



Venus wins 4th Wimbledon title
AP, Wimbledon

Venus Williams won her fourth Wimbledon title yesterday, then basked in cheers on the court that always seems to inspire her best tennis.

The heavily favoured Williams beat surprising finalist Marion Bartoli 6-4, 6-1 for her sixth Grand Slam title. She also won Wimbledon in 2000, 2001 and 2005.

At number 31, Williams became the lowest-ranked women's winner in Wimbledon history. Plagued in recent years by injuries that sent her ranking sliding, she rediscovered her championship form this week at the All England Club.

En route to the final she lost a total of 17 games while beating 2004 Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova on Wednesday, 2004 U.S. Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova on Thursday and French Open runner-up Ana Ivanovic on Friday.

Venus served out the first game at love, then broke serve when Bartoli double-faulted. They played 19 minutes before Bartoli

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Curbing political control must for police reform

The Daily Star roundtable told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday said curtailling political government's control over the police, ensuring facilities to enable the force work lawfully and making it a pro-people organisation should be the main thrusts of the police reforms.

They suggested that the police reforms should include training of policemen for changing traditional mindset with special emphasis on issues like human rights, their salary hike, lessening workload,

increasing allocation for maintenance of police stations and gender sensitive policing.

Several speakers came heavily on the political governments for bringing frequent changes in the top post of the police, which they said broke the chain of command in the force and contributed to loss of loyalty of subordinate police officers to the bosses.

The speakers stressed the need for bringing all the communities, especially vulnerable ones, for their views before finalising the drafted Police Reform Programme (PRP)

to make it successful, sustainable and people-friendly. A committee has prepared the draft for police reforms with the assistance of UNDP, DFID and European Union.

Policing the police and making them prepared to deal with the defects they are facing is required along with listening to their grievances, they said.

They emphasised police's immunity from political control through protecting their interest and judicial oversee so that they

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A roundtable on Police Reform: Some Immediate and Long-term Goals in progress at The Daily Star office in the capital yesterday.

Democracy will be at stake if 2 top leaders left out of reforms

Says Motia Chy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) leader Motia Chowdhury yesterday strongly opposed the idea of excluding Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia from their party posts in the name of reforms as the move might threaten democracy and give way to religious militancy.

It will be a wrong idea if anyone thinks of practising democracy in the country by excluding the two leaders [Hasina & Khaleda], the AL presidium member said referring to a feature published in The Wall Street Journal that also predicted that religious militancy will be encouraged and strengthened in the country if the two top leaders of the two major political parties

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Musharraf attack linked to mosque siege

Says cleric, claims 70 students killed in fighting

AFP, Islamabad

A Pakistani cleric said a bid to shoot down President Pervez Musharraf's plane was apparently in revenge for the bloody government siege of his mosque, in which he alleged that 70 students had died.

The claim came as fighting intensified on the fifth day of the standoff between radicals holed up in the bullet-scarred Red Mosque in Islamabad and security forces, with gunfire and blasts echoing around the city.

It indicates that military ruler Musharraf, a key US ally, faces a

serious backlash from Islamic militants for his determination to drive out mullah Abdul Rashid Ghazi and hundreds of his diehard followers.

"I received a telephone call yesterday from a man I did not know," who offered his "congratulations" before news of Friday's attack on Musharraf's aircraft became public, Ghazi told AFP by telephone.

"He said, 'I fired at Musharraf's plane just a while ago.' He said that Musharraf survived," said Ghazi, the deputy leader of the mosque.

Security officials said earlier they were probing possible links

between the operation and the failed bid to shoot down the plane as it took off from a military airbase at Rawalpindi, near Islamabad.

Musharraf has survived at least three other militant attempts to kill him.

Police have said they found two anti-aircraft guns and a machine gun on the roof of a house near the airbase after the attack.

An experienced anti-terrorism official said the shooting was probably planned in advance "but because of the events of (the) Red Mosque they might have advanced the plan and faltered."

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Nearly a million marooned in W Bengal floods

AFP, Kolkata

Floods in eastern India have left nearly a million people stranded, authorities said Saturday, as the nationwide death toll from torrential monsoon rains hit 655.

"All rivers are flowing above the danger level," said Mortaza Hossain, relief minister in West Bengal state, which has been hard hit by the rains.

"Rescuers have evacuated some 6,500 people," he told AFP.

The deluge has marooned almost a million people in 3,000 villages in coastal areas of the state, the minister said.

The monsoon, which sweeps India from June to September, often causes flooding and deaths in the densely populated country of a

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Trial train arrives from Kolkata today

30-member Indian team to come to talk train service with Dhaka

UNB, Chuadanga

A trial train, carrying a 30-member Indian official delegation, arrives at Darshana station near the border today.

The team comprising senior officials from Indian home and railway ministries will hold talks on Dhaka-Kolkata train service with Bangladesh officials in the capital on July 9-10.

A delegation from Bangladesh will go to Kolkata later this month for the final round of talks before opening the train service sometime late August, officials said.

Darshana Station Master Belal Hossain told the news agency that

the Indian team will arrive at 10:40am. Railway and customs officials will receive the guests and together inspect the arrangements for immigration and customs checks at Darshana. Later, the delegation will leave for Dhaka for formal talks.

Bangladesh Railway officials said passengers from Bangladesh will board the train at Kurmitola station in Dhaka. The train will run non-stop up to the border where the engine and crew will be changed for onward journey to Kolkata.

"It is yet to be decided if the customs and immigration checks will be done at Kurmitola or Darshana station," said an official.

Hearing of Lobi's graft case today

UNB, Dhaka

Former BNP lawmaker Ali Asgar Lobi, already sentenced to eight years' imprisonment for tax evasion, now faces a graft case along with his detained wife.

The charge hearing of the graft case takes place today at the Special Judge's Court.

On March 21, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) filed the case with Gulshan Police Station, accusing Lobi and his wife of concealing information in their wealth statement submitted to the commission.

Lobi was arrested on February 6 while his wife on June 26.



People crowd a road at Malibagh Chowdhurypara in the capital yesterday as a garment factory catches fire injuring 11 workers.

Moroccan security forces on maximum terror alert

AFP, Rabat

Morocco's security forces were on maximum alert yesterday after "established terror threats" by what experts said was the regional branch of al-Qaeda.

Interior Minister Chakib Benmoussa informed the country's security experts on Friday of a "current threat" against the north-west African country.

The alert demands the full mobilisation of the security services and the "redoubling of vigilance," the interior ministry said after the meeting.

Morocco has been on edge since a series of suicide bomb attacks earlier this year which killed a police officer and injured 45 people.

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11 injured in fire at garment factory

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A devastating blaze at Envoy Garments Ltd factory in Malibagh Chowdhurypara in the capital yesterday left at least 11 people including two firefighters injured.

Most of the wounded were workers of the factory who suffered injuries as they jumped on to the roof of an adjacent four-storied building from the roof of the five-storey Envoy Garments Ltd building.

Rabeya Akhter, Rehana, Fatema, Umme Kulsum, Russell and Jewel were among the wounded workers. The names of the rest of the injured could not be known immediately. Two firefighters who were injured in the incidents are Ashraf Alam and Mohammad Jashim. The injured were admitted to different local hospitals and clinics.

Factory workers said the fire started from a boiler on the third floor around 5:15pm and they attempted to douse the flames with fire extinguishers.

"As the fire started to spread despite our attempts to douse it, we ran for cover and in a few minutes the blaze engulfed the entire third and fourth floors and gutted almost all machines

and fabrics." Quality Inspector of Envoy Garments Ltd Mohammad Rony told The Daily Star.

Factory workers said a number of them suffered injuries when they tried to rush out using the staircase where some of their colleagues had already piled fabrics in order to save those from the fire.

Eleven fire engines from Ramna, Tejgaon and Khilgaon stations rushed to the scene and brought the flames under control in one hour.

Managing Director of Envoy Garments Ltd Abdus Salam Murshedi alleged that the firefighters took a long time to arrive at the spot. He claimed his workers had already extinguished the fire before the firefighters arrived.

Deputy Director (operation and maintenance) of Fire Service and Civil Defence Sheikh Mohammad Mizanur Rahman said heavy traffic was the reason behind their delayed arrival. He also said they could not go upstairs quickly enough as the staircase was blocked with piles of fabric.

A large number of policemen, Rapid Action Battalion and army personnel had rushed to the scene soon after the fire broke out.

1 dies, 4 go missing in boat capsized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

One person died and four went missing when a boat with 22 passengers aboard capsized in Harinarain Canal under Sunamganj district yesterday.

The dead was identified as Ripa Akhtar, 42. The missing passengers are Ripa's three children—Sharif, 6, Sourav, 7, and Shahi, 9, and 45-year-old Doyaful Bibi.

The boat sailed for Siddhirganj of Biswambharpur upazila from Gourarang of Sunamganj Sadar upazila at about 5:00pm. After half an hour, it was caught in strong current and sank in the canal.

Locals and police found Ripa's body floating on the canal at 8:00pm and retrieved it, but the rest four, including Ripa's three sons, remained missing as of 9:00pm yesterday.

The other passengers, however, managed to swim ashore. Of them, three were admitted to Biswambharpur Upazila Health Complex.

Robbery in guise of Rab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified criminals in the guise of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members looted cash and gold ornaments worth Tk 4.56 lakh from a house at Hazaribagh of old Dhaka early hours yesterday.

The police quoting Rab said it was a robbery incident because the elite force did not send any team in that area for any operation that time.

A group of five to eight people wearing black jacket inscribed with Rab reached the house at 62, Bhagalpur of Hazaribagh at around 12:00 midnight in a black microbus and searched for Sukumar, Govinda and two tenants of the house, according to Shihir Kumar, younger brother of Govinda.

The robbers said they came to capture Govinda and Sukumar, owners of a jewellery workshop, on charge of illegal gold business.

Shihir said four of the disguised Rab members entered the house while the others stood guard outside.

He said the robbers tied hands and legs of Govinda and five other family members before robbing. They also beat up them during the half-an-hour robbery, Shihir added.

The robbers took Govinda with them after blindfolding him and beat him inside the microbus. Later, they left Govinda near Hazaribagh sluice gate and asked him to run or else he would get caught in crossfire.

The family members filed a case with Hazaribagh Police Station yesterday.

Prayer Timing		
July 8		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-10	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-55	7-00
Esha	8-17	8-45
Source: Islamic Foundation		