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VICTIM OF BLOCKADE VIOLENCE

# Auto driver dies from burns

Today's Dakhil exams postponed

STAR REPORT

The driver of a CNG-run three-wheeler lost his battle for life yesterday, six days after he was burned in a petrol bomb attack at Hathazari upazila in Chittagong.

Thirty-two-year-old Saber Ahmed, who suffered 45 percent burns on March 4, died at the burn unit of Chittagong Medical College Hospital around 8:30am, reports our Chittagong Correspondent.

With the latest death, 86 people have so far been killed, mostly in mindless arson attacks, since the BNP-led 20-party alliance called a nationwide indefinite blockade on January 5.

Of the victims, 69 had no links to politics whatsoever.

Saber, the only earning member of his family, along with a passenger suffered

burns after alleged hartal supporters hurled a petrol bomb at his auto-rickshaw near Chariya Madrasa.

He was returning to his Domdama home in Fatikhhari taking a passenger, Ranjit Nath, from Hathazari upazila headquarters. Ranjit, a day labourer, died the next day at CMCH, while Saber was struggling for life with badly damaged respiratory organs.

Just 17 days ago, Saber and his wife were blessed with a daughter, Samiya. His wife Kamrunnesa was wailing over the future of their kids.

"Oh Allah! Who will look after my children now? Whom will call father now?" she said at the burn unit.

Saber had planned to arrange a small family party on the occasion of their

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Family members mourn the passing of auto-rickshaw driver Saber Ahmed at Chittagong Medical College Hospital yesterday. Saber suffered burns in a petrol bomb attack on March 4.

PHOTO: STAR

## Rejoinder from GCM Resources

GCM Resources PLC, a UK-based company involved in development of the Pulbari Coal Project in Bangladesh, has said that it did not breach any obligation and the project is ready to start now and will provide Bangladesh with the most efficient and fastest way to access new and affordable large scale commercial energy and electricity.

In a rejoinder sent in response to The Daily Star report headlined "UK warns against adverse impact" published on November 22 last year, GCM stated that "UK National Contact Point (NCP) for the OECD found no grounds for the complaints lodged by a couple of international activist organisations. Instead the

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## Amnesty Int'l against cop proposal

STAR REPORT

Amnesty International yesterday urged the government to reject the police proposal for immunity for its members from prosecution for torture.

In a public statement, the UK-based rights watchdog said the Bangladesh government must firmly turn down the police's proposal to undermine legal safeguards against torture and ensure that these safeguards truly act as a deterrent, by bringing to

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## Bring the killers to justice

Wife of slain writer Avijit urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The wife of slain blogger-writer Avijit Roy has demanded that the government do everything in its power to bring the killers to justice.

"I do not believe that simply catching the killers will be enough. I urge the government to address terrorism and stop a legal culture of impunity, where writers can be killed without the killers being brought to trial," Rafida Ahmed Bonya said in a statement.

The statement was released yesterday by the Centre for Inquiry (CFI), a non-profit educational, advocacy and research organisation headquartered in New York.

In the statement, Bonya also called upon the world to "recognise what has happened" and join them "in this demand for justice".



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## A bizarre snatching

REZAUL KARIM

Every mobile phone owner, more or less, experiences the onset of panic and despair the moment he realises his phone is missing. But what happened to me is more than that when I suddenly saw my mobile phone gone in the blink of an eye.

The story may sound bizarre, but whenever I think of the incident, a shiver goes down my spine.

It happened on Sunday midnight when I was returning to my Bashundhara home by my office-hired CNG-run three-wheeler in a relatively calm Dhaka city. One of my colleagues was with me.

Like other three-wheelers, our

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## EC prepares for DCC, CCC polls

Sits tomorrow with ministries, law enforcers to fix dates

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission will sit with officials of education and home ministries, and law enforcement agencies tomorrow to discuss tentative dates for holding Dhaka and Chittagong city corporation polls.

"As different educational institutions are used as polling centres, we have to find out a suitable voting date when no public exams will be held. That is why, we will sit with education ministry officials," EC Secretary Sirajul Islam told The Daily Star yesterday.

The meeting will be held at the conference room of Election Commission (EC) Secretariat at 11:00am, he said.

As stable law and order situation is very crucial for holding elections, the commission will also discuss with the home ministry officials and law enforcers, the secretary added.

EC's Joint Secretary Jesmin Tuli said they had sent a letter to the home ministry and education ministry yesterday, requesting them to attend the meeting.

Although no formal announcement has been made about tentative dates for holding the DCC or CCC polls until now, the EC sources said, both the polls might be held in the last week of May or the first week of June.

Earlier on March 1, Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad

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The Arial-Tongibari canal at Tongibari upazila in Munshiganj is being filled up by an influential quarter. Locals say they have complained to the administration, but that yielded no result. The death of the canal means havoc on agriculture and environment.

PHOTO: STAR

## WAR CRIMES TRIAL VERDICT

# Nizami appeal hearing delayed

State, defence asked to submit statements by March 31

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday gave the state and defence of convicted war criminal Motiur Rahman Nizami time until March 31 for submitting concise statements on an appeal filed by the Jamaat chief against his death sentence.

A concise statement contains the points on which the lawyers place arguments before the apex court during its hearing.

A four-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice SK Sinha extended time for submitting the statements, as none of the defence and the state placed those yesterday as per an earlier order.

The court said the appeal filed by Motiur Rahman Nizami would be prepared for hearing without any summary statement, if the prosecution and the defence did not place those by March 31.

Earlier on February 24, the SC ordered the defence and the state counsels to submit the brief statements on Nizami's appeal by yesterday.

During yesterday's hearing, Nizami's advocate-on-record Zainul Abedin Tuhin told the court they could not prepare the statement due to some personal difficulties of Nizami's principal lawyer Khandker Mahbub Hossain.

On Monday, Zainul, on behalf of Nizami, submitted a petition to the apex court seeking a four-week extension for submitting the concise statement.

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## Manna taken to DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detained Nagorik Oikya Convener Mahmudur Rahman Manna was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital last night after he had complained of chest pain.

Manna was kept under observation at the Coronary Care Unit. He was brought to the hospital from the DB police office in the capital around 10:40pm, Inspector Mozammel Haque, chief of the DMCH Police Camp, told this correspondent.

On March 7, Manna, who

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**PRAYER TIMING**  
MARCH 11  
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 5-05 12-45 4-30 6-12 7-30  
JAMAAT 5-40 1-15 4-45 6-15 8-00  
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

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ONLINE POLL

Do you think violence in the name of political movement is a serious threat to human rights?

Yes (84%)

No (16%)

TOTAL VOTES: 430

**TODAY'S POLL**  
Do you think it would be justified for BNP not to participate in the upcoming city corporation elections to Dhaka and Chittagong?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT  
www.thedailystar.net

## No moratorium on death penalty

Pakistan scraps the provision in all cases

REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistan will begin executing criminals on death row whose appeals have been exhausted, an interior ministry spokesman said yesterday, reversing an earlier announcement that only those convicted of terrorism would be executed.

"It applies to all (on death row), irrespective of the nature of the crime," said the spokesman, who said the order was given late on Friday but not publicised.

There are more than 8,000 Pakistanis on death row. But the country had a de facto moratorium on executions in place from 2008 until December, when Taliban gunmen massacred 134 children and 19 adults in the worst militant attack in the country's history.

Politicians say fast-track executions are vital to reigning in militant attacks in the nuclear-armed nation of 180 million people.

So legislators voted in sweeping powers allowing the military to try and execute

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## CHOPPER CRASH

# French sports stars killed

REUTERS, Buenos Aires/Paris

Three French sports stars - Olympic swimmer Camille Muffat, yachtswoman Florence Arthaud and boxer Alexis Vastine - were among 10 people killed when two helicopters collided in Argentina on Monday during the filming of a reality TV show.

Authorities said it was

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