

## Hasina blasts police attack on AL procession

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League president and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina has blasted the government for what she called 'an unprovoked police attack' on a peaceful torch procession of Awami League in the capital yesterday evening.

In a statement last night, Hasina said police used batons and fired tear gas shells indiscriminately on the procession injuring party leaders and workers and also arrested many.

This action is a sheer reflection of the fascist character of the BNP-Jamaat coalition government, she said.

The former prime minister said every citizen has a constitutional right to organise rallies, meetings, processions, demonstration, protest, siege, strike, hunger strike or hartal. Any attempt to curb these rights is tantamount to fascism, she said.

Hasina alleged that the government let loose its police force on the Awami League procession.

"This action is not only a naked interference into people's constitutionally recognised democratic rights, but also an attempt to foil a peaceful movement," she said.

Hasina cautioned the government that the people's movement for restoration of democratic rights could not be silenced by any amount of torture or repression.

Rather those who try to silence the people's movement by using arms "will be thrown into the dustbin of history" and destroyed, she said.

She urged the government to stop its repressive actions and urged the people to give an appropriate reply to the atrocities by making Sunday's hartal a success.

## BNP activist beaten to death at Feni

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Feni

A BNP activist was beaten to death by his party men at village Seebpur under Sadar upazila in the district on Friday night.

The victim was identified as Obaidul Hoque, 47, of village Seebpur under Sadar upazila.

BNP terrorists Nizam, Jamaluddin, Sabuj, Tipu, and Faruque demanded toll from a local businessman Jakir Company. They kidnapped Obaidul Hoque and took him to an unknown place when he protested it.

They beat him mercilessly and dropped at Bhijnhat. Later local people recovered him and sent him to Feni Sadar Hospital in a critical condition where he died at about 1 am on Saturday.

Victim's wife filed a case with Feni Sadar thana in this connection.

None was arrested till filing of this report last night.

## Alleged gangrape 7 arrested in Bagerhat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police arrested seven persons on Friday night for their alleged involvement in armed attacks on five houses of Hindus at Gopalpur village under Kachua upazila in Bagerhat district on November 16.

The arrested are Sekander Shikder, Rustom Shikder, Asghar Shikder, Rezaul, Shikder, Hemayet Shikder and Shafayet Molla.

It is alleged that the OC of Kachua thana Mohammad Abdul Alim refused to record the incident as a rape case.

Villager Atal Kumar Shikder was reportedly forced to rewrite the complaint on November 17 in which no reference of incident of rape was made.

At last, a dacoity case was recorded stating that the alleged persons committed dacoity and tortured men and women of five Hindu families.

Meanwhile, an investigation into the incident has started by senior police officials of Bagerhat district.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Dec 2		5-11 pm
Dec 3	6-26 am	

## Prayer Timings

Dec 2		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-00	5-06
Zahr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-14	5-20
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

# So-called pro-BNP staff now running PIB?

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Normal activities at the Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) are being hampered for the last few months due to undue interference by a section of officials and employees, sources there alleged.

Though PIB is an autonomous body, a group of officials and employees claiming themselves as pro-BNP are now virtually running the institute.

The PIB could not organise any workshop in last two months due to pressure from the group, they alleged.

The deadlock begun soon after the BNP government took over power. The so-called pro-BNP officials and employees demanded dismissal of the people who were appointed during the tenure of the immediate past Awami League government. They also brought allegations of corruption against Sheikh Abdus Salam, the immediate past Director General of PIB.

An official of information ministry was given the charge as DG for a short period after departure of Abdus Salam in the last week of September. Later, Abdul Hannan was appointed DG in-charge.

But the pro-BNP group is not accepting the authority of Abdul Hannan.

In such a deadlock situation, PIB is about to be

deprived of a UNICEF fund now for a workshop on reporting and feature on children and women, the sources said.

When contacted, Abdul Hannan however denied that there has been a deadlock at the institute.

He however admitted that no workshop was held at the PIB in the last two months. He attributed this to the absence of a permanent DG and said all the scheduled workshops including the UNICEF funded one would be organised soon.

The sources said the information ministry formed an investigation committee following pressure from the pro-BNP group. The committee revealed that there were allegations of corruption against some of the pro-BNP persons and questions were raised about appointment of those who demanded the investigation.

The ministry repeatedly issued letters to PIB asking for explanation regarding the allegations.

A reply was prepared in time with relevant documents. But it was sent to the investigation committee last week about two months of its preparation, allegedly due to pressure from the group.

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## Launch capsized 3 more bodies recovered

UNB, Bhola

Three more bodies floating in the river Tetulia were recovered yesterday, raising the death toll to 8 in Thursday's launch capsized.

ML Jahangir with about 100 passengers on board capsized Thursday afternoon in Tetulia river near Biswa Road Ferryghat when it was hit by the MV Koko-1.

The body of Anil Kumar Das, cooperative officer of Char Fashion upazila, was recovered yesterday, Deputy Commissioner of Bhola said. Anil hailed from Babuganj in Barisal.

But fishermen claimed they recovered two more bodies floating in the river. The identity of the victims could not be known.

Rescue vessel MV Hamza salvaged the sunken launch from under 30 feet deep water on Friday. Three bodies were found stuck inside the launch. Two bodies were recovered earlier.

## CCC commissioner Shahid freed on bail, held from jail gate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Bakalia police arrested ward commissioner and CMP-listed notorious terrorist Shahid Ullah from in front of the Chittagong jail gate at Laldighi on Saturday night.

Shahid Ullah, an elected ward commissioner on Awami League ticket from No. 18 South Bakalia Ward, is accused in seven criminal cases including murder of a BCL activist in 1998, extortion, riot, and attack on police during the one-party Mayoral election on January 3 last year which left the Officer-in-Charge of Chandgaon thana bullet injured.

Sources in police said, Shahid, a former MES College-based BCL cadre, got bail from the court on Saturday morning and released at around 7.30 pm. But police arrested him from the jail gate as per directive of CMP Commissioner Shahidullah Khan, sources said.

Earlier, Shahid was arrested thrice in last two years but each time he was released on bail, another source said.

## France-Senegal WC opener

AFP, Pusan



HANDING THE WORLD OVER! FIFA president Sepp Blatter passes the World Cup trophy on to the representatives of co-hosts Japan and South Korea during the draw ceremony in Pusan on Saturday.

England were drawn Saturday in a tough World Cup first round group with Argentina, South Korea and Japan, in Seoul on May 31 against Senegal.

Reigning champions France will meanwhile open the tournament to be co-hosted by South Korea and Japan, in Seoul on May 31 against Senegal.

England and Argentina were put in Group F, which will be played in Japan and will meet in Sapporo on June 7.

But Nigeria, finalists in the last African championship, and Sweden were also put in Group F making it by far the toughest of the eight groups drawn at a gala ceremony in the South Korean city of Pusan.

Despite Michael Owen's goal of the tournament, Argentina won their last World Cup match against England in the second round of the 1998 finals in France on penalties.

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## Bail violating higher court's order Showcause on Addl CMM, Dhaka

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka yesterday issued a showcause notice on an Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka to explain by January 2 why the matter of granting bail to two accused in a criminal case, violating order of the Higher Court, should not be referred to the Supreme Court.

Judge Ahmed Jamil Mostafa passed the order following a petition filed by the prosecution side seeking cancellation of bail of the accused and legal action against the Magistrate who granted bail violating the order of the Sessions Judge's Court.

The Second Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Muhammad Shafiqul Azim Khan Siddiqui granted bail to two accused in a criminal case on November 18 despite two separate criminal cases were pending with the Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court for hearing on the same issue on November 24.

The two accused are -- Mohammad Firoze Miah and Mohammad Yusuf. They were arrested from Sayedabad Bus Terminal by Demra Police on June 2. Police also recovered 485 bottles of phensidyl from their possession.

As per rule the lower court cannot grant bail to any accused in a case while another petition for bail for the same accused is pending with the higher court. But the magistrate took an exception by passing the order.

The Magistrate passed the order violating the rules and orders of the higher court. He showed disregard and negligence by passing the order, the judge observed.

However, the judge cancelled the bail of the two accused and issued warrant of arrest against them.

## Attack on Chinese co: Case against Sathkira JCD leader, 19 others

UNB, Sathkira

A case was filed yesterday against 20 people, including some Chhatra Dal leaders, for ransacking the office of a Chinese company engaged in installation of digital telephone lines here.

The ruling party-backed JCD cadres attacked the office on Thursday for refusing to pay a toll of Tk 5 lakh, company manager Wang said in his petition.

As the local police refused to take the case the company manager complained to the Additional Deputy Inspector General.

The accused included district Chhatra Dal general secretary Masum Billah Shaheen and sub-assistant engineer of the telephone office Ratan Kumar Dutta.

The petitioner said JCD cadres in connivance with the local telephone engineer attacked and ransacked the company's office.

On an earlier occasion the company paid Tk 1.5 lakh to the JCD cadres under pressure from the telephone engineers, he added.

The main accused, Masum Billah, was granted bail by the court later yesterday.

## Shazneen case Bail petition of accused Minu, Parvin rejected

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Special Court for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka, yesterday rejected the bail petition of Minu and Parvin, accused in the Shazneen rape case.

Judge Mohammad Shah Alam Miah passed the order after hearing the petition submitted by the defence lawyers on Wednesday.

The defence lawyers made submissions in support of granting bail for the two accused while the prosecution side opposed it.

After hearing both sides, the court rejected the bail petition.

Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, 15, youngest daughter of Latifur Rahman, Chairman of Transcom Group, was raped and murdered at their Gulshan residence on April 23, 1998.

Latifur Rahman filed a murder case with Gulshan thana on April 24, 1998 accusing Shahidul Islam alias Shahid, a domestic help at his residence.

Mojibur Rahman, Additional Superintendent of Police (CID), filed a rape case with Gulshan thana after six months investigation into Shazneen murder case.

The murder case, pending with the First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka, was earlier stayed by an order of the Supreme Court. The order will remain valid till disposal of the rape case.

## Amanullah Kabir made BSS MD

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has appointed Amanullah Kabir Chief Editor and Managing Director of state-run BSS news agency on a two-year contract, an official notification said yesterday.

Kabir is former Executive Editor of The Independent. He had long been involved in journalists' union. He is former president and secretary general of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and general secretary of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ).



City shopping centres and malls like this one are being illuminated ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr in the middle of this month. The photo was taken from Gulistan area last night.

# Annual ordeal: Parents start flocking to city schools

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thousands of students and parents have started flocking to different government and private schools in the city to collect and submit admission forms ahead of the beginning of the new academic year.

Parents and guardians are having a tough time like in the previous years to get their wards admitted to reputed schools.

Admission tests for Class I to IX in the twenty-four government schools will be held on January 8, 10 and 12, education ministry sources said. The distribution of admission forms will start from December 22 and run through January 5. Forms are available at respective schools at Tk 50 each.

Meanwhile, education ministry has divided the city's government schools into three categories. A decision to this end was made a meeting of the ministry last week.

Schools that fall in "A" category

are Government Laboratory High School, Mirpur Government High School, Motijheel Government High School, Khilgaon Government High School, Nawabpur High School, New Government Girls High School, Islamia High School and Mohammadpur Government High School. Admission tests for these schools will be held on January 8.

Schools in "B" category are Motijheel Government Girls High School, Narinda Government High School, Dhaka Government Muslim High School, Banglabazar Government Girls High School, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar High School, Government Science College (School section), Dhanmondi Girls High School and Armanitola Government Girls High School. Admission tests for these schools will be held on January 10.

Schools in "C" category are Dhanmondi Government Boys High School, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Government Girls High School, Kamrunnesa Government Girls High School (Dhanmondi), Collegiate School, Kamrunnesa Government Girls High School (Tikatuli), Ganobhaban Government High School and Tejgaon Government Girls High School. The admission tests of these schools will be held on January 12.

A little over 65,000 seats in the government schools in the city are up for grab this year. Prospective students are rushing to private tutors and coaching centres to prepare for admission tests for reputed government and private schools.

Usually, the school admission procedure is complete by December but this year it is likely to be delayed due to the Eid-ul-Fitr, Christmas and Victory Day.

"It is really a tough job to get

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# 2 foreigners virtually imprisoned in hospital for having AIDS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



A rally marking World AIDS Day in the city yesterday.

Two foreign nationals have been virtually imprisoned in a specialised hospital in the city without any special care for having contacted the deadly AIDS.

Twenty-nine year old Lee Dong (not his real name) counts his days in a dark and dirty room on the 6th floor of Infectious Diseases Hospital (IDH) at Mahakhali. When this correspondent went to see him recently, he asked in broken Bangla why he is confined and for what crime.

Well built and fairly tall Dong, a resident of Myanmar capital Yangon, was arrested from the Bay while fishing illegally and sent to Chittagong Central Jail for 15 days. While in jail, he suffered from persistent sickness and was admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital. There he was under treatment from July 13 to 17 last year.

Doctors could not diagnose his illness and advised further investigation. On September 9 last year, he was sent to Dhaka Central Jail.

He then underwent several tests including one for HIV that causes AIDS. As he tested positive, he was shifted to the IDH on July 20 this year.

Since then, he has been confined to a small room shared by two other persons who also tested positive. Four unarmed policemen stand guard round the clock outside the room making sure they do not escape or commit suicide. A collapsible gate at the stairs is kept locked all the time.

Thirty-year old Yuan (not his real name), also an AIDS patient from Thailand, has similar fate. He shares a worn-out, dirty bed in the same room. Yuan was also arrested from the Bay and sent to Khulna Central Jail. Due to illness, he was shifted to Khulna General Hospital.

Yuan was under treatment there from May 19 to June 10 this year but his

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