

## Copies of split verdict to be sent to CJ this week

By Special Correspondent

Copies of the split verdict of the Death Reference Bench of High Court in the Bangabandhu murder case is not likely to be submitted to Chief Justice Latifur Rahman today when the court reopens after vacation.

The copies may be submitted later this week, it was learnt yesterday.

After receiving the copies, the Chief Justice will form a third bench to hear the acquittal of five of the 15 accused by Justice Ruhul Amin, one judge of the Bench. The other judge --Justice Khairul Huq -- upheld death sentences of all the 15.

In the split verdict was given on December 14.

A trial court in its verdict on November 8, 1998 sentenced all the 15 to death for murdering Bangabandhu along with most of his family members on August 15, 1975.

Four of them Faruqur Rahman, Bazlul Huda, Shahriar Rashid Khan and Mohiuddin Ahmed --are in Dhaka Central Jail. Others are absconding abroad.

## Cold wave death toll in India rises to 68

NEW DELHI, Jan 6: Cold weather sweeping northern and eastern India has killed at least 68 people in the past few days, officials said today, reports Reuters.

In the northern state of Uttar Pradesh 35 people died, officials said, while the United News of India (UNI) said 33 people died in the eastern state of Bihar. The news agency said 335 people had also been taken ill.

Night temperatures have dropped to around four degrees Celsius in parts of northern India, hitting the poor who live on the streets.

"Those who died on account of the cold wave were people who could not afford woollen clothing," Uttar Pradesh's relief commissioner RC Dwivedi told Reuters.

Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are among India's most populous states, have a majority of the country's poor and are among the worst affected during the winter months.

Thick fog and mist have disrupted the movement of trains, buses and aircraft in many states.

New Delhi's international airport was forced to cancel several flights earlier this week.

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Jan 7		5.27 pm
Jan 8	6-43am	

Prayer Timings		
January 7		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-10
Zuhr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-30	5-35
Esha	7-00	7-30
Source: Islamic Foundation		

## Cancer among children alarmingly high

### No registry, no population-based study: Experts

By Naimul Haq

Cancer among children in Bangladesh is alarmingly high, according to a three-year study.

The study conducted by the Radiotherapy Department at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) found that out of 10,095 patients who were detected having cancer, 495 were children aged up to 14. The rate is five per cent.

The study was done from January 1990 to December 1992 but not made public earlier.

Of the 497 children, 16.3 per cent had (eye) retinoblastoma, 14 per cent blood cancer, 13.48 per cent bone cancer, 12.47 per cent lymphoma, nine per cent tumour in the central nervous system, 7.85 per cent (brain) neuroblastoma, 7.44 per cent germ cell tumour, 6.84 per cent soft tissue sarcoma and 4.43 per cent had nasopharyngeal tumour.

"The rate is quite horrifying," Prof Hye, former director of Cancer Hospital in the city told this correspondent when contacted. "It is a significant finding and is a matter of great concern", he said.

Of the 10,095 patients, 30 per cent was of 15-45 age group and 65 per cent was above that age group.

Among the males, 21 per cent had cancer in lung, 12 per cent in laryngeal, six per cent in lymphoma, 6.35 per cent in oropharynx and 5.86 per cent in oral cavity.

Among females, 24.32 per cent had cervix cancer, 17.6 per cent breast cancer, 8 per cent oral cavity cancer, 5.93 per cent ovary cancer and 3.31 per cent had lymphoma cancer.

Another leading oncologist of the country said, "Cancer is a growing problem in developing countries. Unfortunately, population-based study on cancer is lacking in Bangladesh and so we can not fix strategy for cancer treatment."

Dr Pinaki Bhattacharya, Member Secretary of Oncology Club said, "There is no cancer registry in Bangladesh, which is a big hurdle. In fact, we are developing a cost-effective cancer registry to study See page 11 col 7

## Opposition calls hartal in Ctg today

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 6: BNP led All-Party Action Council (APAC) will enforce a day-long hartal in the port city tomorrow demanding withdrawal of case filed against BNP central leader M Morshed Khan MP.

The authorities have already tightened security in the city with deployment of additional police force fearing violence during hartal hours.

Meanwhile, police arrested some opposition activists including six JCD leaders which prompted APAC to take a decision for a 48-hour hartal in the port city from January 10.

Chittagong chapter of All-Party Action Committee (APAC) took out a procession in the city this afternoon in support of its tomorrow's dawn-to-dusk hartal.

The procession was brought out after a rally held in Laldighi See page 11 col 3

## Official talks held Indonesia offers zero tariff facility for Bangladeshi goods

By Diplomatic Correspondent

Indonesia will give zero tariff facility to Bangladeshi products to reduce its trade imbalance with the former.

The facility will be effective after the first meeting of the proposed Joint Commission, to be held in Jakarta within the next two months. The Commission is likely to be formed soon.

At official talks here yesterday, the two countries also agreed to exchange "concrete ideas" for poverty alleviation, removal of illiteracy and empowerment of women to make greater strides in these fields which are crucial for development.

The two countries also decided to hold single country

exhibitions, fairs and to exchange business and trade delegations to boost trade.

Visiting Indonesian Foreign Minister Dr Alwai Shihab and his Bangladeshi counterpart Abus Samad Azad led the two sides at the hour-long talks held at the state guest house Padma.

The talks were held on the sidelines of the on-going visit of Indonesian Vice-president Megawati Soekarnoputri. She arrived here yesterday on a three-day official visit.

A joint statement issued after the talks also emphasised "building a bridge of friendship, trade and understanding" between the

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Innovation for wrong reason... Department of Narcotic Control (DNC) officials arrested four persons on their arrival yesterday at the Kamalapur Railway Station in the city from Akhaura on an Upaban Express train. They wore specially deigned vests, each carrying 68 bottles of phensidyl, a banned cough syrup used as intoxicant.

--Star photo

## Discontent intensifies over appointment of IG Prison

### High-ranking jail officials want their man, not one from armed forces

Star Report

Discontent amongst high-ranking officials at the Prison Directorate is intensifying over stopgap appointment to the position of Inspector General of Prisons, sources said.

Incumbent IG Brigadier Mohammed Waliur Rahman Chowdhury was drafted into prison services from the armed forces on a six-month deputation in February 1997. He has held the position ever since.

In March 1997, the Ministry of Home Affairs sent a letter to the Establishment Ministry, requesting withdrawal of Brigadier Chowdhury within six months so that the post can be filled in through departmental promotions.

The recruitment rules demand that officials within the department occupy top positions of the directorate. The Jail Reforms Commission (JRC) also supported such an arrangement.

However, suddenly by bypassing the rules, the establishment ministry appointed

Brigadier Chowdhury as the IG through an official order. Apparently the Armed Forces Division had nominated him for the position.

According to a source, the home ministry sent at least three letters to the establishment ministry, which suggested that the matter be settled directly through intervention of the Prime Minister's office.

Jail officials, at several meetings, urged the government to make the top post available for the departmental officials. The Jail Officers' Association also submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister, requesting necessary steps in this regard, but there was no follow-up, said a source.

The practice of placing army officers in the post started in 1977 during the regime of slain President Ziaur Rahman. The trend continued up to 1996.

Just before the general election in 1996, the position fell vacant, after the army official entrusted with the responsibility

had been posted elsewhere. Initiatives to fill the vacancy as per existing rules were stalled.

"It caused resentment amongst jail officials and hampered implementation of programmes taken to speed up jail reforms," a senior jail official told the Daily Star.

Apart from the Jail Reform Commission's suggestion, the Parliamentary Standing Committee in several meetings over the years has recommended that someone from the department should be made IG Prison for dynamism in the jail reform programmes.

Meanwhile, according to a source, the incumbent IG has recommended for immediate implementation of the jail reform programmes, including of filling in of the top position from within the department. In his recommendations, submitted to the parliamentary standing committee on home ministry, he has identified impediments to the reform programmes, the source added.

## Jubo League leader shot dead in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Jan 6: Shaikh Kabirul Islam, chairman of Dumuria Union Parishad and president of upazila unit of Awami Jubo League was gunned down by unidentified assailants near Dumuria AL office at about 9 pm on Friday.

Police said the gunmen shot Kabirul, 30, point blank while he was about to board a Khulna-bound passenger bus.

He was taken to the Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) at about 9-45 pm where the doctors declared him dead.

According to family sources, Kabirul was on the hit list of Dumuria-based unit of Biplobi Communist Party (BCP). He had been residing in a rented house in Khulna town fearing attempt on life, sources added.

Another source said the murder was a sequel to previous enmity with some top leaders of Khulna district Chhatra Union for his firm stand against toll collection from businessmen and shrimp farm owners of Dumuria upazila.

The slain UP chairman filed a case against BCU leaders with Dumuria thana in September last year.

The armed cadres of Biplobi Communist Party were hired by BCU leaders to kill Kabirul who was to marry a member of the women wing of Bangladesh Chhatra Union (BCU), family sources said.

A case was filed with Dumuria thana this afternoon accusing some BCU leaders. But police arrested four persons having link with the 'Barun group' of Biplobi Communist Party.

The arrested are Ensar Ali, 26, Islam Hossain, 24, Aksed Shaikh, 30, and Abdur Razzaque, 30.

With the murder of Kabirul Islam, the total number of UP chairmen murdered in last 4 years stands at five in Khulna district.

## Manzoor Watoo jailed for graft

ISLAMABAD, Jan 6 : A court today jailed a former Pakistani provincial chief minister for graft, the latest conviction in a crackdown on corruption launched by the military rulers, reports AFP.

Manzoor Watoo, former chief minister of Punjab province, was found guilty by an accountability court of misusing official funds to benefit a private firm, state-run Associated Press of Pakistan said.

He was given three years jail and also fined rupees 100 million (about 1.6 million dollars) by the court sitting in Punjab's capital, Lahore.

Watto has also been debarred from holding any public office for 21 years.

Scores of people, including politicians and bureaucrats, have been punished under the anti-corruption drive launched by military ruler General Pervez Musharraf since he seized power in October 1999.

But Musharraf came under fire after he pardoned former prime minister Nawaz Sharif from serving lengthy jail terms on hijacking and corruption charges and exiled him to Saudi Arabia.

Critics said the deal brokered by Saudi royalty undermined the credibility of Musharraf's crusade against plunderers of national wealth. The regime defended the decision, saying it was taken in the national interest.

## Road accidents kill 6 in 2 dists

By Staff Correspondent

Six people were killed and 10 others injured in separate road accidents in Bogra and Rajshahi districts yesterday.

Of them, four were killed in Bogra while the rest in Rajshahi.

In Bogra, four people were killed and 10 injured when a bus skidded off the road and fell into a ditch at Godarpara on Bogra-Rangpur highway yesterday, according to UNB.

Police said the bus fell into the ditch at about 11.30 am leaving its four passengers dead on the spot. Two of them were identified as Abdul Hamid, 45, and Shahin, 20, of Shibganj upazila in Bogra. The identity of two others could not be known immediately.

The injured were admitted to local hospitals.

Our Rajshahi Correspondent reports: Two people were killed in two separate road accidents in the district yesterday.

One Abdus Sattar, 30, of village Santhia under Pabna district was injured when he fell from a running truck at 9 am.

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Local people sift through ashes to retrieve valuables after a fire gutted more than one hundred makeshift houses at East Rasulpur in Kamrangirchar yesterday morning.

## Over 100 houses gutted at Kamrangir Char in city

By Staff Correspondent

More than one hundred makeshift houses were gutted in a fire at East Rasulpur in the city's Kamrangir Char area yesterday morning, Fire Brigade sources said.

The reason of the fire could not be known immediately.

Police suspected that the fire originated from an earthen oven in one of the makeshift houses at about 8:30 pm.

Four fire fighting units from different city stations rushed to the scene at about 9:30 pm and extinguished the blaze with the help of local people at 10:45 pm.

A general diary was filed with Kamrangir Char thana in this regard yesterday.

## Transfer of Purbachal project 400 'political appointees' now preparing to stage protest

By Staff Corespondent

More than 400 employees of Rajuk, widely known as political appointees, are preparing to stage a protest against the government's recent decision to hand over the Tk 2000 crore Purbachal project to the LGED (Local Government Engineering Department).

The Ministry of Public Works and Housing decision puts the job of 400 employees, recruited on master roll more than two years ago ahead of the Purbachal project, on the line.

According to Rajuk sources, these employees a vast majority of whom comes from a north-western district of the country, have been simply drawing salaries for over two years. Purbachal project could not take off due to complications over

land acquisition.

The Ministry of Public Works in a letter to Rajuk on January 2 said that despite appointment of a contractor more than a year ago Rajuk has failed to implement the Purbachal project. Therefore, the ministry 'has decided to hand over the overall responsibility of the project to LGED for immediate implementation'.

Rajuk sources said the ministry decision to strip hand over the project to LGED is not right. They said Purbachal project could not start because the local public representatives of Gulshan, Narayanganj, Rupganj and Kaliganj did not cooperate with them over the acquisition of 6,150 acres of land. They also

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