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People's Right to Know

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ALERT!
TB (Pulmonary tuberculosis) kills one person every ten minute in Bangladesh. Such high rate of infection is prevalent in Bangladesh due to lack of proper diagnosis and awareness.

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Mullah Omar ready to surrender Kandahar

Last Taliban bastion to be handed over to Naqibullah



AFP, Kabul
Afghanistan's Taliban militia's supreme leader Mullah Mohammad Omar today reportedly agreed to surrender its last bastion of Kandahar after two months of US air attack.
Omar would hand Kandahar city over to veteran mujahedin commander Mullah Naqibullah, a Pashtun tribal elder and former military commander of the southern province, the Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) reported.
The report could not be independently confirmed, but a senior spokesman for the US-led coalition against terrorism earlier said "good news" was expected and Omar may be willing to surrender Kandahar.
"I can tell you authoritatively that some of Mullah Omar's most senior commanders are negotiating their own surrender," coalition spokesman Kenton Keith told a news conference in Islamabad.
"You should also take seriously reports that Mullah Omar himself is

negotiating to save his own skin."
It was not immediately clear whether Omar had agreed to personally give himself up, but Washington has consistently said that any negotiations should not let Taliban leaders go free to fight another day.
Keith warned that many of those negotiating their surrender had "blood on their hands" and could expect to be brought to justice.
The surrender of Kandahar could mean the beginning of Omar's threatened guerrilla war from the mountains of Afghanistan, if his troops are able to run the gauntlet of US and tribal forces virtually surrounding the city.
But it would also allow the Pentagon to concentrate its military might on its main objective hunting down alleged terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden and members of his al-Qaeda network.
Keith said negotiations were "ongoing" between Omar and the new leader of Afghanistan's interim cabinet, Hamid Karzai, that would "spare a

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GOVT ON WITCH-HUNT SPREE

Hit list of 120 staff drawn for retirement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The government, currently on a witch-hunt spree, has decided to send some 120 officials and employees into forced retirement soon.
Most of the officials and employees in the latest hit list had allegedly revolted against the BNP government in early 1996 and participated in the Awami League sponsored 'Janatar Mancha'.
Some others will be terminated on charge of corruption, sources said. Some Secretariat-based unionists are also in the sack-list. Sources said the government is also inquiring about the officials, who allegedly conspired with the Awami League ministers in corruption.
Official sources said the government has already prepared a list of 20 officials and about 100 employees

to send them into forced retirement as per the reports of different detective branches and the Bureau of Anti-corruption.
Official sources said the axe is going to fall on two secretaries, one additional secretary and a number of joint secretaries and deputy secretaries.
The government has already given forced retirement to 11 high officials including one additional secretary, eight joint secretaries and two deputy secretaries for their 'biased role' towards the AL and for their active participation in the 'Janatar Mancha' in 1996.
All of them belonged to the 1973 Bangladesh Civil Service batch and were sent to retirement under the Public Servant Retirement, 1974 law.
Under the law, any government servant may opt for

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More changes in admin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The government yesterday brought about major changes in some vital posts as part of its current drive to reshuffle the administration.
Planning Secretary Anwarul Bar Chowdhury has been transferred to establishment ministry.
The post of the establishment secretary fell vacant during November 19 to December 1 following retirement of Syed Marghub Murshed. Later, the government appointed Shafiqul Islam as secretary in-charge of the ministry on December 2 by giving him promotion on December 1.
Earlier, AB Chowdhury was the establishment secretary, but the BNP government after assuming power transferred him to the planning ministry about a month ago before bringing him back to the

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3 killed as trucks collide near Bangabandhu Bridge

UNB, Sirajganj
Three people were killed and 13 others injured when two trucks collided on the Bangabandhu Bridge west side link road under Kamarkhand upazila here yesterday.
Identities of the victims could not be known immediately.
Witnesses said the accident occurred at about 2 pm near Maddyha Bhadrachhat Talukder Bazar when the Dhaka-bound truck carry

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Family members barred from visiting Shahrir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The family members of noted writer and journalist Shahrir Kabir were not allowed to meet him since he was arrested on November 22.
They told The Daily Star that upon filing an application to the City

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Hawkers doing brisk business during the Eid rush have taken over parts of many city roads such as this one, creating traffic jam and causing misery to pedestrians.

Hawkers rule the road

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
With the Eid festival only days away, hawkers have reoccupied footpaths and parts of some major thoroughfares at the busy city points, badly disrupting movement of traffic and pedestrians.
Police and local terrorist groups are collecting huge amounts of tolls from the hawkers and at a higher rate on the pretext of Eid, it is alleged.
Pavements and portions of the roads in Gulistan, Bangabandhu Avenue, Baitul Mukarram, Nilkhet, Dhaka College, Firmgate and many other areas are now fully occupied by hawkers.
But neither police nor Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has so far taken any effective initiative to free the city dwellers from the resultant sufferings.
According to sources, a section of

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Armed clash between Sramik Dal, Sramik League at AJM: 20 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj
At least 20 people were injured, seven of them with bullets, in a gunfight between the activists of Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal and Sramik League in Adamjee Jute Mills area yesterday.
The clash ensued when Sramik Dal workers tried to capture of the CBA office at around 1 pm.
Sources said about 50 Sramik Dal activists led by Motahar, Masud and Liton stormed into the CBA office and beat up some Sramik League activists.
As the news spread in the mill area, Sramik League supporters rushed to the spot and locked in a gunfight with their opponents. Both the groups exchanged about 100 rounds of bullets and exploded crackers during an hour-long clash.
Those injured with bullets are Masud, 27, Shohag, 20, Harun, 20, Sekandar, 45, Quayum, 35, Shahjahan, 25 and Abu Sayeed, 45.
They were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).
BA president and Sramik League leader Ruhul Amin Sardar and Sramik Dal secretary Giasuddin Kalu blamed each other for the incident.
Additional police force was deployed in the mill area to avert further clash.
No case was filed till writing of this report at 7 pm yesterday.

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BTTB cuts NWD call rates

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Bangladesh Telephone and Telegraph Board (BTTB) yesterday reduced the NWD tariff rate to encourage people to use its services.
The BTTB, which earns nearly Tk 300 crore from Nationwide Dialing, has been facing tough competition from private cellular phone companies which offer a lesser rate in NWD calls than land phones. The revenue of BTTB has been going down since the cellular companies started their nationwide networks.
The new NWD call rate is Tk 3 per minute for a distance between one mile to 50 miles, down Tk 2 from the previous rate of Tk 5. The rate for calls for a distance between 51 to 100 miles is Tk 6, down Tk 4 from the old rate of Tk 10. Calls for distance of 100

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White paper committee makes little progress

Non-availability of documents throws spanner
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
More than a month after the government set up a three-member committee to prepare a White Paper on alleged corruption during the tenure of the immediate past Awami League government, there has been little progress due to "non-availability" of relevant documents.
"It is still busy collecting required documents but the relevant ministries are not prompt enough in supplying those," said a source in the committee headed by former secretary Mohammad Muniruzzaman.
Two other former bureaucrats Nuruzzaman Mia and Abdul Quader are also in the committee being aided by two serving deputy secretaries.
"Whatever documents we are getting from the ministries are not enough to substantiate the alleged acts of corruption. The ministry officials appear hiding facts or

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K M Obaid released on bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Former secretary general of BNP and member of the party Standing Committee K M Obaidur Rahman was released on bail yesterday.
K M Obaidur Rahman, MP, was arrested on September 22 in 1998 for his alleged involvement in the murder of four national leaders inside the Dhaka Central Jail on November 3, 1975.
The Supreme Court granted him bail on December 1 till April 30, 2002.
BNP leaders and activists received K M Obaid after his release from the prison cell of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib University Hospital. He addressed a brief rally there, which was attended, among others, by Disaster Management and Relief Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf and Sabeda Obaid

Violence, crime grip Raozan, Fatikchhari

Thousands leave home for city
NURUL ALAM, Chittagong
Incidents of violence and crime including abduction, killing, rape, mugging and illegal toll collection continued unabated since the October 1 parliamentary polls in Raozan and Fatikchhari upazilas, the most vulnerable areas in the northern part of Chittagong district.
Sources said the situation forced several thousand people of the areas to flee their homes and take shelter in the city. Even many Union Parishad (UP) chairmen and members in Raozan and Fatikchhari went into hiding or left their villages for safer places fearing attacks from 'armed terrorists'.
At least six 'godfathers' in the two upazilas have been sheltering those 'identified' terrorists for years together to serve their political interests.
Three godfathers in Fatikchhari -- one from AL, one

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Forty attacks on newsmen in as many days

SHAIKH NAZRUL ISLAM
The first 40 days of the BNP-led coalition government have seen 40 incidents of attacks on journalists making the profession more vulnerable than ever.
Repression on journalists is not something new in Bangladesh. During the tenure of the last government seven journalists were murdered and many more were issued threats on their lives.
The government has decided to launch an in-depth investigation into the seven murders, but sources allege that activists of the ruling party itself have singularly been responsible for the 40 incidents that occurred recently.
The ruling party and its coalition partners put law and order in the country on the top of its list of agendas after taking office.
Reports of incidents of attack

on journalists and innocent people continue to appear in most of the leading newspapers. The home minister initially refused to endorse such allegations but later admitted that some attacks may have occurred.
In the most recent occurrence, Shahrir Kabir, a writer and columnist, has been arrested. Kabir, was detained for 20 hours before police officially confirmed that he was arrested under section 54 of the CrPC on charge of involvement in anti-state activities. He remains confined till date without any specific charges.
Activists of Jatiyatabadi Juba Dal attacked a group of journalist at a press conference organised in Bagerhat by former state minister Muzzammel Haque on November 11.
Babul Sardar, of Janakantha,

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ACI Iftar

Sehri, Iftar timing

Ramadan	Dec	Sehri	Iftar
21	7		5-15
22	8	5-05	5-15
23	9	5-05	5-15