

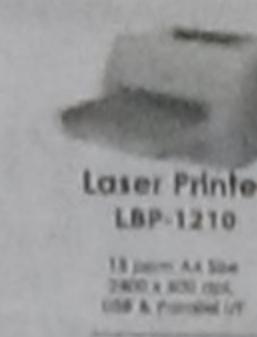
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ELECTRONICS

Fema sees
Aug 4 polls
free, fair

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (Fema), an election-monitoring organisation yesterday said that the standard of polling at the August 4 local body elections held under the state of emergency was better compared to any other elections in the past.

Fema said that polls in the four city corporation and nine pourasavas were held in a free and fair environment.

"There was no problem in holding the elections under a state of emergency," Fema president Munira Khan said while unveiling its polls observation report at the National Press Club yesterday.

The August 4 elections deserve appreciation as it was of a better standard than any elections in the past, the report said.

"Voters could cast their votes spontaneously as the law and order situation was good," the Fema president said in reply to a question.

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BURNT BY HUSBAND
Rajshahi wife
finally gives up
battle for life

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Arzina Khatun, whose husband allegedly set fire to her after pouring kerosene 13 days ago, succumbed to her injuries yesterday at a city hospital.

The poor housewife from Rajshahi died at 7:45am at the Burn Unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

"How can I bear the loss of my child? The brute took my daughter's life," said victim's mother Zayeda Sheikh holding Arzina's coffin while it was being taken out of the DMCH morgue after a post-mortem.

Arzina's mother Zayeda and brother Liton Sheikh, along with other relatives, received the body at 2:15pm and left for Rajshahi to bury her at the family graveyard at Lakshimpur Bhatpara.

Arzina, who obtained master's degree in geography from Rajshahi College and passed the 27th BCS exams last year, received burn injuries to her face, breast, abdomen, arms, back and thighs after her husband Kamruzzaman Kamu doused her with kerosene and alighted her with a gas lighter at their house at Shalbagh in Rajshahi on July 29.

While receiving treatment at the

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PRIMARY SCHOOLS
Teachers plan
agitation against
Brac supervision

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Teachers of non-government primary schools will hold a grand rally in the capital on August 20 demanding cancellation of Brac supervision over all primary schools in 20 upazilas under a pilot project.

Tougher programmes will be announced from the grand rally, if their 10 demands are not met by August 18, said teachers under the banner of Bangladesh Non-Government Primary Teachers' Association yesterday.

"It is the responsibility of the state to ensure quality primary education for all. Why does the government allow non-government organisation Brac that has no experience in formal education to supervise all primary schools in 20 upazilas?" said association President M Aminul Islam Chowdhury at a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity in the capital.

He also said the government move is part of a plan to privatise country's primary education. But it would not help improve the standard of primary education, he added.

"We shall hold a grand rally on

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Prayer Timing

August 11

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-25	5-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-41	6-44
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation



Georgian refugees sit next to their belongings in central Tbilisi yesterday as Russian troops were reportedly heading towards the Georgian town of Gori.

Lankan troops push into rebel territory: 43 killed

AP, AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan soldiers launched a pre-dawn attack on Tamil separatists in the embattled north yesterday, killing 15 rebels, while other battles in the region left 27 rebels and one soldier dead, said the military.

The civil war on the Indian Ocean island has escalated in recent months, with the military stepping up ground assaults and airstrikes after the government pledged to capture rebel-held territory and crush the insurgents.

In the latest offensive, army troops pushed into the rebel territory across a defence line in the village of Kilali on the Jaffna peninsula early Sunday and attacked rebel bunkers, said military spokesman Brig Udaya Nanayakkara.

He said soldiers killed 15 guerrillas before retreating to their bunkers, without suffering casualties.

Fighting, meanwhile, continued throughout Saturday along the front lines in Vavuniya, Mullaitivu,

and Jaffna and Weliya regions bordering the rebels' de facto state, Nanayakkara said.

Scattered battles in Vavuniya killed 16 rebels and one soldier while three rebels died in Mullaitivu. Separate clashes killed five insurgents in Weliya and Jaffna.

There was no immediate word from the Tigers about the military's latest claims, but the guerrillas said an air strike inside their territory on Saturday killed or wounded civilians.

Two civilians, including a school teacher, were killed, four more civilians were injured... when (the) Sri Lanka air force bombed Aranpalai," the Tigers said.

The military has not commented on the Tiger claims, but the defence ministry said 27 guerrillas and a government soldier were killed in other fighting in the northern parts of the country in fresh fighting since Saturday.

Both sides routinely exaggerate enemy casualties and under-report

Corruption probe
against major's
in-law lands

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Mehendiganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) filed a general diary (GD) against an army major after he allegedly threatened the official with dire consequences when the UNO refused to back down from investigating corruption charges against the major's brother-in-law.

UNO Khan Md Nurul Amin filed the GD Saturday night with Mehendiganj Police Station.

Sources said Khan ordered his youth development officer to investigate corruption charges against Patarhat Muslim High Schoolheadmaster Nurul Amin.

The headmaster's brother-in-law, the major, called the UNO Friday and asked him to stop the probe and file a probe report in favour of the headmaster, Khan alleged.

When the UNO refused to stop the investigation, the major

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BARISAL CITY
Santu demands
cancellation of
poll results

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Defeated Barisal City Corporation (BCC) mayoral candidate Sharifuddin Ahmed Santu yesterday demanded cancellation of the election result and urged the Election Commission (EC) not to publish gazette notification of the result.

"The Election Commission should hold the election again. At least it should arrange re-election in controversial polling centres 18, 19, 31, 36, 57 and 79. The same goes for polling centres 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30 as Hiron complained about these centres," he said.

"It should take half an hour at most to take the result to the election office from any centre in the city but surprisingly it took about eight hours to announce results of a number of the polling centres," he said claiming it was nothing but a proof of irregularities and manipulation.

The PDP leader lost to Awami

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Danish envoy
for lifting
emergency soon

UNB, Dhaka

Danish Ambassador in Dhaka Einar H Jensen yesterday said his country would like to see the emergency rules lifted soon and a free and fair general election held in Bangladesh later this year.

"We like to see the lifting of the state of emergency as soon as possible," he told reporters after a meeting with Home Affairs Adviser MAM Atmat at his secretariat office.

Amassador Jensen, who observed municipality election in Mymensingh's Fulbaria on August 4, praised the holding of the polls in a peaceful and fair manner.

"I think it was very good and a good sign for Bangladesh general election later this year," he said.

Court rejects
Shamim Iskander's
petition for
quashing case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected a petition for quashing a case filed against detained former Biman flight engineer Shamim Iskander for hiding information from the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

Judge Mohammad Azizul Haque of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court passed the order after hearing arguments from the defence and the prosecution.

Shamim, brother of detained BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, went to the sessions judge's court following the rejection of a similar petition by the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court on July 31.

He stated in his petition that the case was filed violating the provisions of law and with the malafide intention to harass him.

Shamim, whose name was on the second list of 50 corruption suspects, and his wife Kaniz Fatema were sued on May 5 this year on charges of concealing over Tk 20.47 lakh of their wealth from the ACC.

He was arrested when he came out of Khaleda's Shaheed Moiul Road residence on July 18.

The country has seen an increase in its poor population due to the recent skyrocketing of the prices of essentials, economist Dr Abu Barkat said yesterday.

Speaking at the publication ceremony of Arthik Khabar, an economic fortnightly, at the Purbani Hotel in the city, Dr Barkat said that the situation has caused an additional three to four crore people to live under the line of poverty.

A large number of people in the country already live under the poverty line and the recent price hikes have forced another three to four crore people below the line."

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The Dhaka University Economics Professor, speaking as chief guest at the ceremony, said the 1/11 aspired to destroy the economic boom of the country. It had come at a time when the country's economy was witnessing industrialisation and development, he said.

He urged all concerned to create a less repressive economy in the country based on ideals of the liberation war.

Dr Barkat said though the country earns about Tk 60,000 crores in remittance, in its budget the government looks for only Tk 10,000 to 15,000 crores in foreign donation. If

they told the court that they were forced to give the confessional statements.

Officers-in-charge (OCs) of different police stations yesterday submitted reports on arrest

AUG 21 ATTACK
2 Huji men
denied bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected the bail petitions of two Harkatul Jihad (Huji) members in a case filed for blasting grenades at an Awami League (AL) rally on Bangabandhu Avenue on August 21, 2004.

Metropolitan Sessions Judge Mohammad Azizul Haque passed the order on the bail petitions of Huji members Rafiqul Islam and Arij Hassan Sumo after hearing both the sides.

The two also submitted petitions for retraction of their confessional statements given earlier to magistrates admitting to their involvement with the attacks on the AL rally.

They told the court that they were forced to give the confessional statements.

Officers-in-charge (OCs) of different police stations yesterday submitted reports on arrest

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Rickshaw garage built illegally on the box culvert of a canal at Kafur in the capital. A bamboo bridge has also been made to get the rickshaws to the garage. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

SEIZURE IN CTG

No expiry dates
found in 450 MT
powdered milk

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Customs officials at Chittagong Port could not find any manufacturing or expiry dates of the powdered milk inside 18 containers the authorities seized Thursday.

Customs officials of the Audit Investigation and Research (AIR) branch opened five of the 18 powdered milk containers Thursday and found no manufacturing and expiry dates.

Yesterday they examined the remaining 13 containers on Jetty-5 of the port in presence of representatives from the joint-forces formed taskforce, importers, the Clearing and Forwarding (C&F) agent and the pre-shipment inspection company concerned.

Abul Khaer Milk Products Ltd of Abul Khaer Group had imported the 450 tonnes of powdered milk in 18 containers.

The powdered milk was made in Australia and it was shipped to

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