortured to death by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel, was handed over to his family 36 hours after his death.

Meanwhile, the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate yesterday sent three people who were

arrested in connection with the Majnu murder case filed on Saturday night with Boalia Police Station to jail custody.

Investigation officer (IO) of the case Sub-inspector Manjurul Haque Akkhand arrested Zahurul Islam, Baser Ali and Ali Hossain of Chapainawabganj and produced them before the court.

A magistrate-led probe body prepared Manju's inquest report noting that his body had innumerable marks of torture.

The body of Majnu was taken to his home around 2:15pm yesterday after an autopsy by a three-member medical board. His loved ones burst into tears and locals, who gathered at his home since morning, became angry when the body reached there.

Minutes later a huge procession paraded the 2km under-construction bypass with his body chanting slogans against Rab and the caretaker government. They

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Khaleda sick

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP chairperson and former prime minister Khaleda Zia is suffering from high blood pressure and diabetes.

"She has very high blood pressure and also is suffering from diabetes related complications," a party source said yesterday quoting Khaleda Zia's doctor who had visited her on Saturday.

The detail of her physical

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8,000 chickens culled for bird flu

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

District administration in collaboration with joint forces culled around 8,000 free ranged fowls and layer chickens at around 400 households of eight villages and in three poultry farms in Domar upazila since Saturday night.

This was the largest chicken

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Investment package good enough for oil companies

Says outgoing Chevron chief

SHARIER KHAN

Outgoing Chief of Chevron Bangladesh Andrew L Fawthrop believes that Bangladesh's investment package is good enough to attract oil companies in the third round bidding -- but it would have to ensure an 'efficient employment of the current policies'.

"The basic investment policy [of Bangladesh] is very well thought out and there is a good set of working conditions. Unfortunately that slows down due to too much bureaucracy," said Fawthrop, who has also been the longest serving chief executive officer (CEO) of Chevron Bangladesh [previously Unocal Bangladesh].

In an interview with The Daily

Star last week prior to his departure from the country, Fawthrop pointed out that the government has to understand that the bidding



Andrew L Fawthrop

round is a marketing issue and therefore Bangladesh will have to have a good understanding of the world market.

He noted that Bangladesh has been immensely benefited by the production sharing contract (PSC) with his company, which took all the risks and invested everything needed. Under PSC, with free gas given to Petrobangla as profit share, Chevron's gas, from all its fields, costs less than a dollar for most of the lifetime of gas production from these fields.

Serving in Bangladesh from late 2002 amid a gas export controversy created by his company, Fawthrop led Chevron to become the biggest and the most cost effective foreign

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7 US soldiers killed in Iraq bombing

AFP, Baghdad

Seven US soldiers and their interpreter were killed by two different roadside bombs in Iraq, the US military said yesterday.

In western Baghdad, six soldiers and an interpreter were killed in a single blast on Saturday while patrolling the capital in search of weapons and bomb-making materials.

Increased US patrols as part of the new Baghdad security plane to regain control of the violent capital have resulted in a sharp spike in military casualties over the past few months.

In the southern city of Diwaniyah, a roadside bomb tore through a US military vehicle killing one soldier and wounding two others also on Saturday.

At least 15 US servicemen have been reported killed just this weekend and 76 so far this month,

putting May on track to be one of the bloodiest months in the four-year-old conflict.

The deaths bring the total US casualty toll since the March 2003 US-led invasion to 3,419 according to an AFP count based on Pentagon figures.

Earlier two people were killed and another 10 wounded when a car bomb went off next to a gas station near the Iraqi interior ministry in central Baghdad on Sunday, security officials said.

Hours earlier, another car bomb exploded in northeastern Baghdad near the Shia stronghold of Sadr City, wounding five people, one of them seriously.

Two Iraqi policemen were wounded in a roadside bomb attack and an Iraqi army soldier was injured in clashes outside the northern city of Kirkuk, officials said.

Benazir vows to return for Pak elections

AFP, London

Exiled former Pakistani prime minister Benazir Bhutto vowed to return to the country for the forthcoming elections, in an interview published yesterday, despite President Pervez Musharraf ruling it out.

Pakistan's military ruler insisted Friday that Benazir Bhutto and fellow exiled former prime minister Nawaz Sharif would not be allowed to return ahead of the general election due later this year or in early 2008.

But Benazir Bhutto, who leads

the popular Pakistan People's Party, told the British newspaper The Sunday Telegraph: "No matter what, I'm going back this year."

The 53-year-old went into exile in 1998 over corruption cases pending against her and her husband. She faces arrest and possible imprisonment if she returns.

Musharraf, 63, suspended chief justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry on March 9 on misconduct charges, which provoked a wave of deadly protests.

Clashes erupted between rival political activists in the southern

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CHITTAGONG TEST

Third day rained off

BISHWAJIT ROY from Chittagong

Rain continued to play havoc with the first Test as play was called off without a single ball bowled on the third day at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday.

The ground was waterlogged following overnight and persistent morning showers which forced umpires Daryl Harper and Billy Doctrove to abandon the day's play at 11 o'clock in the morning.

Not only did rain disrupt the first day's play, it allowed only 20 overs to be bowled on the second day.

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PHOTO: STAR

A woman carries a girl to school wading through stagnant rainwater on Greenway Road in Moghbazar in the capital yesterday.