

## Big ammo haul from Bogra AL leader's house, truck

62,112 bullets, 120kg of explosives recovered



A view of the bullets, left, recovered from the residence of an AL leader in Bogra; the truck, right, which was seized with huge ammunition.

ANWAR ALI, Bogra

Police recovered 62,112 bullets of Chinese rifle and powerful explosives weighing 120kg from an abandoned truck and an Awami League (AL) leader's house at Jogarpara village in Kahlalu upazila of the district on Friday night in what they said the biggest ever haul.

Five persons including the wife of AL leader Akhikur Rahman Pintu were arrested.

Pintu, convenor of Birkadar Union AL, along with five others fled the spot before the police arrived.

Sources said police could not arrest the leaders of the gang, believed to be involved in arms trade, as they fled before the police

raid.

"There was undoubtedly a massive plan for sabotage and it may be linked to other sensational crimes across the country," Deputy Commissioner of Bogra Rafiqul Mohamed told The Daily Star.

The explosives recovered are used for making dynamites and the ammunition are of Chinese origin, now also made in India, he said.

Some 50,100 bullets in 18 plastic bags and 42 packets of explosives were recovered from the truck abandoned inside a brick kiln of one Yasin Ali. The rest were found in and around the AL leader's house.

The explosives are of dark brown colour, each packet weighing

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Money laundering  
49 dubious  
accounts  
identified,  
peerzada  
under watch

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

A Bangladesh Bank (BB) taskforce has identified 49 accounts in five banks suspected to be used for money laundering.

The taskforce was formed early last year and it forayed into accounts of all banks to come to the conclusion. A special inspection team of the BB is scrutinising these 49 accounts to bring specific charges.

The suspected accounts include one by a so-called peerzada (son of a spiritual leader) with a foreign bank. The taskforce has been looking into abnormal transactions on the account of the peerzada.

The taskforce has alerted the banks about flight of foreign exchange through over-invoicing.

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## Hasina plotted coup after polls, says Patal

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina planned a military coup after her party's debacle in October 2001 elections, State Minister for Youth and Sports Fazlur Rahman Patal said in parliament yesterday.

"I am telling you as an MP that the opposition leader prodded the army to stage a coup at the fag end of the caretaker government's tenure but the patriotic army refused to go by her dictates," said Patal while taking part in discussion on the budget.

Trading of accusations with few words on the virtues or vices of the budget as usual marked the general debate on the budget.

A former leader of Bangladesh Chhatra League, Rajshahi University, Patal launched a tirade

against the Awami League and its leadership.

"After losing power, Sheikh Hasina and her party leaders have been cooking up evil designs," said Patal. "Her latest design was to brand the present government as having links with al-Qaeda and its leader Osama bin Laden."

In his lengthy speech, Patal also harped on post-independent days and recalled the contributions of Sheikh Mujib, General Osmani, Ziaur Rahman, Tajuddin Ahmed and students to the independence movement.

"But the attitude of Awami League leaders is that independence of Bangladesh is their property," said Patal.

Drawing a comparison between Sheikh Hasina and the BNP chair

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## Khaleque, Salahuddin swap corruption charges in JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) lawmaker S A Khaleque and State Minister for Communications Salahuddin Ahmed levelled charges of corruption and land-grabbing against each other in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

Speaking on the budget, Khaleque accused the minister of taking Tk 25 lakh in bribes from Dhaka City Corporation Ward Commissioner Monwar Hossain Dipjol to allow him set up a CNG gas station in Mirpur in Dhaka.

He alleged that Dipjol was accused in 34 criminal cases, but the minister allocated him the CNG plot occupying his (Khaleque's) land.

"If such allocations are allowed in exchange of money then how could hooliganism be rooted out?" Khaleque wondered.

Taking floor on personal clarification, Salahuddin said he was ashamed to say that all the roads and highway lands in Mirpur area were in a way or the other occupied by Khaleque.

"I had to recover lands from his grab for allocation for the establishment of the CNG station," he said.

Dismissing Khaleque's allegation, he said the allotments were given under the government policies, not for personal gains.

"If he had been a sane man, I would have definitely filed a case,

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## Forex reserves reach \$2.36b on WB loan disbursement

STAR REPORT

The World Bank (WB) disbursed \$307 million of its Bangladesh Development Support funds yesterday, pushing the foreign exchange reserve to \$2.367 billion.

This is the highest level of forex reserve since June 1996 when it was \$2.039 billion.

The WB board approved \$536 million in loans on June 19. The IMF also approved \$490 million of which \$70 million will be disbursed in a couple of days.

The rest of the loans will be disbursed in six tranches -- one every month. But before funds disbursement, the IMF would review the progress in implementation of the conditions it laid down.

Another \$35 million in debt relief grant from Japan will be added to reserves soon.

## Dy speaker invites AL, BNP to talks over tea

AL to respond today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Deputy Speaker Akhter Hamid Siddiqui invited the ruling BNP and the main opposition Awami League (AL) to a dialogue at his chamber yesterday evening to resolve the parliamentary stalemate due to the AL's boycott of session.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdul Hamid told reporters they would respond to the invitation today after discussing it with party leaders.

Akhter Hamid sent separate letters to BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives

Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain and the deputy leader of the opposition, inviting them to resolve the standoff over a cup of tea at his chamber.

Hamid also told the Deputy Speaker on telephone that before joining him over tea, he would have to discuss it with senior party leaders.

The deputy speaker however hoped that the treasury bench and the opposition would meet today. The ruling party is ready to sit with

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An Awami League activist jumps off the bridge at Dhanmondi Road No. 32 when police clubbed pickets during yesterday's hartal.

## Hartal sees patchy fights between police and pickets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Riot police clashed with hundreds of pro-hartal activists of the main opposition Awami League (AL) and its front organisations in different parts of the city yesterday, firing rubber bullets and lobbing teargas canisters to disperse them.

More than 100 activists of the opposition were injured in the clashes at Dhanmondi, Bangabandhu Avenue and other places in the city, while another 100 people were reportedly picked up by police. Pickets blasted about 50 handmade crackers and threw brickbats on police during the turbulent hours.

Riot police clubbed processionists, fired teargas shells and were engaged in chase and counter-chase at Dhanmondi at about 11:00am.

"Road no 32 (old) of Dhanmondi

turned into a battlefield for nearly four hours since 11:00 in the morning when hartal pickets and law enforcers clashed with each other," said a resident of the area. The crowd blasted handmade bombs and police retaliated by firing from shotguns and lobbing teargas shells.

The Awami League enforced the countrywide hartal to protest price hike of essentials owing to measures in the new budget and lack of security in public life. The party enforced another hartal on June 12 and its student wing, Bangladesh Chhatra League, a half day hartal on June 19.

Yesterday's hartal witnessed the most violent mood of the opposition

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A BIWTC coaster slides into the Karnaphuli river yesterday because of high current caused by incessant rain and flash floods.

## Top level changes in banks

STAR REPORT

The government yesterday brought changes in top positions of the nationalised commercial and specialised banks and financial institutions yesterday.

A notification of the finance ministry said Managing Director (MD) of the Bangladesh Shilpa Bank Md Abul Hamid Miah was made the MD of the Rupali Bank.

Rupali Bank MD Mohammad Farhad Hossain was made the MD of Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha.

Janata Bank Deputy Managing Director M Ziaul Haq was given the current charge of the MD of the Bangladesh Shilpa Bank.

Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha MD Rabiul Islam was sent back to his position of the executive director of the Bangladesh Bank, withdrawing him from the deputa-tion to the Sangstha.

## 4 washed away by Ctg flood waters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four people were washed away by raging floodwaters in Fatikchhari upazila in Chittagong district yesterday as the situation in southeastern and northwestern districts worsened because of torrential monsoon rains and onrush of hill waters.

Officials said the floods submerged a number of Fatikchhari villages, killing Bibhuti Barua, 35, of Bhujpur, Baddrodoza, 60, of Payneedong, Afser, 30, of Suabil and Delwar, 55, of Roshangiri.

Another seven of three families in Sunderpur union were missing for the last two days, they added.

UNB also reported the deaths of Sabina Begum of Narayanhat and her two children, Khadiza Begum of

Sunderpur and her daughter Rumana, M Nurul Absar of Shoaabell, Delwar of Roshangiri and Jebel Hossain of Datmara in the upazila.

Of the dead, villagers retrieved the bodies of Sabina Begum and Rumana.

Officials said 13 unions in Fatikchhari and nine unions in Mirersarai went under seven to 10 feet water as the Halda burst its banks in at least 10 places.

They said the floods marooned 50,000 families in Fatikchhari and 10,000 in Mirersarai.

The upazila nirbahi officer of Fatikchhari, Ramijur Rahman, said several thousand people were marooned in the low-lying areas.

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## A road for muggers

Small traders find Rayer Bazaar-Waizghat embankment road risky

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The embankment road between Rayer Bazaar and Waizghat has become a muggers' paradise and fish traders are their catch.

Scores of fish traders who buy fish in Waizghat and sell at different kitchen markets can no longer use this road safely these days.

Hardly a day could pass by without a trader being mugged. Most of the victims are very poor and not willing to report these incidents to police, The Daily Star found in an investigation.

"Reporting to the police would not only be a waste of time but also

invite hassle for us," observed one of the three traders who were robbed of whatever they had on the early morning of Thursday.

Mohammad Shaheed, a fish trader, had to fork out Tk 3,000 when three muggers waylaid his rickshaw at knifepoint at around 6:00am at the intersection of Hazaribagh Road and the embankment road. Within half an hour, fish traders Nirmal and Khadem Ali lost Tk 4,000 and Tk 4,500 at the same spot.

Shaheed had borrowed the money at a high interest just a day before he lost it. Now, he does not

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## Proposed tax measure for professionals, directors may be lifted

NAZMUL AHSAN

The mandatory minimum taxes for company directors, businessmen and professionals under the self-assessment scheme may be withdrawn.

The proposed budget for the next fiscal has the provision of a mandatory minimum tax of Tk 30,000 for company directors and Tk 12,000 for professionals and businessmen.

A proposal for the withdrawal is likely to be placed in parliament tomorrow when the budget will be passed. The private sector had termed the proposed tax measure a deterrent to investment and the

capital market.

A recent meeting between Chairman of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) Shoaib Ahmad and a group of businessmen agreed to the withdrawal of the proposed tax measure.

President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) Yussuf Abdullah Harun led the private sector to the meeting on Wednesday.

"If passed, the proposed measure would definitely affect com-p a n y

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