

# The Daily Star

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People's Right to Know

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## New SAFF kings



Bangladesh skipper Hasan-al-Mamun (R) receives the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championship trophy from President Iajuddin Ahmed (L) after beating Maldives in the final at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. The hosts beat Maldives 5-3 in penalty shootout after regulation and extra time ended 1-1.

PHOTO: AFP

AL AMIN

Bangladesh crowned themselves undisputed kings of South Asia by lifting the third edition of the SAFF Championship with a 5-3 tiebreak win against Maldives last night. Central defender Sujon capped a fabulous 11-day fairytale run converting the fifth penalty, sending the Maldives custodian Imran Mohammed the wrong way. And as soon the ball kissed the net, the jam-packed Bangabandhu National Stadium roared in deafening approval. The absorbing final went into a shootout after the 120 minutes of thrills and spills ended 1-1. Rokonzaman Kanhan, the talismanic striker, gave the home team a 13th minute lead. But Maldives sprang to life through a 57th strike by Ali Umar, sending the match into overtime. But it only set the stage for the home booters to bid a fitting farewell to their best friend and mentor -- George Kottan. In charge for the last time, Kottan's two-year spell with

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## Crackdown on fuel fixers starts today

### BPC withdraws kerosene sales restrictions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) sends inspection teams to some 1,000 filling stations from today to check quality and quantity of fuel following allegations that dealers are mixing kerosene with costlier diesel, octane and petrol. The inspection teams will examine the calibration of the fuel-dispensing machines at the stations. Nine three-member teams

comprising officials from the BPC, its enlisted marketing companies and the Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institution (BSTI). Three teams will be at work in Dhaka, two in Chittagong and one each in Rajshahi, Khulna, Sylhet and Barisal divisions. Also yesterday, the BPC withdrew control over sales of kerosene at its depots across the country. Earlier on December 11, the BPC imposed control over sales in the face of excessive withdrawal of

kerosene and alleged fuel adulteration. In protest at the BPC move, the dealers suspended purchase of kerosene from the depots, leading to an artificial crisis in northern and southern markets. However, the dealers have not yet called off a planned boycott on Thursday of BPC fuel. While taking the decision to withdraw sales control, a BPC meeting yesterday observed that its

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## Candidates complain intimidation, EC seeks protection

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) fears a pre-election 'law and order breakdown' and has asked the authorities concerned to take necessary steps for fair Union Parishad polls. The EC at a meeting yesterday also reviewed the complaints from election candidates about 'irregularities in nomination filing, setting up of new polling centres and threats from other contestants'. Press reports on law and order breakdown and violation of election codes of conduct also came under scrutiny in the meeting, sources said. "The deterioration of law and

order is a matter of concern especially at a time when we are fully prepared for the Union Parishad polls," Chief Election Commissioner MA Syed told the meeting, quoting newspaper reports. Syed also asked the law enforcement authorities to let the EC know from time to time what measures are being taken to ensure free and fair polls, sources in the EC said. Meantime, the commission sits today to review the recommendations of the just-concluded five-day meeting with the filed-level election officials who demanded army deployment during the polls. The two-month long UP polls begin on

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## Terror-risk list Hasina voices concern to dy chief of US mission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed her deep concern to US Deputy Chief of Mission Christopher Webster at the recent inclusion of Bangladesh in the US list of terror-risk countries. In response, Webster assured her that Bangladesh's inclusion in the list would not make any difference in the existing good ties between Bangladesh and the United States. They were exchanging views on the sidelines of a dinner hosted by the Awami League (AL) in honour of the diplomats stationed in Dhaka at Hotel Sonargaon last night. Envoys of different Asian and

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## Domestic help beaten to death in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A domestic help was beaten to death for taking a small piece of iron rod from an under-construction building. Nurul Islam, 20, a domestic help at 286/3 East Rampura in the city's Khilgaon, was caught as he tried to take a piece of iron rod on Friday. The guard of the under-construction building beat him up and handed him over to his master, Haji Jahirul Ali. Ali, took him to his residence, beat him up again, and confined him to the rooftop where he died on Sunday noon. Later, Neighbours informed the Khilgaon police who recovered the body. Police sent the body to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) morgue for autopsy and a case was

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## Crimes creeping in

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law and order across the country has started deteriorating as criminals are coming out of their hideouts after withdrawal of joint forces. Crime incidents like murder, mugging, robbery and extortion have increased in the city and elsewhere in the country. The law and order had marked an improvement after the joint forces began the anti-crime drive -- Operation Clean Heart -- across the country on October 17 last year. A good number of listed criminals were arrested during the drive while the rest went into hiding. But the scenario began to change and criminals started coming out of their hideouts after the army pullout on January 9. They are now moving freely, reports from many areas say. In the most sensational incident, eight people were killed in two bomb explosions at a fair in a remote

village in Shakhipur in Tangail district on Friday night. In the city, muggers stabbed to death insurance company employee Abdus Salam Faruq on the Mazar Road in Mirpur on Sunday and looted valuables. In another incident in the city, armed assailants gunned down Nurul Islam, a leader of opposition Awami League's student front Jubo League, at Pallabi. He was shot dead for his alleged involvement with the joint forces during an anti-crime drive on January 17, police and his family believe. Local people said Islam's death was a "revenge killing" and there may be more such killings by the criminals who have now come out of their hideouts. Robbers looted gold ornaments worth about Tk 1.03 crore from a jewellery at Gulshan on the same night. In Narayanganj in the same night, criminals snatched away their

accomplice Anwar from police at Fatullah. Dacoits looted cash and valuables from 14 shops and offices at Topkhana Road in the city on the night of January 15. In northern Panchagarh district schoolgirl Parbati Das was raped and killed by miscreants at Kalikapur Christianpara at Atoari on Friday morning. Sources claimed that cadres of the ruling party are now taking control of most of the drug businesses and smuggling spots in the city. Transport owners now fear that extortionists and hoodlums would now resume their activities at different bus terminals in the city. They had gone into hiding closing their 'union offices' but are now moving

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ROLL OF HONOUR	
SAFF CHAMPIONSHIP Bangladesh 2003	
Year	Champions Runners
1997	India Maldives
1999	India
	Bangladesh

## Cop injured in gunfight with extortionists at Fatikchhari

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A policeman was bullet-injured and two men were arrested during a gunfight between a group of armed extortionists and police at Fatikchhari in the district here yesterday. The injured policeman identified as Nayek Jahangir Alam was admitted to a local health complex with a bullet in the knee and was later shifted to Dampara Police Line Hospital in the city. Sources said armed cadres allegedly belonging to Islami Chhatra Shibir went to a construction firm engaged in road construction at Udaliya Tea Garden of Fatikchhari yesterday afternoon and demanded toll. But authorities soon informed police about the matter. As police arrived, the extortionists opened fire triggering a 10-minute gunfight with the police in which some 30 rounds of bullets were exchanged. Police managed to arrest one Alamgir, 28, an associate of a listed

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**ANNOUNCEMENT**  
The Daily Star is pleased to announce that it is going to resume its regular Saturday literature page from January 24 under its new literary editor, Khademul Islam. All relevant correspondence and communication regarding local literary events should be addressed to The Literary Editor, The Daily Star, 19 Kanwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215, or to the attn: Lit Ed, dseditor@gononet.com. Publishers should also send review copies of literary works and publications to the above address.