

## Press briefing

**FROM PAGE 1**

Asked whether cases would be filed with the civil court if any army personnel was found guilty, he said, "Every department has its own rules and actions would be taken as per the law."

About the death of 12 people in army custody, he said the incidents are being investigated. When his attention was drawn to the government's claim that the persons died of heart attack, Monirul said unnatural death cases were filed and the cases are being probed.

Regarding the death of one Yakub Ali, he told journalists that Ali already bore marks of injury on him when nabbed by the army. Moreover, he was a heart patient.

At this point, Assistant Inspector General of Police Hasan Mahmud Khandaker, who attended the briefing to represent the police, said it is wise not to make comments on issues under investigation.

Asked about alleged harassment in army camps, Monirul said, "Everything is going as per the law." He also said the army does not take the arrested to its camps, but hands over the suspected criminals to police as quickly as possible.

"It is not an army drive, it is a joint drive," he said when asked under what law the army is conducting the drive.

Monirul denied army beating up of an old woman and her daughter in

## Wife beaten to death by husband in Sirajganj

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj**

A housewife was beaten to death by her husband at village Charangaru in Shahjapur upazila on Monday.

The victim was identified as Jobeda Khatun, 30, wife of Ashu Miah police said Ashu beat up Jobeda mercilessly, resulting in her death on the spot.

Police recovered the body and arrested Ashu. A case was filed with Shahjapur police station in connection with the murder.

## Major admin

**FROM PAGE 1**

economic affairs, service, local government and development, and others.

Officials of all tiers are frequently being transferred to other ministries which is not helping them to develop skill in a particular area. Officials ranking from the assistant secretaries to deputy secretaries will be transferred to any ministry under any block.

"The move will bring about a change in the administration and restrict wholesale transfer of officials," the foreign minister added.

## AL prospect

**FROM PAGE 12**

party preparation for the central council when party chief Sheikh Hasina returns from the US next week. Hasina, now on her fourth trip to the US after the last general elections, is scheduled to be back home on Saturday.

The last regular council of the party was held on May 6-7 in 1997, which had nominated Sheikh Hasina and Zillur Rahman as party president and general secretary respectively for a three-year term. Unprepared to hold a due central council while in power, the AL rather held a special council on June 23 in 2000 to extend the tenure of that committee for two more years.

However, on June 11 this year, the AL once again extended the central committee's tenure by six more months after fixing the December 22-23 schedule for the next central council.

Party sources feel that if the central council is not held as per schedule considering that the situation is not 'congenial,' this would further shelve the prospect of a much-needed revamping of the party.

Meanwhile, the main opposition party appears losing the initial

Mugda on Monday. Rather, he alleged that the women were hindering army effort to recover illegal weapons.

He said the army drive would continue as long as it is required. He also said 3,017 persons have so far been arrested, 1,036 of whom are listed criminals. Some 395 firearms have also been recovered till date.

Lt. Col. Nazrul Islam attended the briefing on behalf of the army.

## Housewife gangraped in Barisal

**A CORRESPONDENT, Barisal**

A housewife was gangraped by miscreants at village South Baghia in Barisal sadar upazila on Monday night.

According to police, Kulsum, 16, wife of Kamal Hossain of the same village, came to her father's house on the occasion of Shah-e-Barat.

On Monday night, a gang of six miscreants named Faisal, Hanif, Mamun, Babu, Ruhul and Kamrul abducted Kalsum while she was going to a grocery shop nearby. They took the housewife to an abandoned building and raped her by turn.

Victim's father filed a case with Kotwali police yesterday. Police arrested Kamal, one of the accused in the case.

## Udichi

**FROM PAGE 12**

welcome address.

Among others who took part in the discussion were Udichi General Secretary Mahmud Selim, film actor Anwar Hossain and noted columnist Abed Khan.

Addressing the function, Wahidul Haq said the organisation, launched during the military rule of Ayub Khan in 1968 with the aim to free the nation from the Pakistani rulers' cultural oppression, had survived all kinds of repression.

He asked all to take the movement onwards to ensure that working people's struggle wins over all repressive forces.

The speakers asked for a concerted effort to uphold the cultural spirit to fight communalism, terrorism and invasion of alien culture.

Udichi activists of different city units rendered a number of songs, recited poems and rhymes, staged short drama and performed a mime show on the occasion.

Meanwhile, an Udichi press release said that different units across the country observed the occasion with due festivity and with a vow to run its ongoing pro-people cultural movement against all kinds of repression.

## 6 armed cadres of PBCP held in Rupsha

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna**

Rupsha police arrested six cadres of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party on Monday night.

The arrested PBCP cadres are Aslam Shaikh, 35, Mahbubur Rahman, 40, Abdus Salam, 30, Monirul, 28, Bashir, 24, and Saiduzzaman Sony, 25.

The PBCP cadres were arrested from their hideouts at Naihati and Srirampur villages in Rupsha upazila.

## Saber

**FROM PAGE 12**

last Wednesday, died at the Chittagong Medical College Hospital in the early hours of yesterday.

However, army sources denied allegations of torture on Tripura and, quoting doctors, put his death to brain haemorrhage, caused by high blood pressure.

During the drive on Wednesday night, troops picked up the 48-year-old constable from the Razaknali police camp under the Pekua than of Cox's Bazar and took him to a nearby army camp.

Family sources alleged that the army had accused Tripura of working as an agent for the now-defunct Shantibahini and tortured him.

On his return to the police camp, Tripura fell sick and was taken to the local health complex. Later in the same day, he was admitted to the Combined Military Hospital.

However, as his condition deteriorated, he was shifted to the CMCH at around 8:30 that night in coma. Till his death yesterday, he did not regain consciousness, sources in the CMCH said.

In the afternoon, after autopsy at the hospital's morgue, Tripura's body was handed over to his wife Jyotsna Rani Tripura. Later, he was cremated at his in-law's village in Mohalchhari.

While talking to journalists, Jyotsna Rani did not comment on the nature of her husband's death but demanded exemplary punishment to those who had caused it. Tripura was only three months away from retirement.

## PM: Demands

**FROM PAGE 12**

a delegation of Bangladesh Sarkari Karmachari Samonnyo Parishad at her office in the afternoon.

The 22-member delegation, led by Parishad president Abdul Mannan and secretary general Mohammad Salehuddin Selim, apprised the Prime Minister of their various problems and some of their demands.

She gave a patient hearing and also assured them that the legitimate demands would be fulfilled in phases.

Stating that the present government has made significant progress with the cooperation of all, including the government and semi-government employees, the Prime Minister said there was still a long way to go to overcome the drawbacks.

About reinstatement of the employees sacked illegally by the past Awami League government, she said some of them had got their jobs back while a decision regarding other cases would be taken after proper scrutiny.

She said a decision regarding the demand for Employees Trustee Board would be taken after discussion with all concerned.

BNP Secretary General and LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Food Minister Abdullah Al Noman, Prime Minister's Political Secretaries Harris Chowdhury and Mosaddek Ali were present in the meeting.

## Land grab

**FROM PAGE 1**

running into the lake, causing severe water pollution, the problem has not been addressed by the plan.

Town planners suggested that the authorities follow the model of the Dhanmondi lake development project in implementing any such project on the Gulshan Lake, which was declared 'ecologically critical' by the Department of Environment (DoE).

To make things worse, the authorities did not evict illegal occupiers from the lakeside. A Rajuk survey shows that about 150 illegal establishments have sprouted in the lake area.

On June 19, the prime minister directed the authorities to zone the lake and its surroundings as the 'project area', but they failed to follow the directive for reasons unknown.

Earlier, a strong syndicate of some employees in the town planning and the engineering department was involved in the fraudulent practice in allotting plots, the Rajuk sources said.

Locals threaten that they will not let any project on the lake be successful without their involvement.



Abdus Samad Azad addresses a rally yesterday organised by city Awami League protesting the arrest of Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim MP and Saber Hossain Chowdhury, political secretary to Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina.

## 152 arrested on Day 13

**FROM PAGE 1**

Earlier on Sunday, an inquiry committee, headed by an assistant superintendent of police (ASP), submitted a report on Wednesday's incident to the home ministry.

Meanwhile, our correspondent from Sylhet reports that Jamir Uddin, a carpenter and activist of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party, died at the Golapganj upazila health complex at 5:10pm yesterday.

An army team picked up the 35-year-old from his Dattarail residence at Golapganj and took him to its upazila parishad complex camp in the early hours of yesterday.

He was later taken to the Dakshin High School and severely beaten up in front of several pedestrians.

According to sources, the troops asked Jamir about the whereabouts of some local criminals.

Police sources meanwhile claimed that Jamir was a listed criminal and accused in two cases of extortion and attempt to murder, and said he had sustained injuries after jumping off a hilly area near Barapota Mokam at Raigarh village. The army had taken Jamir to the area to recover illegal weapons.

He was handed over to the upazila health complex at 4:30 yesterday afternoon, they added.

Jamir's body was later sent to the Osmany Medical College Hospital for post-mortem.

In the capital, there were army raids on the Fulbaria terminal, Rampura and Khilgaon areas, Kaptan Bazar and the Geneva Camp

at Mohammadpur.

Three listed criminals each were rounded up from Rampura and Khilgaon areas and the Geneva Camp. Eleven others were also arrested during the raid on the Geneva Camp.

Nine people were hauled up from Kaptan Bazar including the owner of a liquor shop.

In the port city, army simultaneously raided AL lawmaker Anwar's city residence at Pancharish and ancestral home at Fatikchhari at 4:00am.

At around the same time, former AL legislator Babu's Surson Road residence and village home at Halidhar in Anwara upazila were raided. No firearm was found during the raid.

The AL leaders were not home during the raids.

The troops also rounded up six suspected criminals and recovered one pipe-gun and eight cocktails from Mirsarai.

Our Khulna correspondent said local journalists have no access to information about the outcome of army crackdown. Neither the PID nor the ISPR has issued any handout since the raid began on October 17.

Our Bogra Correspondent said army arrested former Jatia Party leader Ferz Khan from his residence at the Bogra New Market area yesterday.

Feroz is accused in several criminal cases, including that of possession of illegal firearms.

## FM: Foreign policy

**FROM PAGE 1**

threshold of economic development."

Morshed Khan hoped that the Bangladeshi diplomats would increasingly reflect the country's concerns in the evolving rules and arrangements within the framework of the on going WTO and other negotiations.

"These are difficult challenges, but to remain relevant and useful we must live up to these challenges. I look forward to a future where the economic thrust of our foreign policy would be as vigorously pursued as its other important political and security imperatives," he said.

Referring to other challenges, the foreign minister said Bangladesh has been in the forefront of all multilateral initiatives within the UN and other multilateral forums to enhance peace, promote dialogue and encourage cooperation to address the problems constantly being faced by global community.

Claiming achievements in upholding democracy, human rights and focussing on concerns of vulnerable groups of people, Khan said foreign policy of the present government would continue to encourage multilateral focus on these important issues in the coming years.

"The challenges before us are

## Manju

**FROM PAGE 1**

police and civil administrations from party influence.

Manju however said there is a marked improvement in law and order situation after deployment of the army for crackdown against criminals. Barring few stray incidents, majority of the country's people are happy with "Operation Clean Heart".

Manju noted that the previous Awami League government also tried to politicise the administration and planned to grab all the 300 parliamentary seats. "Democratic system will not be strengthened if we can't establish the rule of law," he said.

He observed that violence, murder and rape and joblessness were pushing the country towards anarchy. "We don't want anarchy, we want continuity of the democratic system," he said noting that the situation at present is critical and threatening the country's democracy.

He mentioned that the finance minister closed down the Food for Work Programme as works under the scheme had been given to party-men in defiance of all rules and laws.

Presided over by JP city unit President Abdur Rahim, the meeting was also addressed by JP Secretary General Sheikh Shahidul Islam, Kamrunnahar Jafar, Sadek Siddiqui, Amana Begum and Azam Khan.

complex and arduous and in the rapidly changing regional and global context, they would require much attention on our part on many fronts," he said.

Describing the present foreign policy as a natural extension of domestic policies on critical political and economic issues, he said it would continue to serve the people and the country.

"I also hope that in its implementation, our foreign policy would be a force in support of regional and global peace and progress much beyond the ambit of our national priorities."

As regards regional cooperation, the foreign minister said the government is committed to promoting trade among the SAARC countries. "The forthcoming SAARC Summit in Pakistan may play a major role in giving regional cooperation a fresh impetus."

About relations with the close neighbours, he said it could be improved on the basis of equality, non-interference and settlement of outstanding bilateral issues through dialogue.

"The relations of Bangladesh with her neighbours have always been of vital interest to us, not only for their implications for our national security but also for positive contribution they may make to the realisation of our legitimate economic interests," he observed.

Khan said the present government remains committed to working consistently to consolidate friendly relations with the South Asian neighbours. "All countries in the region can make vital contribution to making South Asia secure and prosperous by resolving their differences."

On relations with the ASEAN, the foreign minister said Bangladesh attaches importance to ties with these countries and welcomes the process of increasing dialogue within the ACD framework.

"The process may open up entire range of new possibilities to channel our productive energies for accelerated growth of our countries," he told the seminar.

Chaired by BISS Chairman Mufleh Osmani, the seminar was also addressed by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Reaz Rahman, Foreign Secretary Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury and the BNP chairperson's adviser MM Rezaul Karim.

## Sk Selim

**FROM PAGE 1**

Sheikh Selim was arrested on October 21 from his Banani residence in the city under Section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code. Later, he was given a one-month detention under the Special Powers Act 1974.

Barrister M Amirul Islam moved the petition on behalf of the petitioner.

## Promotion of trade

**FROM PAGE 10**

Bangladesh.

Lack of direct telecommunication link also hampers bilateral business seriously. In addition, banking, insurance, PSI and lodging facilities are also not adequate at border points. Also lack of adequate power supply, warehouse and godown facilities cause problems to exporters and importers of both the countries, the seminar was told.

The seminar further revealed that there are three important land customs stations two in Sylhet and one in Brahmanbaria to facilitate export and import to and from Meghalaya, Tripura and Assam, but none of them could develop either infrastructural or logistic supports much to the disappointment of prospective Bangladeshi exporters.

Physical, infrastructural and transportation problems apart, different tariff barriers and inadequate logistic supports are also major obstacles to expediting trade and investment between the two sides, the participants of the seminar pointed out.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury stressed the need for initiatives from the both sides to ensure duty-free access of products to both the coun-

tries and liberalisation of trade.

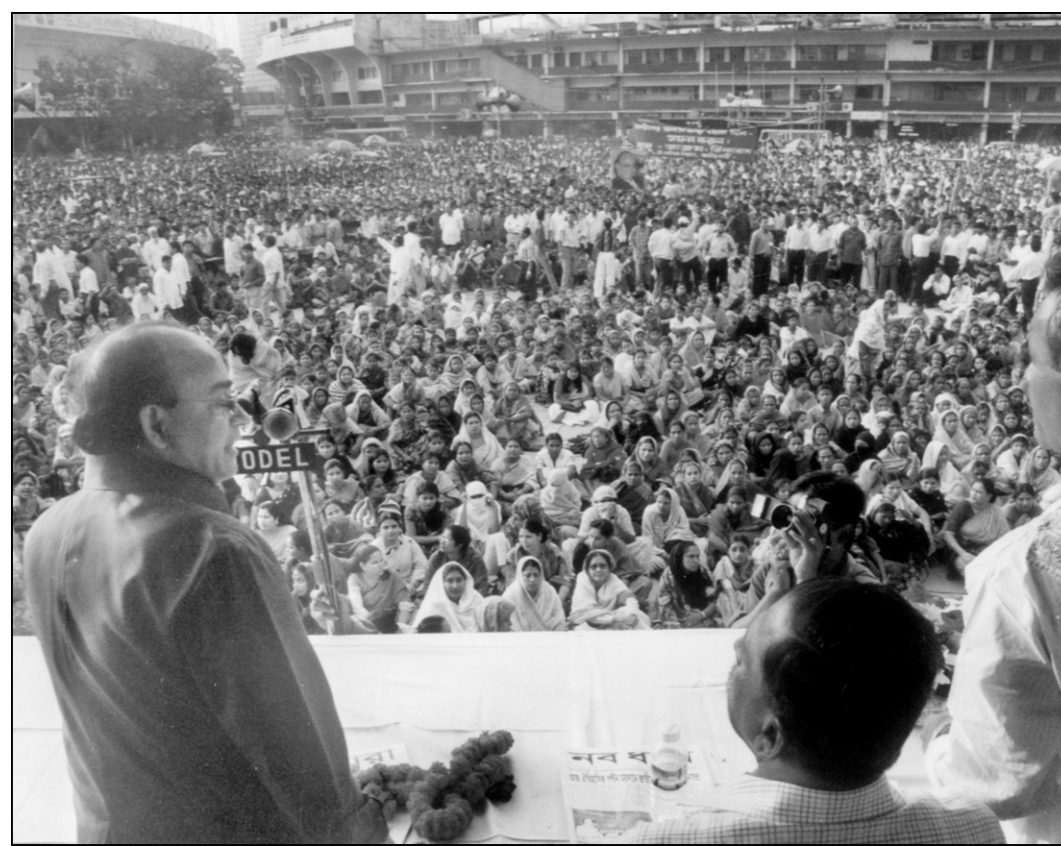
Acting chief commissioner of India Dilip Sinha said the northeastern region of India had vast natural resources like minerals and others, but the geographical location was a serious handicap for it, hindering trade and investment and development as well.

He called for measures to help the landlocked region emerge as a bridge for trade between the two countries.

FBCCI president Yousuf Abdullah Harun emphasised the need for resolving the issues, including the border trade existing between Bangladesh and India, and called upon both the sides to come forward with a 'political will' to harness the tremendous business potential.

The seminar concluded that India being an 'economic giant' in this region could play a significant role in economic development of its neighbouring country as American cooperation did for that of Mexico.

The participants agreed that it is India who could take the forward step to this end through reducing the staggering trade gap and, as a gesture of goodwill, could allow duty-free access of Bangladeshi goods to its market on non-reciprocal basis under the SAARC umbrella.



Jatiya Party (Manju) Chairman Anwar Hossain Manju addresses a public rally organised by the party at Paltan Maidan in the city yesterday.

## Crackdown on Chechens

**FROM PAGE 12**

ble unless Putin sought a peace settlement.

"You will never be able to crush the Chechen people and bring it to its knees. There is one reasonable, correct step to sit down at the negotiating table," he told AFP at a world congress of Chechens in Denmark.

Meanwhile Russia has maintained a wall of silence around the nature of the gas its troops pumped into the Moscow theatre on Saturday as they launched an assault to free the more than 800 hostages.

Of the 117 hostages who died, 115 succumbed to the effects of the gas. Fifty hostage takers also died. Interfax news agency yesterday quoted officials saying 45 people had been shot dead and not gassed, but later retracted the report.

A top medical official said "sarin or other poison gases" were not

used but rather an "anesthetizing gas used in surgery." US officials said they were told by Moscow that an opiate-based substance was used.

## PR Chanda

**FROM PAGE 12**

Mohammad Saifur Rahman, the then officer-in-charge (OC) of Ramna thana, filed the Sedition Case with the CMM's Court, Dhaka on April 8 against former state minister for planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir and six others including former home secretary and incumbent Election Commissioner Shaifur Rahman.

In the case, it has been alleged that the accused had erected a Janatar Mancha (people's dais) in front of the Jatiya Press Club in March 1996 and instigated the government officials and employees to join the agitation against the then BNP government.

## Rape: One jailed for life in Khulna

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna**

A young man was sentenced to life term imprisonment in a rape case here on Monday.

According to the prosecution, Mohammad Ibrahim Molla, 25, son of Yusuf Ali Molla of Puraikati village in Paikgacha upazila, raped a five-year-old daughter of Intaz Ali Sheikh of the same village at 11 am on August 11, 1998.

Intaz Ali filed a case with Paikgacha thana accusing Ibrahim on August 22.

After investigation, SI Solaiman of Paikgacha thana, submitted the charge sheet on November 15 of the same year and charge was framed against the accused in the special tribunal on February 17, 1999.

Judge Mohammad Shahinoor Islam pronounced the judgement in presence of the accused.

## 9 get life term for murder in Kurigram

**UNB, Kurigram**

The District and Sessions Judge's Court here on Monday sentenced nine people to life term imprisonment in the sensational Aiyub Ali Mondal murder case.

The convicts are Rubel Alam, Ruhul Amin, A Kader, A Rahman, Tajul Islam, Rustom Ali, Pipul, AKuddus and A Mannan. The court also fined the convicts Tk 10,000 each, in default, to suffer another one year RI.

According to the prosecution, the convicts chopped Aiyub Ali Mondal to death under a tree in Rajarhat thana at 9pm on October 26, 2000 while he was returning home riding a motorbike.

Another accused died during the trial.

## Graft case

**FROM PAGE 12**

shown as prosecution witnesses. Earlier, the CMM's Court transferred the case to the Sessions Judge's Court for trial.

In the case, filed with Motijheel thana, it has been alleged that Anwara Begum, wife of former DCC Chief Engineer Mohammad Shamsul Haq Bhuiyan, had filed an application in 1985 with the then DIT (now Rajuk) seeking allotment of five kathas of land in the city's Banani area on forged documents. But the application was cancelled on scrutiny.

Later, Mohammad Hanif made arrangements for allotment of the same land in the name of his wife in 1996 by misusing power.

BAC filed the case against the accused on April 7 this year.

Following the case, Mohammad Hanif and five others, but Lt Col (retd) Nurul Haq were granted bail by the High Court till submission of the charge sheet.

## Delhi declaration

**FROM PAGE 12**

US President George W Bush abandoned it in March 2001, shortly after taking office.

The failure to mention the Kyoto protocol in the draft declaration has also led to speculation that India is siding with Washington on climate change and had raised doubts a final declaration would emerge that would satisfy the 170 nations participating in the event.

Those taking part had expected the spotlight at the meeting to fall on the protocol ahead of its implementation early next year.

India, whose environment minister TR Baalu presides over the eighth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, known as COP-8, said he was determined to bring about a consensus on the draft declaration.

"It is only an initial paper. Ultimately, the document which is going to emerge will be a consensus document," said PV Jaikrishnan,

India's environment secretary, the highest-ranked bureaucrat in the environment ministry.

He later told a news conference that different parties had approached the Indian side to detail what they wanted to be included or removed in the declaration.

"We are taking a look at this. We hope to come out with a final declaration at the end of the conference," he said.

Delegates to the New Delhi conference have, since it began last week, discussed global warming and how to monitor its impact, as well as emission control.

The ministerial leg of COP-8 begins today, with environment ministers from around the world expected to attend.

Developing countries are expected to lobby hard with the rich nations not only for greater transfer of technologies, but also for funds to fight climate change.