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THE DEATH OF CHE

It was also the end of idealism in Africa, Asia and Latin America

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MALDIVES TENSION MOUNTS

The Supreme Court annuls last month's presidential polls results

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Your Right to Know

IN MEMORY OF NAWAB

Actor Razzak reminisces about his time with Anwar Hossain

2 Hefajat leaders escape; one succumbs to injurury

DWAIPAYAN BARUA and PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY, Ctg

Two prime suspects in the Monday morning blast at a Chittagong madrasa have easily escaped arrest, thanks to an apparent late response from law enforcers.

Mufti Izharul Islam Chowdhury, the

founder and principal of Jamiatul Ulum Al Islamia Madrasa, and his son Harun Izhar got enough time till police moved to arrest them late in the evening that day. The explosion occurred in a second-

floor room of the madrasa's four-storey dormitory around 11:30am. Both Izharul and Harun were on the madrasa premises till late afternoon amid a huge police presence and talked to the media.

Yesterday morning, police filed two cases -- one under the explosives act and the other for preserving acid in the madrasa -- against some 12 people. Hefajat-e Islam Nayeb-e-Ameer Mufti

Izharul, and Harun Izhar, Hefajat's publicity secretary, were named as the prime accused. Police also recovered a handmade gre-

nade at the madrasa compound in Lalkhan Bazar area early yesterday.

Md Shahidullah, additional deputy commissioner of CMP North zone, who led Monday evening's drive, said they did not immediately arrest the duo as they

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BLAST AT CTG MADRASA Cops acted late Terrorism bell rings

Home fears militant attacks amid volatile politics after Oct 24

M ABUL KALAM AZAD and M RAHMAN

Banned militant outfits plan to carry out terrorist attacks in the country once political turmoil over the polls-time government takes a turn for the worse after October 24, said top officials of the home ministry and police.

"The recent arrest of some militants and Hefajat-e Islam men, and Monday's explosion at a Chittagong madrasa are not isolated incidents. There is no doubt that they will try to create anarchy," said a senior police official, preferring anonymity.

These elements made attempts to carry out terrorist attacks but couldn't succeed due to the government agencies' constant watch and crackdown on militants over the past few years, said the official.

"It, however, does not mean that they will not be successful if there is any political unrest."

The five Islamist outfits that have been banned so far for militant and anti-government activities are Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), Harkatul Jihad al Islami (Huji), Shahadat-e Al-Hikma, Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) and Hizb ut-Tahrir.

But these outfits have either opened new fronts or are secretly working with little-known organisations to continue their operations.

Huji established links with some Hefajat leaders, as it SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



These large pitchers have been set up to preserve rain water rolling down from roof as nearby sources of drinking water has become saline. The photo was taken in Holdebunia village in Bagerhat in August. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Coastal districts salinity-struck

Research shows death of groundwater; suggests stopping irrigation right away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Except for some pockets, all the groundwater aquifers down to 600-700 feet below in 140 upazilas of 19 coastal districts have become saline due to seawater intrusion, a government research has found.

More alarmingly, the groundwater in some areas of 16 of these districts is contaminated with arsenic. In Gopalganj and Pirojpur and in Patharghata upazila of Barguna, there is no fresh water down to 1,100 feet below, according to experts involved with the research.

The coastal region is home to about 2 crore people and some of them are sometimes compelled to drink such water, especially in the dry season when surface water is not available.

Experts say intrusion of seawater is taking place because of climate change and the situation is worsening through heavy lifting of groundwater.

They suggest preserving the available fresh water in the aquifer system in these districts only for drinking purposes.

Anwar Zahid, deputy director of the groundwater hydrology department of Bangladesh Water Development Board, presented the findings of the study at a workshop at Biam auditorium in the

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RMG factory fire kills 9

STAR REPORT

At least nine people were killed and 50 others injured as a devastating fire swept through a garment factory at Maona in Sreepur of Gazipur yester-

The dead include the company's general manager Rashiduzzaman Mandal and two technicians --Khalil and Naim.

The six others could not be identified as their bodies were charred beyond recognition, said Ameer Hossain, officer-in-charge of Sreepur Police Station.

however, said eight bodies were recovered as of 2:15am today.

The fire originated around 6:00pm in the dyeing section of Aswad Composite Mills owned by Palmal

The cause of the blaze was not immediately known. Firefighters brought the flames under control around 12:45am today, fire service officials said.

Firemen recovered seven bodies from the ground floor and two from the second floor of the twostorey factory at Bariderchala. Factory Director Emdad Hossain said 170 work-

ers were on duty on the two floors when the fire broke out. "Almost all of them managed to come out of the

Sreepur upazila Chairman Iqbal Hossain Sabuj, building," claimed Emdad, who suffered injuries while rushing out of the building.

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Adilur gets 6-month bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday granted bail to Adilur Rahman Khan, secretary of rights

organisation Odhikar, for six months in a case filed for publishing a "false report" on its website.

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WAR CRIMES TRIAL OF ALIM

Judgment today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A tribunal is set to deliver today its verdict in the war crimes case against former BNP minister Abdul Alim, who was allegedly involved in killing Bangalees, especially Hindus and freedom fighters, during the 1971 Liberation War.

Alim faces 17 charges of crimes against humanity and genocide.

According to the charges, he participated in the killing of as many as 600 people and was also involved in looting, arson, deportation and detention of unarmed civilians. He was the chairman of Joypurhat Peace Committee and a leader of Razakar Bahini.

He and his accomplices attacked predominantly Hindu villages of



Flames rage through a two-storey garment factory in Sreepur of Gazipur yesterday.

SQ CHY VERDICT LEAK PLOT BNP now embarrassed

Prabir Barua Chowdhury

The BNP will not announce any programme any time soon to protest the conviction of its leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury by a war crimes tribunal as the party's policymakers are embarrassed about the suspected involvement of Salauddin's lawyer in the leak of the draft

verdict, party sources said. The high-ups of the main opposition party thought that the caretaker government issue should get priority in planning the party's next course of action as the incumbent government has reached the fag end of its tenure and the next general election is due within just over three months.

The party had been almost silent over the trial of war criminals until its standing committee member Salauddin was sentenced to death by International Crimes Tribunal-1 on October 1 for committing crimes against humanity in Chittagong during the Liberation War.

The leak of the draft verdict against BNP lawmaker Salauddin provided the party with an opportunity to question the transparency and standard of the trial.

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Fakhrul, Ashraful can hold dialogue

Khaleda tells Chinese envoy about political impasse

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPOONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has offered secretary generallevel talks between the ruling Awami League and the opposition BNP to resolve the ongoing political stalemate over the next general elections.

"BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and Awami League General Secretary Syed Ashraful Islam could be the representatives of the two sides [at the

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PHOTO: STAR





