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BILLBOARDS IN CTG

Left, billboards publicise the Awami League government's "successes" in drawing more foreign investment and setting up inland container terminal. Right, another billboard advertises the initiative for the 1,300-megawatt power plant in Bagerhat. The photos were taken at Agrabad, Chittagong yesterday.



PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS



Acid thrown on mother, daughter

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A man allegedly threw acid on his wife and teenage daughter, leaving them critically injured at Badarpur village under the district's sadar upazila last night. He and his gang made the attack around 7:00pm when the victims were returning home from a nearby shop. The mother and the daughter -- Helena Begum, 45, and Sumi Akhter, 15 -- are undergoing treatment at Patuakhali General Hospital.

Syria strike due in days, says West

Damascus vows to fight off raids; Russia, Iran warns of catastrophe; UN postpones chemical probe

AGENCIES

Syria yesterday vowed to defend itself as Western powers told the Syrian opposition to expect a strike against President Bashar al-Assad's forces, accused of deadly chemical weapons attacks, within days.

The message was conveyed to the opposition in a meeting between senior figures of the Syrian National Coalition, including its president, Ahmad Jarba, and envoys from 11 core "Friends of Syria" alliance members, including Robert Ford, the former US ambassador to Syria who is now Washington's pointman with the opposition, sources who attended the meeting

held on Monday in Istanbul told Reuters.

Russia, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's most powerful ally, warned any use of force would have "catastrophic consequences". And Syria's closest ally Iran has warned a visiting top UN official of "serious consequences" for the region in case of international military action in Syria.

During a defiant news conference, Syria Foreign Minister Walid Muallem said Damascus would defend itself against any strikes.

"We have two options: either to surrender, or to defend ourselves with the means at our disposal," he said.

CIA helped Saddam in gassing Iran

AFP, Washington

The United States provided Iraq with intelligence on preparations for an Iranian offensive during the Iran-Iraq war even though it knew Baghdad would respond with chemical weapons, Foreign Policy magazine reported Monday.

Citing declassified CIA documents and interviews with former officials, the magazine reviewed the US record as Washington weighs military action against Syria for its alleged use of chemical weapons near Damascus last week.

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Sex workers forced to leave brothel

Activists of Islamist group attack red-light quarter in Madaripur; 30 hurt; cops defy HC order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A brothel in Madaripur town was attacked allegedly by Islamist activists and nearly 500 sex workers were forced out of it yesterday.

Several hundred activists of Islahe Qoum Parishad stormed the brothel at Puranbazar around 11:00am. They beat up at least 30 women who did not want to leave what they call home for generations, said Mamata Rani, president of Bandhobi Nari Sangha, an organisation of sex workers.

The attackers ransacked the 250-year-old brothel and looted valuables, she alleged.

The attack was made despite a July 22 High Court ruling, in which the home ministry and police were asked not to harass residents of the brothel and to allow the sex workers to continue with their occupation for a year.

Responding to a petition by the rights organisation Ain O Salish Kendra, the court also ordered removal of the signboards hung on the four gates of the brothel, which prohibited clients of the sex workers from

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Harvesting edible algae on rooftop

AFP, Bangkok

On a hotel rooftop in Bangkok, dozens of barrels of green liquid bubble under the sun -- the latest innovation in urban farming.

Proponents of the edible algae known as spirulina say it could help provide a sustainable source of protein as an alternative to meat.

Three times a week, Patsakorn Thaveuchukorn harvests the green algae in the barrels.

"The algae is growing so fast, normally the doubling time is around 24 hours," said Patsakorn, whose employer EnerGaia uses Bangkok's rooftops to grow spirulina.

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Extortion by cops rampant in Savar

Situation unchanged despite actions

STAR REPORT

The police in Savar, on the outskirts of the capital, have been continuing extortion with apparent impunity despite repeated protests by the locals.

News reports and police investigations that found cops guilty of the crime have also failed to change the situation for the better.

On Monday, traders of Savar's Aminbazar blocked the Dhaka-Aricha highway, demanding withdrawal of the policemen involved in extortion.

This sort of protest, however, was not a stray incident. Rather, it was an outburst of long-held discontent over extortion by the police there.

"People supply fish, meat and other food items to the police camp for free or at half the market price. Yet the policemen's demand keeps rising," said a local trader requesting anonymity.

Residents of Aminbazar complained that police had threatened to implicate them in the case filed for the murder of six boys in Aminbazar on July 18, 2011, our Savar correspondent reported.

Following Monday's incident, Habibur Rahman,

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From PM to footballer

THE GUARDIAN ONLINE

The former prime minister Boiko Borisov became the oldest footballer to appear for a Bulgarian professional club on Sunday when the 54-year-old played in his team Vitosha Bistriza's goalless draw against Rakovski in a domestic

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NIZAMI'S TRIAL 5 witnesses added to list

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday allowed the prosecution to examine five new witnesses in the war crimes case against Jamaat-e-Islami chief Motiur Rahman Nizami.

According to the defence, the prosecution have so far got three chances to add witnesses after submission of formal charges.

The prosecution first submitted a list of 68 witnesses. They were later allowed to

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Mueen, Ashraf were directly involved

Witness testifies about abduction of DU teachers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Alleged al-Badr leaders Chowdhury Mueen Uddin and Ashrafuzzaman Khan had been "directly involved" in the abduction of Dhaka University teachers from the campus on December 14, 1971, and the victims had never returned, said a prosecution witness yesterday.

Rashedul Islam, son of martyred DU teacher Abul Khair, told

International Crimes Tribunal-2 that he had heard about their involvement from Mafiz, driver of a minibus used to pick up the abductees from the university.

Rashedul, the 18th prosecution witness in the case against Mueen and Ashraf, said Masuda Banu Ratna, niece of Prof Giasuddin, one of the abducted teachers, had also told his mother about the

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The Daily Star Integral Energy Limited ONLINE POLL

Do you think it was justified for BNP leader Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir to say that the government has given transit to India but failed to get anything from the neighbouring country in return?

Yes (78%) No (22%)

TOTAL VOTES: 272

TODAY'S POLL Do you think the zila parishads administrators' accusation against lawmakers of interfering in the activities of the local government bodies is justified?

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