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RANGS BUILDING Another body recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rescuers took out one more decomposed body from inside the rubble of Rangs Bhaban yesterday which caved in partly December 8, raising the death toll from the collapse to five.

Seven more dead bodies are believed to have been trapped in the debris.

The body was identified as of Farid Sheikh, 32, a construction labourer. Rajuk workers retrieved it from the fifth-floor wreckage at around 9:30am.

Rescuers took out the other four bodies on Thursday, when rescue operation began five days after the building imploded. No dead body was recovered Friday.

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Musharraf ends state of emergency

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf lifted his unpopular state of emergency yesterday, but only after a last-minute move to shore up his powers before general elections three weeks away.

Amid months of political turmoil and the stiffest challenges to his authority since he seized power in a 1999 coup, Musharraf ended emergency rule and restored the constitution, which he suspended on November 3.

His Western backers, notably the United States, had insisted on

an end to the emergency before the elections, hoping to quell a wave of popular discontent in a nuclear-armed country central to the US "war on terror".

But Musharraf still faces accusations that he has effectively rigged the January 8 vote for parliament. Judges who opposed him have been dismissed and detained, and strict curbs on the media will remain in place.

"The emergency was revoked and the constitution was restored at 1:30pm today," Law Minister Afzal Haider told AFP.

"The lifting of the emergency

will ensure that parliamentary elections are free and fair," Haider said. He called the move a "victory for the people of Pakistan".

Musharraf was to address the nation live on television at 1500 GMT.

The president imposed emergency rule six weeks ago, citing a surge in attacks by Islamic militants as well as what he said was interference by the judiciary in running the country.

Thousands of people were jailed, uncooperative justices sacked and tough new curbs

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

1 killed, 12 hurt in filling station collapse

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

A construction engineer was killed and 12 workers were injured as an under construction concrete canopy of a CNG filling station collapsed on them at Kanchpur of Sonargaon upazila yesterday.

The dead was identified as Suruj Mian, 35, an assistant engineer of a construction firm. His body was pulled out at around 4:30pm. Rescue operation was going on till filing of this report at 7:22pm to ascertain if anyone else is trapped under the rubble.

Witnesses and workers said four columns and the shed of under construction OS Filling Station collapsed at around 12:30pm over

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Draft coal policy finalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The final draft of the coal policy discourages aggressive development of the country's coal sector and places national bodies into the driving seat to lead the sector by pushing private and foreign investors into the backseat.

Under this policy, private companies will not have sole ownership over any coal mining deal. They must come in as partners with a national coal mining company.

The committee on reviewing coal policy finalised its report on Friday clearing some ambiguities in the policy.

For instance, the committee opted for maintaining the existing

coal development royalty rate against the earlier suggestion to increase the rate.

The 10-member committee agreed not to increase the royalty rate considering the fate of the country's lone coal mine of Barapukuria, which would become bankrupt with the increased rate.

The earlier suggestion was to increase the royalty to over 20 per cent from the existing five to six per cent. A coalmine developer has to pay corporate tax at the rate of 35 per cent in addition to paying the royalty.

The committee however suggested that a committee headed by a state minister or equivalent rank

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

CA leaves to perform hajj today

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhruddin Ahmed leaves for Makkah via Jeddah this morning to perform hajj.

Fakhruddin's wife Neena Ahmed is accompanying him. Army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed and his spouse Nazneen

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Huji man held

UNB, Benapole

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested a member of Harkat-ul-Jihad Bangladesh (Huji) along with arms and ammunition at Porabari Narayanpur village here on Friday night.

The arrestee, Manirul Islam Madina, 45, is a close associate of

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Bhuiyan asks govt to prosecute war criminals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Demanding trial of the war criminals, senior BNP leader Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday said that the government should take initiative to try the war criminals, as it would not be possible for any individual to file cases now.

"It was possible to try the killers of martyred intellectuals earlier as there were a lot of supporting documents, but all the previous governments failed to do it," Bhuiyan, also the party standing committee member, observed.

He was speaking at a discussion meeting held at a community

centre in the city's Gulshan on the occasion of Victory Day.

This is the first time that such a demand was made by BNP, which was allied with Jamaat-e-Islami during Awami League rule in the movement against the then government and formed a coalition government with Jamaat after the 2001 general elections.

Jamaat is held responsible for its anti-liberation role in 1971.

Bhuiyan urged the Election Commission to hold the general elections quickly by completing the preparation of voter roll and carrying out necessary reforms.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7



PHOTO: STAR

A blaze at a South Begunbari slum in the capital yesterday, which burned 200 shanties to ashes leaving 10 people including a fire department official injured.

Climate deal sealed by US U-turn

UN talks set 2009 deadline for new pact

AFP, Nusa Dua

World climate negotiators set a 2009 deadline yesterday for a landmark treaty to fight global warming after two weeks of intense haggling led to a climbdown by an isolated United States.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who flew to the Indonesian island of Bali for a late appeal for flexibility, praised the deal as a "pivotal first step" to confront climate change, "the defining challenge of our time."

Following gruelling all-night talks, the conference of 190 nations

finally launched a process to negotiate a new treaty by when the UN Kyoto Protocol's commitments expire in 2012.

It comes after a year of stark warnings from Nobel-winning scientists, who say millions of people will be at risk of hunger, homelessness and disease by 2100 if temperatures keep rising at current rates.

The United States, the only major industrialised nation to reject the Kyoto treaty, reached a compromise with the European Union to avoid mentioning any

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Bird flu flares again in Asia

AP, AFP, Hanoi, Islamabad

Bird flu has resurfaced in parts of Asia, with human deaths reported in Indonesia, Myanmar, Pakistan and China and fresh outbreaks plaguing other countries during the winter months when the virus typically flares.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Prayer Timing

December 16

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-20	5-55
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-22	5-25
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

পদধ্বনি

নতুন বিজয়ের পথে, লক্ষ শহীদের পদধূলি বুকে, শুনি নতুন বিজয়ের পদধ্বনি।

Gallerie Apex

যে চোখ দেখেনি মুক্তিযুদ্ধ
দেখেছে বিজয়ের আনন্দ
সেই হাতে আজ উঠুক বেজে
সকল বিজয়ের ছন্দ।

মহান বিজয় দিবসে, যাদের আত্মত্যাগে পেয়েছি বিজয়, তাঁদেরকে জানাই শ্রদ্ধা।
যাদের কর্মযোগে আসবে অনেক বিজয়, তাদের জানাই অভিনন্দন।

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