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People's Right to Know

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BDR, BSF fight at Tentulia Bangladeshi killed

BSS, Tentulia

A Bangladeshi citizen abducted by the Border Security Force (BSF) of India was killed during a more than four-hour long gunfight between the BSF and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) on Tentulia border in Panchagarh district in the small hours of yesterday.

A tense situation is prevailing on the border.

Deploying a large number of soldiers with heavy arms near Hatiram BSF camp, the BSF opened unprovoked fire at Goolgoach outpost of BDR and Kashimpur village on Tentulia border at around 1:45am yesterday, BDR, police and local people said.

The BSF also intruded into Bangladeshi villages, abducted an unidentified person, and killed

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Voter list becomes iffy on legal tangles

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The possibility of having a fair voter list for the next parliamentary election is fading fast. Time shortage is most likely to force the Election Commission (EC) to prepare a list in too much of a hurry.

With only about seven months in hand to make things ready for the election, the EC is yet to fix the dates for publication of the draft and the final versions of the electoral roll it has been preparing since January amid a wide-scale controversy.

The difficulties the EC is in have mainly stemmed from the stubborn attitude of Chief Election Commissioner MA Aziz towards the opinions of his two initial colleagues, who have all along been opposed to

going for a fresh voter list.

With the backing of the government that appointed two new election commissioners to provide him with a majority in the commission, the CEC ignored the January 4 High Court directives to update the existing electoral roll and thus aggravated the crisis.

The fieldwork of fresh voter listing ended on March 30, allegedly keeping a large number of eligible voters outside the roll.

Though officials at the EC Secretariat say they will revise the existing voter list if a fresh one cannot be made, many voters are sure to be left out due to the time constraint. As the procedure of revising an existing roll is almost the same as that of preparing a new

one, it will be difficult to execute the task accurately within the remaining short span of time.

In case of the current voter list, the EC started preparing it on May 15, 2000 and published it on October 26, almost a year before the 2001 election held on October 1. The EC Secretariat officials say the list was printed in February 2001, over seven months ahead of the last parliamentary election.

But this time the EC started voter listing on January 1 last, only one year ahead of the upcoming polls, and set June 1, 2006 as the date for its publication. After wasting no less

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Dr Kamal assures Kansat victims of legal aid

SHAMIM ASHRAF, from Kansat

Representing members of the 11-member Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) probe committee on the Kansat killings Dr Kamal Hossain on Friday visited the troubled Kansat area in Chapainawabganj.

Addressing a rally at Abbas Bazar near Kansat Kamal said, "You people who are working to feed the whole nation are being killed indiscriminately for demanding uninterrupted power supply for cultivating."

He said this cannot continue and added that the laws have been enforced on them illegally. Kamal assured he would take the matter to High Court to provide them legal aid.

He asked the victims of the troubled area to submit their complaints and added that he would

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Cops called off, rally ban withdrawn

People return home after successful talks; Minu says sorry for calling Rabbani criminal

SHAMIM ASHRAF and ANWAR ALI, from Kansat

Hundreds of locals of trouble-torn Kansat in Chapainawabganj started returning home yesterday afternoon following a primarily successful talks between the agitating locals and a high-powered government body.

A five-member government committee yesterday decided to withdraw the law enforcers during a conversation with Golam Rabbani, convener of the Palli Bidyut Unnayan Sangram Parishad (PBUSP), over telephone, sources

said.

A large number of police and other law enforcers deployed in the area started pulling out at 4:20pm.

Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) was also withdrawn, sources said.

Withdrawals of law enforcers and section 144 are two of the five conditions the PBUSP had set as a prerequisite to the talks to resolve the Kansat crisis in which at least 17 people have been killed in police action since January 4.

Two other conditions-- withdrawal of two cases filed against Rabbani and around 100

others, and release of 32 people, including Rokeya Begum, wife of Rabbani's brother Rezaul Islam-- will also be implemented, meeting sources said.

The government high-ups will take decision about the fifth condition--removal of local BNP lawmaker Shahjahan Mian, the government body told the PBUSP.

Headed by State Minister for Civil Aviation Mirza Fakrul Islam, the committee comprised Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu, State Minister for Public Works Alamgir

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Hartal observed to protest Nizami's Satkhira visit

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A dawn-to-dusk hartal was observed partially in Satkhira yesterday to protest Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer and Industries Minister Matur Rahman Nizami's visit to the district.

The Satkhira unit of Bangladesh Muktijoddha Sangsad and Ekatturer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee called the shutdown supported by the 14-party opposition combine.

Most of the business establishments remained closed till 12 noon and vehicles were off the road during the hartal hours. No untoward incident was reported.

The leaders and activists of Bangladesh Muktijoddha Sangsad, Nirmul Committee and the 14-party brought out a procession in

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PHOTO: STAR

The students of Fine Arts Institute bring out a colourful procession marking the beginning of Bangla year 1413. The photo was taken on the Pahela Baishakh at Shahbagh in the capital.

PAHELA BAISHAKH

Celebration turns
into human sea

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Resolved to uphold Bengali cultural heritage, thousands of people on Friday poured into the streets, parks and open spaces across the capital and elsewhere to celebrate Pahela Baishakh, the first day of Bangla New Year.

Irrespective of religion and age, they welcomed the first day of the Bangla year 1413 with fanfare and festivity, shrugging off the threat of militant attacks.

The biggest cultural festival of the Bangladesh began with Tagore's song "Esho hey Baishakh Esho Esho" sung by the artistes of Chhayanaut at the city's Ramna

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REFORMS DIALOGUE COMMITTEE 14-party names 5 AL leaders today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League-led 14-party opposition line-up sends a letter to the BNP secretary general today, nominating five representatives to his proposed 10-member government-opposition committee to discuss the caretaker government and electoral reforms.

The opposition combine will name five AL policymaking-level members, as BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and AL General Secretary Abdul

Jalil have agreed through correspondence, sources said.

According to them, AL Presidium members Abdur Razzak MP, Tofail Ahmed, Kazi Jafrullah MP and Suranjit Sengupta MP, and Jalil will represent the 14-party alliance. AL Acting GS Obaidul Quader may replace Jalil if the latter's health condition does not improve.

The opposition camp finalised the draft of the letter yesterday at a meeting at the AL central office in

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Citizens' body discusses 15-yr Vision Paper for Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The "Citizen's Group for a Vision for Bangladesh" at its first meeting yesterday decided on the scopes and modalities for preparing the Vision Paper for Bangladesh for the next 15 years.

The meeting, held at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) office in

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AL, Jubo Dal leaders among 5 killed in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five people including two ward unit leaders of Awami League (AL) and Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal were killed in separate incidents in the capital on Friday.

The AL leader killed in a double-murder incident, Alimullah Aleem, 55, was president of Ward-76 AL unit and also a former ward commissioner of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC). The other killed with him,

Abdur Rob Sardar, 65, was president of South Sayedabad Panchayet Committee.

Police and witnesses said around five assailants sprayed bullets inside a ground floor room of Aleem's five-storey house at Dayaganj Sardar Patti in Sutrapur killing the two. The incident took place when several people including Aleem and Rob were engaged in an arbitration at about 10:30 pm.

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Delhi barriers on Dhaka jute goods

Indian customs delays clearance,
tries to push goods into higher
tax categories

MONJUR MAHMUD

India has restricted import of jute products from Bangladesh by pushing up import duties substantially and by imposing other non-tariff barriers.

According to sources, the restriction has been imposed to discourage Indian importers as import of jute products from Bangladesh rose by more than 500 percent during April-November period in 2005-06 financial year.

Submissions of chemical testing certificates have become mandatory for Bangladeshi traders who export twines. The certificates to be issued by the Indian authorities will have to mention that the twines do not have oil content over three percent, sources said.

India has also increased tariff on

jute products to 12 percent from eight percent. Previously, Indian importers were supposed to pay eight percent tax comprising six percent in duties, one percent countervailing duty (CVD) and one percent to the education fund in cases of imports from Saarc countries.

The basic duty for non-Saarc countries is 15 percent, plus two percent to the education fund and one percent as CVD, totalling 18 percent.

Indian importers now have to pay 15 percent duty on jute cuttings and four percent duty on raw jute that were zero duty items previously.

"We were hoping to export

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Advertisement

Turkey wants better trade with Bangladesh

BSS, Ankara

Turkish President Ahmet Nejd Sezer said on Friday Turkey would like to enhance bilateral cooperation with Bangladesh in all fields including trade, economic and commercial sectors.

The Turkish president said this while holding talks with Prime Minister (PM) Khaleda Zia on a wide range of issues on the concluding day of Khaleda's three-day visit to Turkey. Khaleda was scheduled to arrive in Dhaka early today.

President Sezer said Turks consider "people of Bangladesh as their brothers" and Turkey would like to see this relations reflected in stronger economic and business cooperation.

During the 45-minute talks, the two leaders stressed the need for enhancing bilateral cooperation in the fields of trade, economic, agriculture, education, culture, investment,

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