

# BB fines branch managers of 6 banks

## Taking deposits at higher than declared rate

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh Bank (BB) Thursday fined 13 branch managers of six private banks for providing more than declared rates of interest on deposits.

It has also detected similar irregularities in 14 more banks and asked as many branch managers to

explain the high interest rate riddle by December 25.

The 13 branch managers -- two each of Southeast Bank, Trust Bank, Premier Bank, Exim Bank, One Bank and Mutual Trust Bank and one of First Security Bank -- have been fined Tk 2,000 each. The branches are mostly in Gulshan, Banani and Motijheel.

The 14 banks now under scrutiny include AB Bank, IFIC, Oriental Bank, City Bank, UCB, Prime Bank, Bangladesh Commerce Bank, Dutch Bangla Bank, Dhaka Bank, Standard Bank, National Bank, Brac Bank and HSBC.

The BB took the action, the first of its kind, to curb the ill practice

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

## FORCED LABOUR Coastguard rescues 10 boys from Dublar Char

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Coastguard at Mongla have rescued 10 boys from Alorkol area of Dublar Char in the Bay of Bengal where fish traders kept them confined and engaged in hard labour for about three months.

The boys recovered from Matsha Polli of Alorkol on Thursday are Jahangir Alam, 16, Firoze, 14, Nayan, 13, Faruque, 12, Sumon, 13, Sultan, 14, Shafiqul, 15, Lalmia, 14, Jony, 13, and Motaahar, 14. All of them hail from different places of greater Chittagong.

They were handed over to police on Friday morning and sent home in the afternoon under special arrangements. Coast guards bore the expenses of their home-bound journey.

According to coast guards, one

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

## PCJSS leader shot dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Khagrachhari*

An armed gang gunned down a Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) leader at Pankhaiya in Khagrachhari yesterday.

A gang stopped the motorbike of Tridip Sankar Chakma, assistant office secretary of Khagrachhari PCJSS, at Pankhaiya and shot him point blank, sources said.

Meanwhile, the PCJSS blamed United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF) for the killing.

In another incident yesterday noon, Debangshu Chakma, 32, received bullet injuries when he was caught in a crossfire between the PCJSS and the UPDF at Logang in Panchhari.

He was later admitted to a local hospital, sources said.

### Announcement

Today's issue contains 'Martyred Intellectuals Day Special' on Page 5 in place of 'Point-Counterpoint'.

## MARTYRED INTELLECTUALS DAY

# Nation recalls their supreme sacrifice today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nation observes the 33rd Martyred Intellectuals Day today, recalling the supreme sacrifice of the illustrious sons of the soil to free the motherland and pledging afresh to materialise their dream for a society free of exploitation and injustice.

With defeat looming large,

the Pakistani occupation army and their collaborators -- Razakar, Al-Badr and Al-Shams -- abducted frontline Bengali intellectuals and professionals on December 14, 1971 and killed them to cripple the nation intellectually.

Intellectuals, academics, doctors, engineers, journalists and other eminent personali

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

## A case for justice stalled for six yrs

ZAYADUL AHSAN

Six years after the sister of a slain intellectual sought justice to the murder of her brother on December 14, 1971, the case got lost at the law ministry on the question of whether the killers should be tried in the war crimes tribunal or a special court.

Prof. Farida Banu, sister of Prof. Gias Uddin, one of the eight Dhaka University teachers killed by the infamous Al-Badr and Razakar, filed the case on September 24, 1997.

Had the case been put on trial, it would have opened a new chapter of a book that has

never been flipped through by a country born out of blood and fire and sacrifice of three million.

But the book was closed once again after the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) told the home ministry that the case need to be probed under the International War Crimes Act.

The home ministry sent a file to the law ministry for its opinion in January 2000. No-one knows, or rather cares, about the file any more.

"We did a primary investigation and sent a file with our observations to the home

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

## Hasina demands int'l probe into Kuril arms haul

UNB, *Dhaka*

Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina yesterday demanded an international probe into the arms and ammunition haul in the city's Kuril area to find out the "real criminals".

She said the BNP-Jamaat coalition government does not want to allow any international probe into the arms haul for fear of unveiling the truth through FBI, the US intelligence agency, wanted to investigate the matter.

"If FBI or Scotland Yard would be allowed to investigate, the real criminals could be caught... But they (government) do not want it," Hasina said.

The Awami League president was addressing the concluding session of the first meeting of the central executive committee of Awami Sechchhabak League at the party's Dhamondia office in the evening.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

## Police 'torture' Victim's family threatens agitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Relatives of Mahbulul Alam Rony, who died on Friday allegedly from torture at Sabujbagh Police Station custody, threatened of street agitation if the alleged killers were not brought to book by tomorrow.

"I have lost my brother," Hamidullah Ujjal, Rony's elder brother, said after Rony's burial yesterday.

"We will wait to see whether the authorities fulfil our demand by Rony's quikhwani day. If not, then we will block the Mugdapara Bishwa Road and vandalise vehicles."

Ujjal received Rony's body at 2:00pm yesterday on completion of post-mortem at Dhaka Medical College (DMC) morgue. He was buried at the family graveyard at South Mugdapara after the Asr prayers.

In the inquest report, Magistrate Sanaul Haq said there were marks of graze in his left buttock. But Sagar, who bathed the body before the burial, said both soles of Rony bore marks of torture.

However, Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Ashraful Huda said at a briefing yesterday no evidence of police torture was found. He said he would ask the home ministry for a probe into the allegation of torture.

## PM returns home

UNB, *Dhaka*

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia returned home yesterday after attending the three-day World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Geneva.

A VVIP flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines carrying the prime minister and her entourage arrived at Zia International Airport at 1:55pm.

Ministers, Chiefs of the three services, diplomats and high civil and military officials received her at the airport.

The prime minister left for Geneva on Dec 9 to attend the conference that began on Dec 10.

## LEFT-ALLIANCE HARTAL

# 30 hurt as police club pickets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 30 people, including women, were injured as police clubbed pro-hartal pickets in the city yesterday during the country-wide dawn-to-dusk shutdown called by left-leaning 11-party alliance.

The strike called to press home an 11-point demand including removal of anti-liberation elements from the cabinet, arresting the price hike of essentials, stopping misrule, criminal activities and corruption, passed off relatively peacefully in other parts of the country.

Police picked up at least 36

people from different parts of the city during the hartal hours. At least three buses were damaged by pickets in the city.

Police in riot-gear used batons to disperse a pro-hartal mob near the Paltan intersection at about 9:10am when they tried to obstruct movement of vehicles through the area.

Luna Noor, president of Bangladesh Chhatra Union, was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with head injuries, while General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Bangladesh Bimal Biswas, who also took police bashing,

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



PHOTO: STAR

A policeman tries to move Workers' Party President Rashed Khan Menon from the road divider after he fell during a tussle between pickets and police at Paltan Crossing during hartal yesterday morning.

# Police to get reform shot in the arm soon

SHAIKH NAZRUL ISLAM

The police will get a much-needed shot in the arm in a couple of months when the government begins implementation of a project to reform the force and prop up its sagging morals.

The Integrated Police Reform Project seeks to raise facilities, change police recruitment method, introduce on-job training, increase forensic capacity including DNA test, launch intelligence-based investigation to detect crimes and ensure job satisfaction of good officers.

It also envisages putting the police on a higher moral ground, making the force corruption-free

and pro-people, home ministry sources said.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) yesterday submitted a \$13.5 million three-year police reform proposal, adding a fillip to the government efforts.

The proposal also plans to improve the force's case management, legal and disciplinary, monitoring and media dealing capacities.

If its three-year scheme is properly implemented, the UNDP will extend police reform support for up to another six years.

The home ministry said the government was also tapping other

donors including the World Bank for financial and technical support for the project.

After receiving the UNDP proposal, the government asked the United Nations agency to arm the police with appropriate technological prowess to fight cyber crimes and include the Rapid Action Battalion, Ansar and Village Defence Party forces in the reform programme.

The government also sought the organisation's cooperation to fight money laundering and white-collar criminals.

"We have discussed the technical aspects of the reforms with the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

## Bhola sees light after a week

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *BARISAL*

Electricity supply in Bhola resumed after seven days Friday night.

Sources in local Power Development Board (PDB) office said technical fault in the greed line on December 6 disrupted the electricity supply.

Engineers and about 150 workers worked round the clock to repair the fault.

The power supply returned to normal in most parts of the island district at 7:52pm.

The other alternative submarine cable line was also connected yesterday as substitute in emergency.

## Depression over Bay may turn into cyclone

UNB, *Dhaka*

The depression over the Bay is likely to intensify into a cyclonic storm and move towards north-west.

Met office said that the depression intensified into a deep depression and was centred at noon about 1515-km south-southwest of Chittagong port, 1430-km south-southwest of Cox's Bazar and 1450-km south of Mongla port.

The maximum sustained wind speed within 48-km of the depression centre is about 50kph, rising to 60kph in gusts or squalls. The sea will remain rough.

Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to keep hoisted distant cautionary signal number one.

All fishing boats and trawlers over the north Bay and deep sea have been advised to come close to the coast and proceed with caution.

# 2 more flyovers soon to ease city traffic

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government plans to construct two more flyovers at Moghbazar and Mouchak intersections in a bid to cut down on traffic tailbacks in these two overcrowded areas.

Official sources said Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) has donated Tk 3.66 crore for the feasibility study, engineering design and floating of tender for construction of the flyovers.

An agreement has already been signed between the Economic Relations Division and KFAED and the finance and planning minister approved the technical assistance

project proposal.

The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has been tasked with executing the project.

Eight consortiums of construction firms have agreed to carry out the feasibility study, but the authorities shortlisted six firms (foreign and local) for the project. Of them, five firms have submitted their proposals.

After examining them, the evaluation committee selected the Associated Engineering Partnership for final contract negotiation.

The firm placed a financial pro

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

# Smiles of victory wipe out 9-month pain

## A Japanese journalist recalls his journey into liberated Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It was a rough ride from Kolkata to Khulna Racecourse Maidan on December 17, 1971, recalls Japanese journalist Naoki Usui, as the Pakistani occupation forces had destroyed most of the bridges. But the triumphant smile of people subsided all his pain.

Usui was narrating yesterday his 17-hour trip touching Jessore

and Khulna to Khulna Racecourse Maidan on December 17 to cover the surrender of the Pakistani army to the Mitra Bhahini -- allied forces of Mukti Bahini and the Indian army.

"The highway was crammed with jubilant people. Younger ones were waving hands and screaming 'Joy Bangla' at the top of their voice at different places of Jessore and Khulna," Usui says.

The young journalist, now 60, came to Kolkata to cover the Eastern Command of the Indian Army and took 333 photographs of overjoyed children, youths and people while driving around in the two districts. He stayed in Kolkata for four weeks.

"When I went to a village to watch the joys of liberation, people were dancing and singing

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5