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BRAC BANK HEIST Masterminds captured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Detective Branch (DB) of police have arrested 27 people including three they identify as masterminds behind the January jewellery heist at a BRAC Bank branch in the city.

Shukkur Ali, who the investigators regard as the brains of the gang, was nabbed along with his

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Govt won't pass any anti-Islam law

Law adviser assures Ulema on nat'l women policy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The caretaker government has not passed any "law" regarding inheritance, Law Adviser AF Hassan Ariff yesterday said, adding that the National Women Development Policy, 2008 has been misinterpreted.

During a view exchange meeting with the Ulema (Islamic scholars) at Islamic Foundation in Baitul Mukarram, the adviser also said that the government has no plan to enact any law that goes against the rules and spirit of Islam.

"No such 'law' has been passed about inheritance and there is no question of enacting such a law," Hassan Ariff, also adviser to the religious affairs ministry, said

adding "it is really regretful as a situation of misunderstanding is created over a matter that does not exist at all."

The adviser held lack of communication for the wrong representation of the policy and stressed the need for enacting Right to Information Act to avoid any such confusion over government decision in future.

At the meeting, the Ulema urged the Muslims of the country not to act on any rumours or speech that is given by 'people or the media who usually talk against the spirit of Islam.'

The meeting was convened as rumours spread that the latest women development policy contains statement on inheritance law

that opposes Islam. Hassan Ariff told the meeting that the responsibility of the present caretaker government is to hold election and there was not even any discussion among the advisers to pass any law regarding inheritance.

Acting Khatib of the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque Mufti Mohammad Nur Uddin observed that no human being has the power to formulate rules or laws that contradict the Quran and the Sunnah.

"There is no question of ensuring equal rights to women on inheritance, but they should be ensured their due rights," he told the meeting.

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Second ODI against SA today

SPORTS REPORTER

Middle-order batsman Nazimuddin will be given one-day debut when Bangladesh take on South Africa in the second one-day international of the three-match series at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium today.

The Tigers made two changes to the eleven from the first match, which they lost by nine wickets, as pace spearhead and vice-captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza returned to the team.

Right-handed Nazimuddin has been taken in place of left-handed opener Zunaed Siddiqui while pacer Shahadat Hossain is making way for Mashrafe.

Bangladesh have once again employed three left-arm spinners in Abdur Razzak, Mosharraf Hossain and Shakib Al Hasan as the Mirpur pitch is expected to be low

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The Satarkul canal in Badda in the capital falls victim to land grabbers narrowing down the width of the canal considerably. The photo was taken yesterday.

ROW OVER EC INVITE Dr Kamal against settling political disputes in HC

UNB, Dhaka

Sticking to his guns against maintainability of the writ petition of detained BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain, counsel for the Election Commission, yesterday said that in exercise of its power under writ jurisdiction the High Court cannot embark on resolving a political question.

The rule hearing of the writ on the impugned action of the Election Commission before the High Court bench of Justice Mirza Hussain Haider and Justice Mamnoon Rahman remained inconclusive for the seventh day yesterday, keeping the EC in anxious waiting with its plan of electoral dialogue with the BNP.

Citing three-count legal principles, Dr Kamal said it was settled that the High Court in exercise of

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PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

The photo taken yesterday shows poorly parked cars on a street in Motijheel Commercial Area narrowing down the road and creating congestion on this and surrounding streets in the area.

ATTACK ON UK ENVOY Zandal now drafted in charge sheets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) yesterday submitted supplementary charge sheets of two cases filed in connection with the grenade attack on the British high commissioner at the shrine of Hajrat Shahjalal (RA) in Sylhet in 2004.

Inspector Zobayer Ahmed of the CID filed the separate charge sheets with the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court last evening accusing Hurkatul Jihad al Islami (Huji) leader Abu Zandal, also known as Mufti Mainuddin and Masum Billah Khaza, of delivering the grenades for the attack.

Zandal, son of Nurul Islam of Amdanga under Lohagara upazila

of Narail, is in a jail in the capital in another case. He was captured a few weeks ago in Dhaka and grenades were recovered from his possession.

Zobayer, the investigation officer, told The Daily Star that although charge sheets of the cases were submitted earlier, further investigation was carried out after the confessional statement of Huji leader Mufti Abdul Hannan, the prime accused.

During quizzing, Hannan admitted that Zandal provided the grenades through Huji operatives Sharif Shahedul Alam Bipul and Delwar Hossain Ripon, Zobayer added.

The murder case, filed in con

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HBM Iqbal handed 13yrs behind bars His family members also jailed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A special court yesterday sentenced former Awami League lawmaker HBM Iqbal to 10 years' rigorous and three years' simple imprisonment in a graft case for committing two different offences including amassing huge amount of wealth by illegal means.

The court also fined him Tk 50 lakh and another one-year jail if he failed to pay the fine.

Iqbal's wife Dr Momtaj Begum Dolly, sons Moinuddin Iqbal and Imran Iqbal and daughter Nawrin Iqbal were also jailed for three years each as they were found guilty of abetting him.

They have also been fined Tk 1 lakh each and would be behind bars for one more month in failure



Special Court-1 Judge Firoz Alam delivered the verdict yesterday afternoon in a courtroom set up at the MP Hostel in the national

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CA off to Dakar

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed last night left for Dakar to attend the 11th summit of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) beginning in the Senegalese capital tomorrow.

A flight of the Emirates Airlines carrying the chief adviser and his entourage took off from Zia International Airport at 9:53pm.

The head of the caretaker government is leading a small delegation including Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury and Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Syed Fahim Munaim.

Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam, LGRD Adviser Anwarul Iqbal, dean of diplomatic corps, chiefs of the three services and senior civil and military officials saw him off at the VVIP tarmac of the airport.

The chief adviser is scheduled to reach Dakar, via Dubai and London, at 6:05pm Senegalese time today.

The March 13-14 OIC summit

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Oil prices near \$110

AFP, London

Oil prices struck a record high of 109.72 dollars per barrel yesterday after the dollar hit a fresh all-time low against the euro and amid persistent energy supply concerns, traders said.

New York's main oil contract, light sweet crude for delivery in April, soared to the historic level, beating the previous peak of 108.21 dollar that was set on Monday.

Also on Tuesday, Brent North Sea crude for April hit a record high 105.82 dollars on barrel, beating the prior high of 104.42 dollars touched on Monday.

In the foreign exchange market, the European single currency surged to a record high 1.5495 dollars.

A weaker US currency tends to increase demand for dollar-denominated oil as it becomes cheaper for buyers using stronger currencies.

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BALI MEET BEGINS Bangladesh's successes in education reviewed

ASHFAQ WARES KHAN, from Bali, Indonesia

The country's achievements in education received mixed reviews as education ministers from nine countries representing about 60 percent of the world population began E-9 ministerial meeting in the Indonesian island of Bali yesterday.

The E-9 groups Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, and Pakistan, who are among the most populous middle-income and low-income countries in the world.

The annual EFA Global Monitoring Report, released at the start of the conference, recognised Bangladesh's success in universal primary-education enrolment and establishing gender parity but pointed to low literacy and high

dropout rates.

The country was placed in the lowest rung of the EFA Development Index along with 24 other countries, three of them from E-9, who are 'far away from achieving EFA' or education-for-all goals.

The biennial meeting, hosted by Unesco and the Indonesian government, was inaugurated by Indonesia's Vice president Jusuf Kalla who urged leaders to pledge greater political commitment and finances to achieve 'education for all' by 2015.

Unesco's Director General Koichiro Matsuura said at the conference that 67 percent of the world's 771 million illiterates live in the E-9 countries, adding that the prospect of meeting the EFA goals by 2015 would be reflected in the progress of these nine countries.

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Musharraf summons parliament on Mar 17

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf Tuesday summoned parliament to meet on March 17, setting up a showdown with the opposition parties which routed his allies in elections last month.

Former general Musharraf is likely to face a hostile parliament after Asif Ali Zardari, widower of slain ex-premier Benazir Bhutto, and former prime minister Nawaz Sharif agreed on Sunday to form a coalition government.

"President Musharraf has signed the summary (summoning parliament) which Prime Minister Mohammed Mian Soomro sent to him yesterday. The national assembly will now meet on March 17," presidential spokesman Rashid Qureshi told AFP.

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Trial of war criminals a must to establish justice

Roundtable told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The demand for trying war criminals has become a national issue and the government must make its response, speakers at a roundtable yesterday said.

They said the trial of war criminals is required to establish justice in the society.

Mentioning that representatives of the anti-liberation war element Jamaat-e-Islami have penetrated different organs of the government as well as the armed forces, speakers observed that the government has turned its back on its earlier stance regarding the trial of war criminals.

Dainik Prothom Alo at its auditorium at the city's Karwan Bazar organised the roundtable titled

"Let's start the process of trying war criminals".

The speakers--liberation war heroes, eminent educationists, university teachers, human rights activists, writers, poets, cultural activists, journalists--urged all to socially boycott the anti-liberation war elements and war criminals.

They said their demand for bringing the war criminals to book is not an act of vengeance but an effort to ensure justice in society.

They said that at least a token trial of war criminals should be held.

National Professor Kabir Chowdhury, President of Sector Commanders Forum (SCF) and Air Vice-marshal (ret'd) AK Khandker, Maj Gen (ret'd) KM Shaifulah, Prof Anisuzzaman, former army chief Lt

Gen (ret'd) M Harun-ar-Rashid, President of Group Theatre Federation M Hamid, Rashid Haider, Prof Muntasir Mamun, Prof Anwar Hossain, Prof Ajay Roy, journalist Ataus Samad, poet Nirmalendu Goon, Mofidul Haq, Selina Hossain, Convener of War Crimes Fact Finding Committee MA Hasan, Nasiruddin Yusuf, Hamida Hossain, Shahriar Kabir, journalist Sahin Reza Nur, cultural activist Mahmuduzzaman Babu spoke on the occasion among others.

Prothom Alo Editor Matiuur Rahman and Joint Editor Abdul Quayum were the moderators. Prof Kabir Chowdhury in his inaugural speech raised questions about the sincerity of the caretaker

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Sri Lanka shifts Saarc summit venue to Colombo

PTI, Colombo

Sri Lanka yesterday decided to shift the venue of the upcoming Saarc summit from Kandy to Colombo due to inadequate facilities in the island nation's scenic tourist spot to accommodate the leaders and delegations from the member countries.

The 15th summit of the regional grouping and its preceding

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GRAFT CASE Niko official's statement to magistrate recorded

COURT CORRESPONDENT

An assistant manager (commercial) of Niko Research Bangladesh Ltd yesterday gave a judicial statement to a magistrate as a witness in the Niko graft case filed against detained former premier Khaleda

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Prayer Timing table for March 12 with columns for Azan and Jamaat times.

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