

KIDNAPPING
Danida driver rescued, official still untraced
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

One of the kidnapped Danida staff was rescued yesterday from a jungle near the Bangladesh-Myanmar border after three days of the kidnap.

Danida driver Md Hanif was rescued unconscious some 40 kilometres away from Kya Buri Para under Thanchi upazila in the district where Danida Programme Officer Shahid Suman and he had been kidnapped.

Shahid could not be traced as yet.

Law enforcers arrested a few people while rescuing Hanif but did not reveal their identity.

An unconfirmed local source, however, claimed that all the arrested belong to the indigenous community of Modok and Remacry areas in the upazila.

More troops of army have

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CHEATING CASE
Ex-BNP lawmaker
Matiur Talukder gets 3yrs in jail
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A court in Barguna yesterday sentenced former BNP lawmaker Matiur Rahman Talukdar to three years rigorous imprisonment in a cheating case.

The court also fined MatiurTk10,000, in default he is to suffer another six months in jail.

Nizam Peyada of Nangapara village under Amtali upazila filed the case against Matiur, also the general secretary of BNP district unit, with Amtali upazila magistrate's court on March 29.

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21 killed as Baghdad bus stop bombed

3 British, one American soldiers slain, 20 beheaded bodies found

AFP, AP, Baghdad

A rush-hour car bomb attack at a Baghdad bus stop killed 21 people and wounded dozens yesterday, hours after the British military lost three soldiers in a pre-dawn road-side bombing in southern Iraq.

Twenty beheaded bodies were discovered Thursday on the banks of the Tigris River southeast of Baghdad.

The beheaded remains were found in the Sunni Muslim village of Um al-Abeed, near the city of Salman Pak, which lies 14 miles southeast of Baghdad.

A parked car exploded next to

commuters waiting at the stop in the capital's southern Al-Bayaa neighbourhood, killing 21 people and wounding 42, hospital and security officials said.

Iraqi security officials said the explosion occurred at around 8:15 am (0415 GMT) and expected the death toll to rise. A medic in the city's Yarmuk hospital confirmed receiving the bodies of 21 people killed in the blast.

The targeted neighbourhood, a mixed area in southwest Baghdad, often sees clashes between Shiite militiamen and Sunni insurgents, and has been hit by several car bombs during Iraq's sectarian

conflict.

Although the area lies in the mostly Sunni western half of the city, US commanders there say the Shiite Mahdi Army militia maintains an intimidating presence and has driven many Sunnis from their homes.

The evictions have brought retaliatory car bombs and an escalating cycle of violence, despite the increased presence of US and Iraqi forces following the launch of a Baghdad security crackdown in February.

The increased presence has failed to prevent continued

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CAgreets Brown
UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhruddin Ahmed has congratulated Gordon Brown on his assumption of office of the prime minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

In a message of felicitation yesterday, the CA said, "Your unanimous selection as the leader of the Labour Party and to the highest office of her majesty's government is a testimony to the trust of the people of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland in your able leadership."

He expressed his confidence that Bangladesh will find a close

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PHOTO: STAR

A good number of patients crowd the outdoor section of Birdem Hospital in the capital as the strike of the hospital's doctors called off yesterday.

Khaleda yet to receive copy of BNP reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, who is greatly annoyed with the party's reformists, is yet to receive the copy of the 15-point reform proposal that apparently aimed to dislodge her, as the cantonment authorities did not allow the person who carrying the document to her.

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan along with a good number of top ranking party leaders on June 25 announced the reform proposal for the party and over 100 ex-lawmakers of the party supported Bhuiyan's move.

A highly placed source close to

Khaleda Zia told The Daily Star yesterday that she is very angry with the reformist leaders, particularly Mannan Bhuiyan, as none even talked with her on the reform issue during the preparation of the draft and it was not shown to her before the announcement.

"She [Khaleda] was totally ignored ...she was not at all consulted during the entire process," the source said.

After his formal announcement of the reform proposal through a press conference, Mannan Bhuiyan sent a junior leader with a copy of the reform proposal to

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EC ready to sit with parties to talk reform Says CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda yesterday said the Election Commission (EC) is ready to talk with the political parties about the draft proposals for electoral reforms despite the ban on indoor politics.

Speaking to reporters at his office, he said the commission will invite the political parties as soon as the ban goes.

Meanwhile, Jatiya Party (Nilu) Chairman Shawkat Hossain Nilu

and his colleagues met the election commissioners yesterday afternoon.

It was for the first time that any political party has a talk with EC about the proposals for changes in the electoral laws.

Earlier on Wednesday, Election Commissioner Brig Gen (ret'd) M Sakhawat Hossain said the commission has no problem sitting with the representatives of the political parties to discuss the electoral reforms.

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PHOTO: STAR

The photo shows fish poisoned by Dhaka Wasa to prevent their sale at city markets as the fish were cultivated in the contaminated water of the lagoon at Pagla in Narayanganj.

2 more cases filed against Ctg mayor
STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed two more cases against Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury and seven others for embezzlement of Tk 85.25 lakh in the name of two projects.

ACC Deputy Director Abu Mohammad Arif Siddique lodged the cases with Kotwali Police Station.

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UN inspectors visit North Korean nuke reactor

AFP, Seoul

A team of UN inspectors travelled yesterday to North Korea's key atomic reactor to assess the size of the task they will face in monitoring its shutdown under a nuclear disarmament deal.

It is the first time in nearly five

years that International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors will have had access to the Yongbyon reactor, a source for potentially bomb-making material.

In a related development, Seoul announced it would hold talks for the first time on supplying

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Good news for coin savers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Bank (BB) is considering an offer of monetary incentives in exchange of metal coins with the banks in a bid to get the coins back in the market.

BB Executive Director Khandaker Mazharul Haque yesterday told the reporters that the market is suffering from acute crisis of coins despite huge release of coins of taka one, two and five.

Talking about the reason for such crisis, he said that people tend

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Verdict of Mir Nasir's graft case July 4

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Judgement of a graft case against detained former state minister for civil aviation and tourism Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin and his son barrister Mir Mohammad Helal Uddin will be delivered on July 4.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday pressed charges against detained

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Rejoinders

Md Nuru Safa, proprietor of SA Electronics, has sent a rejoinder to The Daily Star report headlined "Houses up for grabs" published on June 6.

He claimed that he had bought the house from Rajuk legally as the highest bidder. He also said that the house is registered in his name and he has been looking after the house himself. Arafat Rahman Koko has nothing to do with the house, he added.

In a separate rejoinder, Obaidul Karim, chairman of Orion Group, said the allegations made in the report that he had made a deal with Goutam Chakraborty, former state minister for water resource ministry, to buy a government house is untrue.

According to the rejoinder, Karim had no involvement in the auction of that property.

Prayer Timing		
June 29		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-54	6-58
Esha	8-17	8-45
Source: Islamic Foundation		