### Austrian daredevil to make new attempt

AFP, Los Angeles

An Austrian daredevil hopes to make a new recordbreaking attempt today to jump from the edge of space, days after his initial bid was aborted at the last minute due to gusting winds.

Felix Baumgartner will be transported up to 23 miles above the Earth beneath an enormous balloon, before launching himself into the void, aiming to become the first human to break the sound barrier in freefall.

If successful, he will go down in the record books. If not, he could face serious consequences, including death.

The 43-year-old was seconds away from lift-off in the US state of New Mexico on Tuesday when organizers decided to cancel because his huge, gossamer-thin balloon was buffeted badly, even while still on the ground.

The Red Bull Stratos mission managers said shortly afterward that Thursday could work for a new bid, but scrubbed that the next day due to a forecast of windy weather for most of the rest of the week.

The ascent is expected to take between two and three hours. If all goes well, the descent will take about 15 to 20 minutes -- five minutes or so in freefall, and 10 to 15 floating down with his para-

#### BSF kills 1 FROM PAGE 20

fire on a group of cattle traders near the border fence around 1:00am as they were returning from India. Khalek died on the spot when the others managed to escape.

The BSF men then took the body. However, they handed over the body to the BGB following a company commander-level meeting. Earlier, another company

commander-level flag meeting was held around 11:00am in this regard.

General Staff Officer-2 of Dinajpur Sector of BGB Major Shafiqur Rahman said two people had been killed and four others injured by the BSF along Thakurgaon Border since January, this year.

#### Death toll

FROM PAGE 1

Chittagong and Cox's Bazar, Communications Minister Obaidul Quader said the government was inquiring into whether there was any failure of the Met Office in forecasting the storms.

Two bodies were found in the Meghna near Janata Bazar at South Sakuchia union of Monpura upazila around 11:30am, Monpura police told our correspondent in Bhola.

The victims Rajib, 22, and Amir Hossain, 40, were from Amdirpar in the union.

Chairman of North

Sakuchia Union Parishad (UP) in Monpura said fishermen recovered the body of Bahar Uddin, 35, from the Meghna near Char Nizam. Earlier around 9:00am

ocal fishermen found two more bodies of unidentified males floating in the river at North Hazirhat union of the upazila.

The storms damaged

hundreds of thatched

houses and uprooted trees

along roads, disrupting road

communications in many

areas. Supply of electricity

during his visit to the storm-

hit areas of Char Elahi in

Noakhali, the communica-

tions minister said the

authorities concerned

should learn from the mis-

takes to avoid such casualty

Calamities are caused by

natural phenomena, but

precautionary steps should

be taken to minimise dam-

age, added Quader.

minister.

or major damage in future.

Talking to newsmen

was also suspended.

of Dhalchar UP.

Locals in Dhalchar union of Charfassion upazila recovered another body from the Meghna, said Abul Kalam Hawladar, chairman

requesting anonymity.

ALCWC'S TENURE

EXTENDED The national committee extended till January 31 next year the tenure of the ALCWC which had been formed through the last national council in 2009.

Companiganj upazila of 24,2009.

> AL President Sheikh Hasina chaired yesterday's meeting.

> party chief to give nominations to candidates for the upcoming national election after reviewing their popularity, commitment and capacity

The government was examining whether the rescue operation for the missing people was carried out properly, mentioned the

# Supercomputer

based Blue Brain Project,

have been working since

2005 to feed a computer with

vast quantities of data and

algorithms produced from

studying tiny slivers of

Last month they

announced a significant

advancement when they

were able to use their simu-

lator to accurately predict

the location of synapses in

the neocortex, effectively

mapping out the complex

electrical brain circuitry

through which thoughts

South African-born

neuroscientist who heads

the project, said the break-

through would have taken

"decades, if not centuries" to

chart using a real neocortex.

He said it was proof their

concept, dubbed "brain in a

box" by Nature magazine,

Now the team are joining

forces with other scientists

to create the Human Brain

Project. As its name sug-

gests, they aim to scale up

their model to recreate an

It is a step that will need

both a huge increase in

funding and access to com-

puters so advanced that they

billion (\$1.3 billion) of

European Commission

funding over the next 10

years is successful, Markram

predicts that his computer

neuroscientists are a decade

away from producing a

synthetic mind that could, in

theory, talk and interact in

inevitably fueled compari-

sons to doom-laden popular

fiction in which conscious

machines turn on their

have been referred to as

"team Frankenstein" and

their computer likened to

"Skynet," the virtual intelli-

gence that unleashes a robot

war on humanity in the

Sean Hill, a senior com-

putational neuroscientist on

"Terminator" films.

The project's scientists

creators and wreak havoc.

His bold claims have

the same way humans do.

If their current bid for •1

entire human brain.

have yet to be built.

would work.

Henry Markram, the

travel.

rodent gray matter.

the project, laughs at such comparisons. He says the computer will

primarily become a repository for knowledge about the brain that will allow scientists to conduct experiments without the need to probe inside people's skulls.

"This is a tool for research, not a giant simulated brain that is going to rule the world," he said.

The computing power needed to build the model is phenomenal. Simply to replicate one of the 10,000 neuron brain cells involved in the rat experiment took the processing capacity usually found in a single laptop. To simulate a fully functioning human brain, it would take billions.

Hill says that such computational power -- known as exascale -- will be available by the end of the decade. The Human Brain Project's scientists are hoping to work with supercomputer developers to ensure future machines match their requirements.

Professor Terry Sejnowski, head of the Computational Neurobiology Laboratory at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in San Diego, has been quoted as saying the Blue Brain project is "bound to fail."

He added: "We are just beginning to appreciate how complex our brains are, far beyond any other device in the known universe."

However, scientists at Human Brain Project are hopeful and determined to

# Half-yearly meet

The party charter mandates the national committee to assist the AL national council to decide on any urgent national and international issues. It is to coordinate between the national council and the ALCWC, and formulate policies to run the AL's parliamentary party.

Due to the ineffectiveness of the national committee, the ALCWC has emerged as the party's most powerful body in making all major decisions without facing any scrutiny by its superior body.

The ruling party's way of running its affairs does not conform to its own constitution and its electoral manifesto -- A Charter for Change.

In its electoral manifesto announced before the 2008 parliamentary polls, the AL had pledged to take steps to ensure democratic practice and establish transparency of political funding, civility and tolerance within the party.

Some AL leaders yesterday said it would have been better had the national committee held meetings regularly.

"But the truth is, the committee did not sit regularly,' said a senior AL leader

It also approved the party's income and expenditure in the last three years since its last national council on July

The AL leaders urged the to win the polls.

Some leaders told the meeting that there are lack of coordination among ministers, lawmakers, and local AL leaders. The issue must be settled much before the

But, even as the team touts its experiments as a possible solution to the brain diseases that affect about two billion people worldwide, they have attracted critics who say their work is far too broad in scope to achieve usable results.

He told CNN via emai that "progress is being made but there is still a long way to go before we will understand the computational capabilities of cortical circuits."

prove critiques wrong.

# national election, otherwise it

may lead to a debacle in the polls, they said. Several leaders suggested completing grassroots councils immediately to hold party's central council on December 29, said sources.

The leaders also advised the prime minister to go tough on the culprits behind the Hallmark scam as well as MLM businesses such as Destiny and UniPay2u that have cheated people.

They also voiced concern over the recent Ramu incident and observed that the mayhem was created to destroy the religious harmony in the

# Slain Iranian's

facebook page, which was photoshopped (see separate

Uttam's actual facebook page has been removed.

The image, copied and pasted to make his fake facebook page, shows that facebook user "Insult allah"

had shared the image with Uttam and 26 people. Even if one assumes that the image was on Uttam's page, it is clear that he had nothing to do with it as some one else had tagged him to

the image. A visit to the "Insult allah" page showed that the picture was actually posted on Kourosh Aryamanesh's fan

The image was then widely shared by thousands, whose comments mostly said that it had to be stopped as it was disgraceful. Most of the people who had commented on it were apparently Bangladeshis.

Kourosh Aryamanesh was assassinated on May 27 1996, in Paris. His followers hold the Iranian government responsible for the killing.

The facebook page of Aryamanesh, who took political asylum in France in 1982 after fleeing Iran, was mainly in Arabic and insults Christianity as well.

The facebook page "Insult allah" was highly offensive and was full of tasteless contents from anti-Islam extremists.

Teletalk

FROM PAGE 1 capital city.

Other divisional headquarters would get the service in phases, according to Teletalk officials.

Bose, also the telecommunications secretary, said there are around three crore internet users in the country who need faster internet connection -- and they could be catered with the 3G service.

"This is one step towards the vision of 'digital Bangladesh' -- as mobile broadband is considered to be one of the biggest factors of development." The service will be rolled

on to the private mobile networks once the licences are secured via the auction due in early next year. Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission

(BTRC) allocated 5 megahertz

(MHz) spectrum from the 2100 MHz band, for now, to Teletalk for the trial purposes. "Teletalk will have to purchase the spectrum at the same rate as the other private operators after the auction," said Bose. The telecommunications ministry is now final-

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to launch the service at the city's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

ising the draft of the 3G guide-

3G, short for 3rd generation of mobile telecommunications technology, enables video telephony and highspeed internet access from the mobile network.

The 3G service has been available in the neighbouring countries of India and Sri Lanka.

### Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 1 about it, said the report.

Island states Vanuatu and Tonga have the highest disaster risk while Malta and Qatar face the lowest risk worldwide, said the report published on October 11.

Environmental degradation is a significant factor that reduces the capacity of societies to deal with disaster risk in many countries around the world, stated the report. The report was published

in Brussels, Belgium by the German Alliance for Development Works, United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security, and The Nature Conservancy.

"This report illustrates the powerful role that nature can play in reducing risks to people and property from coastal hazards like storms, erosion and floods," said Dr Michael Beck, lead marine scientist at

The Nature Conservancy. The top 15 most "at-risk" nations are all tropical and coastal. In these countries, coastal habitats like reefs and mangroves are incredibly important for people's lives and livelihoods.

The report follows the International Day for Disaster Reduction, a time when the international community is discussing how to best achieve reduction of disaster risk and sustainable development.

### Press freedom

FROM PAGE 20

security for private television channel Rtv's reporter Bayezid Ahmed, who took the interview of whistleblower Azam Khan on the railway-gate scandal.

The TIB has expressed concern over Suranjit's irritation with the media following the interview in which Azam pointed the finger at Suranjit.

Suranjit's stand is conrary institutionalisation of democracy and the government's election pledges, said TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman.

Suranjit's ex-assistant personal secretary Omar Faruk Talukder's driver Azam in the interview said the bribe money, stashed in the microbus he had pulled over at Pilkhana, was being taken to Suranjit's house on April 9.

On October 10, Suranjit at a press conference alleged Azam had been instructed what to say in the interview.

Saying the media was crossing its limits, he threatened to take legal action against some TV channels, including Rtv that aired the interview, and some journalists who "tried to tarnish the image of his clean family".

# Fresh plot hatched

FROM PAGE 1 who had certified that the last caretaker government could continue for an indefinite period, always conspire against democracy and constitutional system as they are not taken into account during a democratic government's tenure," she said without mentioning any names.

These people are rated high only when an unconstitutional government comes to power, and for this reason they always conspire against democracy, said the premier. Giving an example of

conspiracy, she referred to the 2001 report of Transparency International branding Bangladesh the most corrupt country in the world. The report was com-

pletely fabricated and it was published in June that year (AL was in power till the end of June) to mislead the people of Bangladesh, the PM said. Such reports were usually published in September-October, she mentioned. What was the motive of

tioned, and said it was intended to prevent the AL from coming to power again. Explaining this, Hasina said a conspiracy was hatched to prevent her

publishing that fabricated

report in June? she ques-

party's return to power as she did not agree to sell the country's natural gas to western countries. The AL got enough votes but it was

Ainun Nishat chaired the

opening session titled

"South Asian Rivers: Need

for a Regional Policy

Framework for Integrated

The speakers said politi-

cal mistrust is dominating

the water sharing issue in

South Asia due to absence of

a common policy or frame-

work for sharing waters of

public information on all

hydrological negotiations

and development projects,

the experts suggested a new

approach of basin-wise

management. In the pro-

cess, they recommended

involving the civil society

members in the manage-

ment of the international

"Taking experience from

the Nile and the Mekong

could change the scenario in

this region. The speakers

said a fresh common

approach by promoting

environmental justice for all

needs to be initiated," Syeda

Rizwana Hasan, chief execu-

Shafaqat Kakakhel, for-

mer Pakistani ambassador

and UN Assistant Secretary

tive of BELA, said.

rives.

With a provision to make

the trans-boundary rivers.

Management".

prevented from assuming members of the ALNC.

city

power, she added. The prime minister asserted that a constitutional and democratic system would continue in Bangladesh despite the conspiracies being hatched. She directed her party leaders to remain alert about the conspirators and said democracy is a must for development.

"To keep the undemocratic and unconstitutional forces at bay, the government has amended the constitution. The country will run as per the constitution," she said. "We believe in empowerment of the people. We believe the state belongs to the people as enshrined in the constitu-Hasina said the govern-

ment has ensured immense power of the people through the 15th amendment to the constitution, and now the people will decide who should come to power. "We don't want to take away voting rights of the people because we had fought for that for long." Renewing her firm com-

mitment to try the war criminals, the premier said the trial is a continuous process, and it will take place decades after decades. "Whenever any war criminal will be found. the person will be tried." Earlier on Friday night,

Hasina had nominated

senior party leaders Amir

Hossain Amu, Tofail

Ahmed and Abdul Jalil as

General, talked about Indus-

River Commission between

India and Pakistan which

sustains successfully despite

bitter diplomatic ties

between the neighbours as

all the conflicting issues

were addressed widely while

minister for water resources

of Nepal, presented the

working procedure of the

Mekong River Commission

that shares water in four

regional countries of

Southeast Asia -- Vietnam

Thailand, Lao PDR and

panel comprising represen-

tatives from the four coun-

tries can negotiate with the

commission and make

public all hydrological data

executive director of Centre

for Policy Dialogue, said the

water sharing issue remains

unresolved for decades in

opportunity to bridge the

gap," he said at the opening

mental lawyer, Legal

Initiative for Forests and

wounded, but not seriously.

A Taliban spokesman said

the top leadership of the

Taliban's Swat Valley chapter

decided two months ago to

kill Yousufzai in a carefully-

planned attack after her fam-

ily ignored repeated warn-

porters yesterday gathered for

small vigils to pray for her

recovery. Government offi-

cials in Peshawar, the main

city in the northwestern

region where Malala is from

were silent for one minute in

blogging about how girls

should have rights in Pakistan,

including the right to learn.

She spoke out in a region of

the country where support for

Islamic fundamentalism runs

Malala gained fame for

herhonour.

Around the country, sup-

"Now it could be an

Ritwik Dutta, environ-

the South Asian region.

session.

Dr Mustafizur Rahman,

in all local languages.

An independent research

Dipak Gayawali, former

making the treaty.

Cambodia.

Livelihood at stake

The three, who were dropped from the party central committee at the

2009 national council, were present at yesterday's meeting and sat with the party chief on the dais.

#### Khaleda

FROM PAGE 1

world community... Patronising crimes and criminals is leading to a negative perception of Bangladesh's society and its people among the neighbouring nations. This might pose a threat to the country's security," she said in a statement. The leader of the opposi-

tion said as a consequence of the incident Bangladesh is being made accountable internationally. The BNP cannot tolerate any threat or damage to life,

property and places of worship of any minority community, mentioned Khaleda. She warned the government not to play with fire by

trying to reap benefit from the incident. "We condemn all sorts of religious and ethnic extremism. We must resist the ill motive of using religious and ethnic diversity for narrow

We need to understand that only by protecting the minority communities we will be able to show our unity and strength to the international community, she

Environment (LIFE), said

the decision-making pro-

cess regarding water sharing

issues needs to be ques-

tioned seriously as the water

issue has become not only

environmental but eco-

nomic, strategic and politi-

money allures vested quar-

ters like contractors, con-

structors and industrialists

to take interests in it though

the civil society or common-

Five sessions were held

yesterday where Shrabani

Roy, director, Environment

Programme, The Asia

Foundation, USA; Partha

Das, programme head

Water, Climate and Hazard

(WATCH) programme,

AARANYAK, India; Di

Sudhirendar Sharma,

Ecological Foundation,

India; Khushi Kabir, execu-

tive director, Nijera Kori

Farah Kabir, country repre-

sentative, ActionAid

Mahfuzullah, secretary

general, Centre for

Sustainable Developmen

(CFSD); Dr Asif Nazrul of

Dhaka University, spoke

age of Malala's assassination

attempt, the banned Tehrik-e-

Taliban Pakistan has drawn

up plans to target Pakistani

among others.

ers might not want it.

A huge amount of project

cal issue.

communal interests."

AFP, Mosul

Shootings and bomb attacks in and around Iraq's main northern city yesterday killed two people, including a soldier, and wounded four others, security and medical officials said.

In a Kurdish-majority neighbourhood in the east of Mosul, a civilian was killed in a drive-by shooting, according to Iraqi army Lieutenant Khaled Hamed and doctor Mahmud Haddad at the city's main hospital.

gunned down.

town of Qaiyarah, a soldier was killed and two others were wounded by a roadside bomb that appeared to be targeting an army patrol, Hamed and Haddad said. And two other soldiers,

who were on leave and in civilian clothes, were wounded by gunmen in the town of Al-Shora, also south of Mosul, according to the officials.

Dhaka, told The Daily Star. Law enforcers had information that a gang of miscreants will cross

member team of the DB set up a check post on a road in Dhonaid around 4:00pm and started checking vehicles there. As a microbus

signal. This prompted the DB men chase the microbus.

They sent a wireless message to the high officials of police about the incident. Alerted by the message,

Ashulia police put up a barri-

bridge. The microbus crossed about eight kilometers dodging the police chase and

ran into a nearby village. Villagers caught one of them and handed him over to the police, while the other

Police arrested four more criminals from the microbus and sent the two bullet-hit to Enam Medical College Hospital in Savar, where the

# 'Which one of you is Malala?'

FROM PAGE 20 specialists said her condition was stable, but they were

watching her closely. Tests on Malala went well doctors said, and her care at a hospital where she was initially treated was good. She remains in critical condition, but specialists are satisfied

with the situation. "The next 36 to 48 hours are important," Major Gen Asim Bajwa told reporters in Rawalpindi.

Pakistani media reports suggested that the government is considering sending her overseas for treatment, but Bajwa, the military spokesman, said Friday that there is no plan yet to do that. According to Malala's

friend Shazia, speaking to the

Christian Science Monitor, a

group of militants riding on a

bike stopped the bus carrying the schoolgirls. Masked men then boarded the vehicle and pointed guns at the girls, asking for Malala.

A hooded Taliban militant Taliban -- and to not hide in shouted: 'Which one of you is their bedrooms. Malala? Speak up, otherwise I The Taliban believes no girl will shoot you all. She is propshould be educated, and agating against the soldiers of Allah, the Taliban. She must be punished.' Almost as soon as he

range. Two other girls were

Malala survives, they will murder her. like Malala speaking against shouted this, the militant recognised the youngster and us," Taliban spokesman Ihsanullah Ihsan said. shot her twice at point blank

they've threatened that if "We do not tolerate people

And angered by the cover-

and international media organisations across the country, BBC Urdu reported. Pakistani Taliban chief Hakimullah Mehsud has issued "special directions" to

his subordinates in different

cities of Pakistan to target media groups, it said. Security near the offices of media organisations in Pakistan have been beefed up following threat, an official

Police arrested 200 suspects, but released all but 35. Those still in detention gave police information that led to the arrest of three more suspects, said Ghulam Muhammad, a local government official.

told BBC Urdu.

Also Friday, police officer Malala, whose writing earned her Pakistan's first Gul Afzal Afridi said that sus-National Peace Prize, also pect has not been arrested encouraged young people to but investigators said they strongly believe he played a take a stand against the role in the attack.

The attack stirred global debate. Leaders across the world spoke out, including those in Pakistan. The teenager has come to symbolize a battle between freedom and oppression, violence and peace, a young generation and a group that is hell-bent on keeping Pakistan under the grip of Islamic extremism.

### Two killed in Iraq attacks

It was not immediately clear why the man was South of Mosul in the

#### Criminal killed FROM PAGE 20

Wahiduzzaman, officer-incharge of the police's Detective Branch (DB) of

Narasinghapur in the after-Accordingly, a 10-

approached the check post, police signaled it to stop. But the driver of the vehicle sped away ignoring the police

cade near the Ashulia

finally stopped near the barricade. As the DB team reached near the vehicle, the gang opened fire at the law enforcers, forcing them to

retaliate. Two miscreants were hit by bullets, while two others

managed to escape.

doctors declared Rony dead. The injured were undergoing treatment there.

## Special trains

FROM PAGE 20 General Abu Taher told The Daily Star last night.

of special trains would run on Bhairab-Solakia and Mymensingh-Solakia route. Besides, a total of 125 new coaches would be added to several other trains, he added.

Meanwhile, the railway

Even on Eid day, two pairs

authorities from yesterday have started selling tickets in advance to ease public sufferings ahead the Eid. Yesterday, the tickets for October 22 were sold while

tickets for October 23 to 26

will be sold from today until

Wednesday from 7:00am to

Kamalapur Railway Station,

The Railway would sell a total of 42,000 tickets against seats everyday for the holidaymakers, said the director general. Abu Taher, while visiting

5:00pm.

issued a suspension order to a booking assistant for concealing ticket-information from a passenger. However, private launch operators will start selling cabin tickets from Monday.

Also, the state-run Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation will start selling bus tickets from Monday, whereas private bus operators have already started selling advance tickets from the last Wednesday.