



PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Police seize unlicensed rickshaws near the Nayabazar Bridge in the city yesterday, completely oblivious to the fact that rickshaws pulled over on the other side of the road have created a traffic snarl-up. The drive against unauthorised rickshaws has been undertaken to ease up traffic congestion in the city.

44 listed criminals nabbed

Aman's motorcade stopped, searched four times; AK-47 recovered from ward commissioner's residence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The army stopped and searched the motorcade of State Minister for Health Amanullah Aman four times on his way to Magura yesterday, where he attended a party meeting.

The troops frisked all members of his entourage, except his wife, and detained a Special Branch of police official. Later, on his way back, Aman got the police officer back to Dhaka in an injured condition and admitted him to a clinic.

Aman later told The Daily Star, "I welcome the army move to improve law and order. Everybody is equal in the eyes of law."

Meanwhile, on the fourth day of its countrywide crackdown on criminals, the army raided residences of leaders and activists of different political parties. Forty-four listed criminals and 119 non-listed criminals were arrested while 19 firearms along with 2,509 rounds of ammunition were recovered.

Earlier on Saturday, the army raided the residence of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) Commissioner Monwar Hossain Dipu alias Digjal, also a film actor, and recovered eight firearms including an AK-47 assault rifle. Four pipe-guns, shot-

gun and pistol were also recovered.

According to sources, the commissioner of ward No 9 was asked to report to the Mirpur camp at Section 10 by 5:00pm yesterday.

In a raid on the residence of another DCC commissioner, Haji Mohammad Mosharraf Hossain of ward No. 60, the army recovered five firearms last night.

Meanwhile, a retired police inspector, Abdul Hamid, was also detained with firearms but was released later as he produced licence for the weapon.

In another development, the army went on a massive search operation in different residential hotels in the city from yesterday evening on the suspicion that listed criminals might have taken shelter in those.

Also yesterday, army handed over 44 people to different police stations.

In Narayanganj, 20 people were rounded up from different places of the district.

On Saturday night, army arrested the president of Shiddhirganj thana unit BNP Kamal Hossain (42) and Jubo Dal leader Alauddin (35) from Godnail area.

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PM to exchange views with editors today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will exchange views with the editors and senior journalists of different national dailies and news agencies at the Prodhonmontri Bhaban at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar today.

The prime minister has invited the editors and senior journalists to lunch on the occasion of the four-party led government's completion of one year in office.

The country's prevailing situation will most likely be discussed during the meeting, according to sources.

This would be her first formal meeting with journalists after the government assumed power in October last year. The prime minister, however, had a one-to-one discussion with some editors and journalists several times after the four-party led government came to power.

Home secy abruptly ends briefing on crime crackdown

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The home secretary abruptly ended a press briefing on the ongoing countrywide army drive yesterday in the face of a barrage of questions from the journalists.

The briefing at the ministry's conference room started off with Home Secretary Omar Faruk saying the government wants to "share information on the joint drive" with the press "because it believes in transparency".

As questions such as under what law the army was making the arrest and how many people had died during interrogation, started pouring in, Faruk left the briefing without giving any specific answer.

He did, however, try to say that

the army drive was being carried out under the purview of law and that the army had carried out similar operations in 1974. But, he failed to specify the law.

The home secretary also side-stepped questions like why did the army take the arrested to different cantonments and stadiums instead of sending them to police, where were the people, who had not been handed over to police, and why were the army seizing legal arms.

In his introductory statement, the secretary presented some statistics on the drive. Later on, responding to a question about alleged deaths of three people and tortures in army custody, he said he knew about two deaths.

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A rare gesture

BNP, AL leaders admit their 'failures and misdeeds' at city seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a rare gesture of political accommodation, representatives of both ruling BNP and opposition Awami League accepted their failures and misdeeds as pointed out by some business leaders at a seminar in the city yesterday.

They were frank in admitting their lack of tolerance, understanding and mutual respect and humbly contradicted some harsh observations made about them in the seminar titled "Political tolerance is the key to economic development".

The Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) organised the seminar at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre at Shere-e-Bangla Nagar.

Four lawmakers, two each from the BNP and the AL, were put in the dock as business leaders came down heavily on the two leading political parties, blaming them for criminalising politics.

Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Redwan Ahmed, former commerce minister and AL lawmakers Abdul Jalil and Asaduzzaman Noor represented their respective parties. Editor of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam moderated the seminar.

"We've to own them... I should not defend (ourselves)," the commerce minister said, referring to accusations made against the politicians. "It's true that our politics is now in problem and we're not trying to streamline it."

In a lighter vein, the ruling party lawmaker pointed his finger at similar problems with the business community. "We'll catch you another day," he said, smilingly.

Khosru, however, differed with Quazi Moniruzzaman of the BGMEA, who opposed the practice of implicating political leaders in graft cases that "damages public confidence in them".

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Shab-e-Barat tonight

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The holy Shab-e-Barat will be observed across the country tonight.

Devout Muslims will observe the holy occasion offering night-long prayers seeking divine blessings for long life, peace, progress and happiness.

Other programmes on the occasion include distribution of foods and sweets among neighbours and destitutes, milad mahfils, special prayers at mosques and visit to the graveyards.

Bangladesh Islamic Foundation and other socio-religious organisations will observe the occasion with various programmes.

Bangladesh Television, Bangladesh Betar and private TV channels will air special programmes and the newspapers will publish articles highlighting the significance of the night.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will hold a milad mahfil at its central office at Naya Paltan in the city after Asr prayers.

Khatme-Quran and milad mahfil will also be held on the mazar premises of president Ziaur Rahman after Magrib prayers, a party press release said last night.

PM renews resolve to fight crimes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, back from Jamalpur

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday reiterated her pledge to root out crime and sought cooperation from all to make the ongoing joint operation against criminals a success.

"A joint drive involving the army, paramilitary BDR and police personnel has started to nab criminals. Drastic actions would be taken against those involved in crimes," she said.

"We are determined to free the country from crime and the army, BDR and police are putting in their best effort in this regard. But cooperation from you (the people) is needed," Khaleda added.

She was speaking at a public meeting at Char Gobindi under Islampur union in Jamalpur district. On her arrival, she first unveiled the plaque of Char Gobindi Ideal Village. Several thousand BNP activists and villagers welcomed her, chanting various slogans.

Khaleda handed over ownership documents of tin-shed houses to some 100 needy villagers. She also presented goats to them so that they could become self-reliant.

She criticised the previous Awami League government for patronising criminals. "They (the AL) during their five-year rule did nothing for the countrymen, but looted public wealth and gave firearms to their partymen,"

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US envoy rejects Time report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador Mary Ann Peters yesterday rejected a recent Time report on Bangladesh saying the country was definitely not a "hotbed of radical Islam".

The US Embassy in Dhaka follows terrorism issues closely and has no evidence to support the allegations of the report that Bangladesh is "a haven for hundreds of jihadis on the lam," an embassy press statement quoted her as saying.

Nor is the Embassy aware of any basis for the story that a ship called the MV Mecca dropped off a large al-

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Mary Ann Peters

নগর দায়রা তাকা



Hasina gets bail, blasts ruling party

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Immediately after getting bail in a graft case yesterday, Awami League President Sheikh Hasina accused the ruling BNP of plundering money from all development work and implicating her in the 'false' case just for political harassment.

"The BNP is looting money from all development work and does not even bother about floating tenders. But they have implicated me in this false case just to harass me," she told a gathering of several hundred party leaders and activists after she came out of the courtroom.

Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge Ahmed Jamil Mostafa granted her bail in the Meghnaghat power plant graft case against a bond of Tk 50,000 at around 2:30 in the afternoon.

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SHAZNEEN CASE

'All but one of the servants were present after the incident'

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Latifur Rahman, second prosecution witness in the Shazneen rape case and father of the victim, was cross-examined for three hours yesterday by defence lawyers representing three of the accused -- Hasan, Minu and Parvin -- at the Second Special Court for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka. Cross-examination of the witness in connection with three other accused in the case had been completed earlier.

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Oct 21		5-27 pm
Oct 22	5-59 am	

Prayer Timings		
Oct 21		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-00	5-25
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-34	5-38
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

Holiday

The offices of The Daily Star will remain closed today (Monday) on the occasion of holy Shab-e-Barat.

Therefore, there will be no issue of the newspaper tomorrow (Tuesday).

Notice

As there will be no newspaper Tuesday, the weekly issue of Lifestyle comes out today. Please check out for your copy.