



Track your shipments online

You can check the status of your shipments across the world in real time, stage by stage, through to delivery. Just log on to fedex.com/bd and you can track up to 30 FedEx shipments at a time.



Every Package Matters



Philips DAP ensures you the BEST Gift for loved ones



This offer is valid till stock lasts

WEDDING SEASON GIFT

TRANSFORM ELECTRONICS

Customer Care Centre: 885366-8, 01712-665463, Enquiry: 01711-404591, 01713-082479

Fakhruddin returns home

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhrudin Ahmed returned home yesterday morning after performing hajj.

On December 16, the chief adviser and Army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed left Dhaka for Jeddah to perform hajj.

A regular flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines carrying the CA landed at Zia International Airport at 10:40 am.

Law Adviser Mainul Hossain, Communications Adviser Maj Gen (Retd) MA Matin, Foreign Adviser Iftekar Ahmed Chowdhury, diplomats, chiefs of navy and air force and senior civil and military officials received the CA at the airport.

After performing hajj, the CA SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

THAI ELECTION

Pro-Thaksin party claims support to form coalition

AFP, Bangkok

Allies of ousted Thai premier Thaksin Shinawatra claimed yesterday they had enough support to form a coalition government, after falling short of a majority in the first polls since last year's coup.

The People Power Party (PPP), which has promised to bring Thaksin back from his self-imposed exile in Britain, looked set to win 232 of the 480 seats in parliament, according to an unofficial

count of all the ballots.

Analysts had forecast protracted hard bargaining with the smaller parties that won seats, but PPP secretary general Surapong Suebwonglee said they already had the support needed to form a government.

"Other parties have agreed to join a coalition, which would give us more than half of the seats in parliament," Surapong told reporters, but declined to name their future partners.

The generals who toppled Thaksin's twice-elected government have made little secret that they want to keep supporters of the self-made billionaire out of power, after trying for more than a year to erase his legacy.

PPP leader Samak Sundaravej declared late Sunday he would become the next prime minister "for sure", but his failure to win an absolute majority has forced him to woo small parties to form a coalition.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Amini, 8 others charged with looting house

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The charge sheet of a looting case against former lawmaker and chairman of a faction of Islami Oikyo Jote (IO) Mufti Fazlul Haque Amini and eight others was submitted yesterday.

Sub-inspector (SI) Kazi Barkat Ali of Lalbagh Police Station, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted the charge sheet against them to the Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court showing 27 people as prosecution witnesses.

The other accused are Mufti Tayyab, Moulana Hedayetullah, Mufti Abul Khair, Mohammad Ali SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Nepal set to abolish Hindu monarchy

Major political parties sign deal

AP, Kathmandu

Nepal's major political parties have agreed to abolish the world's last Hindu monarchy as part of a deal to bring former communist rebels back into the government, the one-time insurgents said yesterday.

While no timetable has been set for the communists to rejoin the government, the deal, signed Sunday, sets the stage for Nepal's transition to a full republic less than two years after the country's king was forced to cede his near dictatorial powers following weeks

of unrest.

The communists, who are known as the Maoists, ended their decade-long rebellion last year and later joined the country's interim government. But they withdrew in September, demanding the monarchy be immediately abolished.

The move plunged Nepal into a political crisis and threatened its transition to democracy.

On Monday, the former rebels were buoyant over the deal bringing them back into the fold. The deal stipulates the monarchy will SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Polls to 4 city corporations to be delayed

Says Brig Sakhawat

UNB, Dhaka

Elections to Rajshahi, Khulna, Sylhet and Barisal City Corporations will be held at the end of April next instead of March as the SSC examinations across the country have been deferred to March 27 due to the recent cyclone, said Election Commissioner Brig Gen (ret'd) M Sakhawat Hussain yesterday.

He, however, told journalists that the Election Commission (EC) would request the government, when it deems necessary, to create an appropriate environment SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Biman starts return hajj flights

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Biman Bangladesh Airlines yesterday began its operation of return hajj flights.

The first return flight landed in Zia International Airport (ZIA) in the capital at 4:30 am yesterday with 314 hajis on board, Biman sources said.

Some hajis complained of SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Prayer Timing		
December 25		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-25	6-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-24	5-27
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation



PHOTO: STAR

The first batch of this year's hajj pilgrims returns home from Saudi Arabia yesterday with others to follow soon. The photo was taken at Zia International Airport.

Pak polls campaign intensifies

AP, AFP, Sukkur

Pakistan's election campaign intensified Monday with the three top political leaders travelling across the country to rally supporters and lash out at President Pervez Musharraf just two weeks before a hard-fought parliamentary poll.

The elections, demanded by Pakistan's Western allies, are seen as a crucial step in restoring democracy here after Musharraf's November 3 declaration of emergency rule and his crackdown on the judiciary.

political opponents and the independent media. Musharraf lifted the state of emergency after six weeks.

Former prime ministers Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, who both returned from exile for the SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

DATELINE AFGHANISTAN

Fifty days in cave

PORIMOL PALMA, back from Bagharpara, Jessore

The caves in Afghan mountains where Noor Islam was captive for about two months were well kept with small entrances but wide rooms inside, where five to six people could easily sleep.

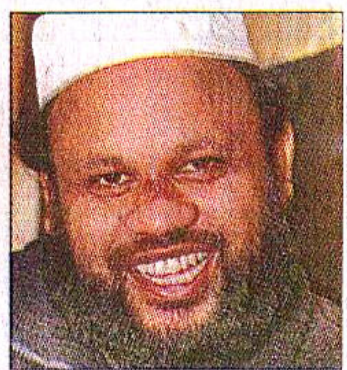
The abductors used to sleep all through the day and start their activities at dusk, said now released Brac Afghanistan's Regional Manager Noor Islam. The abductors talked among themselves in Pashto, whispering at times.

"I think there are many such caves prepared for specific purposes. I was in a cave for a month and 20 days," Noor Islam told The Daily Star.

He however said he does not know if his abductors were Taliban, because all males in Afghanistan are similarly clad,

keep beards, and pray regularly. It is difficult for foreigners to distinguish their affiliations by their attire, he said.

Noor, who joined Brac Afghanistan on December 22, 2005 and was abducted by armed men SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



Noor Islam

Fire again at BSEC Bhaban

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Panic gripped the staff of the offices housed in Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation (BSEC) building at Karwan Bazar in the capital following a fire in a room on the ground floor of the building last night.

The building houses several SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

job in your pocket

The Daily Star Classifieds
On Mobile or Computer
cellbazaar.com
Help: 01713238381-5
The Daily Star | www.gazette.gov.bd | www.cellbazaar.com

Bangladesh Business Awards

Inviting Nominations for

Bangladesh Business Awards 2007

Nomination Deadline January 15, 2008

Celebrating the 8th year

Celebrating the 8th year

Get the recognition of your business, nothing succeeds like success

Rules of Eligibility

The awardee should be involved in private business enterprise and must be a Bangladeshi citizen or ordinarily a resident in Bangladesh. He/she must have clean banking and tax records. There is no restriction on age or race. In case of Enterprise Award, only Bangladeshi companies will be considered with published balanced sheets. In case of Financial Institution Award, Bangladeshi and joint venture financial institutions will be considered with published balanced sheet. In case of joint venture financial institutions, a company incorporated in Bangladesh for carrying out business activities jointly by a Bangladeshi and foreign investors will be considered. The shares of the company are to be held by Bangladeshi and foreign shareholders as per the joint agreement. The Bangladeshi investor must have invested at the start-up capital of the company. Shareholding by Bangladeshi shareholder(s) as a nominee shareholder in a subsidiary company in Bangladesh of a 100% foreign owned company will not fall under this category.

Selection Process

An independent eleven-member jury panel comprising of leading intellectuals, business persons, academicians, lawyers, financial experts and eminent personalities with high social standing, credibility and prestige including CEO's of the two sponsoring organisations shall select the winners.

Criteria

Business Person of the Year

The nominee will be selected for his/her leadership, financial performance, personal qualities, managerial skills and contribution to Bangladesh's development. In financial performance, the nominee must have made outstanding contribution to his/her organization. In case of a public company, he/she must have contributed to a substantial increase in the returns on shareholders' funds. In case of a private company or sole proprietorship, he/she must have contributed to an improvement in return on capital invested. Personal qualities will include integrity, entrepreneurial abilities and personal leadership. Managerial skills will depend on depth of management, adaptability, tenacity, innovation, productivity, creativity and good labour management.

Outstanding Woman in Business

The nominee must be an entrepreneur who has proven her capability to successfully establish and run a business on her own. She must be a person of integrity and tenacity and her success should be a source of inspiration for others. She must be an example to others that women can be successful in business against all odds that they are faced with. Focus would also be given on her dynamism, innovation, determination, adaptability and depth of management.

Enterprise of the Year

Open to small and medium-sized companies, the nominee will be based on innovation, financial performance, productivity, company management and contribution to the community. Innovation will mean success of the company either in products, services or new markets. In financial performance/productivity, the enterprise must have made outstanding growth in profit. Company management will focus on creative management style in developing harmonious relations within the organisation.

Best Financial Institution of the Year

Open to Financial Institutions- Commercial Banks, Insurance Companies and Leasing Companies. The nomination will be based on innovation, financial performance, productivity, company management and contribution to the community. Innovation will mean the success of the institution in innovation of products, services or new markets. In financial performance or productivity the company must have an outstanding and sustainable growth in profit. The company must also have clean banking, client and tax records. In the area of management, the company must display an effective management style and have a viable organization structure. The company must have a track record of establishing and maintaining harmonious relations within the organization and set examples for the industry. The company should

have made positive contribution to Bangladesh's development and society through Corporate Social Responsibility programmes.

Previous Winners: 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005 & 2006

Business Person of the Year

Samson H. Chowdhury, Chairman, Square Group, 2000
Anisur Rahman Sinha, Chairman, Opex Group, 2001
Syed Manzur Elahi, Chairman, Apex Group, 2002
Mohammed Mizanur Rahman, Chairman, PHP Group, 2003
Kazi Zahedul Hasan, Managing Director, Kazi Farms Ltd., 2004
Fazlur Rahman, Chairman, City Group of Industries, 2005
Md. Nasir Uddin, Managing Director, Pacific Jeans Limited, 2006

Outstanding Woman in Business

Salina Akther, Proprietor, Aakor, 2000
Rehana Kashem, Proprietor, Saatrong Handicrafts & Fashion, 2001
Geetara Safiya Choudhury, Chairman & Managing Director, Adcomm Ltd., 2002
Monjulika Chakma, Proprietor, Bain Textiles, 2003
Selina Quader, Proprietor, Agro Concern, 2004
Hasina Newaz, Proprietor, Orchid Printers, 2005
Zinet Fatema, Proprietor, Jahan Metal, 2006

Enterprise of the Year

Concord Engineers & Construction Ltd., 2000
Rahimafrooz (Bangladesh) Ltd., 2000
Otohi Ltd., 2001
Micro Electronics Ltd., 2002
M. M. Ispahani Ltd., 2003
Incepta Pharmaceuticals Ltd., 2004
BRB Cable Industries Ltd., 2005
ACME Laboratories Ltd., 2006

Best Financial Institution of the Year

Dutch-Bangla Bank Limited, 2006

The decisions of the Jury shall be final and binding and cannot be contested. Please fill the attached form and send it to:

BBA Secretariat c/o DHL EXPRESS:
4-5th Floor, Molly Capita Center, Road-127, Holding-76,
Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh
Tel: 9895810, Fax: 8823248, e-mail: bbawards@dhl.com

The Nomination Goes to...

Business Person of the Year 2007

Nominee: _____
Company: _____
Why: _____

Outstanding Woman in Business of the Year 2007

Nominee: _____
Company: _____
Why: _____

Enterprise of the Year 2007

Nominee: _____
Company: _____
Why: _____

Best Financial Institution of the Year 2007

Nominee: _____
Company: _____
Why: _____

Nominator: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
E-mail: _____
Fax: _____

Nomination Deadline January 15, 2008