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Zia's birth anniversary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 79th birth anniversary of late president Ziaur Rahman, the founder of Bangladesh Nationalist Party.

Leaders and activists of the BNP and its front organisations will place wreaths at his grave in the capital's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar at 11:00am, said a party press release yesterday.

However, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, who has been "kept

A burnt down home at Rasulpur of Shibganj upazila in Chapainawabganj and a ransacked room of another home, inset, in the same area. Locals claimed that joint forces during a drive had vandalised and torched their homes while the law enforcers say that the complainants could have done it themselves to create an issue.



PHOTO: STAR

CHAPAINAWABGANJ

Many flee after joint force drive

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Fearing arrest, most of the males in two villages of Shibganj upazila are staying away from home at night after members of the joint forces allegedly ransacked and torched houses during raids there on Thursday.

In the two villages, Rasulpur and Mohadipur, most people are said to be supporters of the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami.

Locals alleged that the members of police, Rab and BGB vandalised 35 houses, torched two more and at least seven motorcycles during Thursday's drives. Four to five masked men were with the joint forces during the rampage in Rasulpur.

This correspondent visited the villages yesterday and saw broken televisions, furniture and ceramic products strewn across the floors of many houses.

Villagers said they had already moved their valuables to other "safe" places, fearing further "attacks" by the law enforcers.

Police refute the allegations. They say the

Kaptai fear returns

74 families get eviction notice to make way for Rangamati Science & Technology University

PINAKI ROY

The Vihar is for people. It's the community members who bear almost all the expenses of the temple. If they cannot live in the village, how will be the Vihar run?

Gyanajyoti Chakma, chief of Gautama Memorial Bouddha Vihar in Bilaichhari Para, looked worried while talking to this correspondent.

The government has decided to build Rangamati Science & Technology University acquiring around 100 acres of land in Bilaichhari Para and its neighbouring Mitingachhari village.

Though the land of the Vihar has not been included in the government acquisition list, 74 families got eviction notice from the administration.

"I am not sure what would happen to

them and where would they go," said Gyanajyoti who took the charge of the Vihar since it was established in 2004.

Rahul Chakma, who donated a portion of his land adjacent to their house to build the Vihar, is among those served the eviction notice.

"We first migrated when our village [Manikchhari Para] was inundated due to Kaptai dam in 1960. Now we were being asked to move again," said Rahul Chakma.

Most of the villagers are like Rahul, descendants of victims of Kaptai hydropower project.

Basuki Chakma, karbari (chief) of the village, is among a few elderly people who still can remember what happened after the construction of the Kaptai dam.

"I was only 11 years old. The then

De Villiers hits fastest 100, 50

REUTERS, Johannesburg

AB de Villiers took 31 balls to smash the fastest century in one-day internationals on Sunday as South Africa posted 439 for two wickets, their highest team total in this format, against the West Indies at the Wanderers.

Described by retired Australia wicketkeeper Adam Gilchrist as the "most valuable cricketer on the planet" earlier this week, de Villiers blasted 16 sixes and nine fours in his blistering 44-ball knock of 149, bettering New Zealander Corey Anderson's 36-ball century against West Indies last year.

The 30-year-old right-hander went down on his knees and slog-swept Jason Holder over deep



SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Voters to get smart NID cards in March

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission is going to start distribution of smart National Identity (NID) cards among voters on March 26 as it expects to begin the card generation process within a month.

Around nine crore voters of the country would get smart NID cards free of cost, said EC Secretary Sirazul Islam.

The commission had recently signed an agreement with French company Oberthur Technologies for producing the smart cards, he told reporters at a press briefing at the EC media centre in the capital yesterday.

The EC will spend Tk 800 crore to generate 90 million smart cards under its Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) project.

Detailed information of a voter with pho-

tograph would be included in the new cards and 25 types of security features would be ensured to prevent possible forgery.

These cards might be used in getting services like taxpayers identification number (TIN), driving license, passport, banking, trade license, marriage registration, health cards, utility services and admission in education institutions.

The existing laminated NID cards are printed on papers and can be easily forged. The law enforcers have so far arrested several people in connection with doctoring the NID cards.

"We hope to start issuing the cards on the upcoming Independence Day. We will issue at least a token number of smart cards in case we cannot prepare the cards," the secretary said.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5



There will be none praying in this Buddhist temple at Bilaichharipara of Rangamati very soon as the indigenous community has been served a notice to move out. The government plans to set up a university on the land the Buddhist had been living on since the Kaptai dam was built.

PHOTO: PINAKI ROY

Sylhet mayor denied bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A Habiganj court yesterday rejected the bail prayer of the suspended Sylhet City Corporation Mayor Ariful Haque Chowdhury, who stands accused in former

PALESTINE WAR CRIMES PROBE

Israel now lobbying against ICC funding

REUTERS, Jerusalem

Israel is lobbying member-states of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to cut funding for the tribunal in response to its launch of an inquiry into possible war crimes in the Palestinian territories, officials said yesterday.

ICC prosecutors said on Friday they would examine "in full independence and impartiality" crimes that may have occurred since June 13 last year. This allows the court

to delve into the war between Israel and Hamas militants in Gaza in July-August 2014 that killed more than 2,100 Palestinians and 70 Israelis.

The decision came after Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, in the absence of peace talks and against strong opposition from Israel and the United States, requested ICC membership, which comes into effect on April 1.

Israel, which like the United States does

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Transformer suit on sale for \$1m

MAIL ONLINE

The real-life Transformer suit is available for purchase on Amazon for \$1 million. And according to the manufacturers, it's a piece of cake to use.

The machine, developed by Japanese robotics company Suidobashi Heavy Industry, functions like an automatic four-wheel-drive, controlled by the user from inside a cockpit.

It can also be operated with a smartphone. The decision to sell the landmark invention on Amazon shocked tech-lovers across the world.



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MILITANT KILLED IN KARACHI

Hunt on for his aides

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Investigators are hunting down the aides of a top militant, who was trying to establish a link between Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and al-Qaeda before being killed in a police crackdown in Karachi on January 9.

Search for the aides had begun soon after the real identity of militant leader Javed Akhter alias Ejaz was revealed, investigators say.

Ejaz, son-in-law of arrested JMB chief Moulana Saidur Rahman, was the prime target of the investigators as he was

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

Obituary



Tashfin I. Huq, FCA

It is with profound sadness that we announce the death of **Mr. Tashfin I. Huq, FCA** (Inna lillaha wa inna ilaihe rajeun). Late Mr. T. I. Huq breathed his last on 16 January 2015 in Karachi, Pakistan. He leaves behind his wife, two daughters, one son and a host of relatives and friends to mourn his death. May Allah grant eternal peace to his departed soul.

Mr. Rezaur Rahman, along with Mr. M. Saifur Rahman and Mr. T. I. Huq, established Rahman Rahman Huq in 1962.

From all at Rahman Rahman Huq Chartered Accountants

PRAYER TIMING January 19

Azan	Jamaat
Fazr 5:30	6:05
Zohr 12:45	1:15
Asr 4:15	4:30
Maghrib 5:40	5:44
Esha 7:00	7:30

Source: Islamic Foundation

ONLINE POLL

Do you agree with BNP leader Ruhul Kabir Rizvi that the government is reluctant to create a congenial and peaceful atmosphere to hold a free and fair election as it has grasped state power with the help of law enforcement agencies?

Yes (73%)

No (27%)

TOTAL VOTES: 466

The Daily Star

Integral Energy Limited

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think it was justified for the chiefs of police, Rab and BGB to comment on political issues?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net