

## 50 injured in action near JS Bhaban

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 50 people including women and children were injured when army personnel resorted to baton charge on people passing their leisure at the South Plaza of the Sangsad Bhaban yesterday evening.

The injured included Mozammel, Ashraf, Wahid, Milan, Sazzad, Tumpa, Chanchan, Kollo, Iqbal, Shirin, Romy, Zakir, Opu, Chanda, Tansir and her seven-year-old child Arani, sources said.

Mozammel was admitted to a city clinic and his condition was stated to be critical.

Witnesses said about 25 army personnel in several groups swooped on the men, women and

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

## 6 get life term in Kushtia AL leader murder case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court, Kushtia on Thursday sentenced six people to life-term imprisonment in Awami League activist Taher murder case.

The convicts are Asadul, Toffazel, Khedu, Solaiman, Hamidul and Tufan.

According to the prosecution, the accused stabbed Abu Taher at village Jamtola in Daulatpur upazila on April 23, 1993.

Taher was admitted to Kushtia Sadar Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries on April 27. Victim's father Golam Rabbani filed a murder case with Daulatpur police station accusing the six.

After examining the records and witnesses, Judge Anwar Hossain pronounced the verdict.

## 2 army men killed, 6 hurt in N'ganj road accident

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Two army men were killed and six injured in a road accident on the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway at Jangail in Sonargaon upazila of Narayanganj district, when they were going on an anti-crime drive in the early hours of yesterday.

The dead are Malek, 24, and Matir, 25.

According to army control room at Adamjee, the accident took place at around 3.30 am when an army pick-up on its way to Arahazar skidded off the road and fell into a ditch. Both the soldiers died on the spot.

The injured were admitted to the Combined Military Hospital (CMH), Dhaka.

# MP Auranga arrested, 9-shooter gun seized

## 226 including 75 listed criminals netted, 42 firearms recovered on 9th day of army drive



PHOTO: STAR

Hemayetullah Auranga, an independent lawmaker from the Madaripur-1 constituency, is tied with hands behind at a Tejgaon army camp in the city yesterday after he was arrested with arms and ammunition in the ongoing anti-crime drive.

## Ctg port to have video surveillance system

NURUL ALAM, Chittagong

The Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) has taken up a TK two crore project to install a 'vessel traffic video surveillance system' at the estuary of the Karnaphuli shortly to monitor ship movement and other activities at the outer anchorage in the sea, official sources said.

"The proposed video camera-based surveillance system is aimed at ensuring modern maritime monitoring facilities, combating piracy and smuggling, averting accidents at the port channel and outer anchorage and also checking revenue leakage," a senior official said.

The project already received a 'go-ahead' from the higher authorities and tender for it would be

floated soon. Implementation of it would take about six months.

Many foreign ports have such surveillance system.

When contacted, Harbour Master of Chittagong Port Quamrul Islam, who heads a committee formed to oversee implementation of the project, said, "When the system is introduced, it will be easy for us to monitor ship arrivals, to avert accidents and to take quick action in cases of piracy. It will also help check revenue leakage by giving a clear picture of ship arrivals."

He mentioned that at present they sometimes get misleading reports about arrival of ships and their stay at the outer anchorage.

In the first phase, two video cameras would be installed -- one at

Patenga and the other near Norman point light house to cover the outer anchorage only. Later, three more cameras would be installed in and around the port to monitor the entire port areas including jetty points, Quamrul said.

The new surveillance system would also help detect arrival of 'ghost ships' and help the navy, coast guards, law enforcers and customs personnel in their operation at the outer anchorage, he said.

Ship movements are now monitored with 'VHF operation' which is not so dependable, port sources mentioned.

Meanwhile, incidents of piracy in and around Chittagong port have affected its image. In the past nine months of this year, about 30 such incidents took place in the port area.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Independent member of parliament Hemayetullah Auranga, a BNP leader and two leaders of its student wing Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) were arrested in the city early yesterday.

A nine-shooter gun along with some ammunition was recovered from Auranga's Hatirpool residence when he was arrested during an army raid at about 5 am. He was taken to Tejgaon army camp.

Auranga, expelled from Awami League prior to the last parliamentary election, was elected from Madaripur-1 constituency.

Auranga is accused in a number of criminal cases filed with different police stations in the city. He is reportedly involved in underworld crime, sources said.

Auranga maintains close links with some influential political leaders who on many occasions backed him in the past.

Awami League, while in power (1996-2001), ordered police to arrest Auranga and two of his associates Hannan and Liakat. But police failed to arrest them.

Army raided the DOHS residence of Saiful Islam Nirab, assistant secretary general of Dhaka city unit of BNP and arrested him along with

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

## Dredging in Passur comes to a halt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Dredging in the Passur River has stopped, making the shipping route of seagoing vessels at the Mongla Port risky.

The dredging was undertaken on February 28, 2000, with at least 50 per cent of the work -- about three kilometres up to the Sabur beacon point -- completed so far.

The Auro-2, an Indonesian dredging ship, left the Mongla Port on September 10 last year for Chittagong on the pretext of engine repair.

The ship left Bangladesh without notifying the Mongla Port Authority (MPA). The MPA failed to bring the dredging ship back, despite its utmost efforts, sources said.

The MPA invited international tenders in 1999 for dredging. The Rukindra Basic Dredging Company,

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

# A council may steer future army drive

NAZMUL ASHRAF

The government is considering formation of a national security council to steer the army in any future anti-crime crackdown like the current one across the country, a highly-placed source said yesterday.

If formed, added the source, the council will have the authority to decide on deployment of the army for anti-crime drives if any in future.

"This will help remove legal complications about calling-out of the army to assist the civil administration in fighting crime," he said, referring to the legal debate over the current army drive.

Terming the plan premature, another source in the Prime

Minister's Office said it is still being discussed and yet to take on concrete shape.

Referring to discussions among the authorities concerned, the sources said the President is likely to head the proposed security council, which may include the prime minister, the home minister, chiefs of three services and heads of the civil and military intelligence agencies.

"But the army's participation in anti-crime crackdowns will never be a permanent arrangement even if the proposed council is set up," said another source. The plan aims to restore peace in society, he added.

With the plan shaped, the law ministry will examine it and the move will proceed further if the ministry finds it practical, the source pointed

out.

Yet, the government is also weighing other options in its promised fight against crimes, he said.

Meanwhile, the government is planning to pull out the army in phases with the start of Ramadan.

A fresh deployment of the army may be needed, if the law and order deteriorates, said a home ministry source.

Admitting that the notorious criminals are yet to be netted in the current army-drive backed by police, he said: "Continuation of the ongoing joint drive depends on its outcome. Moves are under way to nab the absconding criminals and their godfathers."

# Selim shown held in motorcade attack case

Produced in court, remanded again

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Awami League leader Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, MP, has been shown arrested in a case filed with Keraniganj Police Station in connection with an attack on the motorcade of the then leader of the opposition in parliament Khaleda Zia on June 17 last year.

The lawmaker was produced before a first class magistrate's court, Dhaka, yesterday. The court granted a prayer from the CID to show him arrested in the motorcade attack case and placed him on remand for one day.

Earlier in the day, Gulshan police produced Selim before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka, at 3:45 pm on expiry of a three-day remand. Arrested on Monday, he was remanded in a case filed under Section 54 of the CrPC.

The lawmaker alleged in the court that he was mentally tortured during interrogation while on remand. He said although Gulshan police took him on remand, he was interrogated by the Joint Interrogation Cell (JIC) at Cantonment Police Station.

"I was kept with other detainees

and was handcuffed always. I was not given food timely. They gave me a bed sheet but did not allow me to sleep," the Jubo League chairman told the court.

When he wanted to know why he was kept handcuffed, the interrogators said this was done as per a directive from the higher authorities, Selim said.

"In the last three days, my family members and lawyers came to meet me, but they were not allowed."

Police submitted before the court a forwarding report seeking detention of the lawmaker. The report said he gave some important information about anti-state activities during interrogation and that he would be shown arrested in cases filed with different police stations across the country.

Selim should be detained till submission of the police report to prevent him from anti-state activities, the report added.

Defence lawyers submitted four separate petitions for his bail, treatment in jail custody and division in jail as an MP.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

# New ordinance Ample scope to persecute political opponents: AL

REAZ AHMAD

Opposition Awami League has sharply reacted to promulgation of the new ordinance for speedy trial of criminal offences, saying this has been done to persecute political opponents at will.

The new law has been introduced hurriedly in the form of an ordinance bypassing the parliament with a motive to 'eliminate the opposition', they said.

Under the Special Tribunal for Speedy Trial Ordinance, promulgated by President Iajuddin Ahmed on Thursday, the government will list cases to be sent to special tribunals for trial of six criminal offences within 135 days. The offences are murder, rape, possession of illegal arms, narcotics and explosives and hoarding.

Talking to this correspondent yesterday, some top AL leaders said the authority to select cases will give the government ample scope to persecute political opponents by referring their cases to special tribunals and dropping those of ruling party men.

The ordinance came eight days after the army launched a country-wide drive against criminals.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3