



PHOTO: STAR

Joint forces of the anticrime operation arrested Rafiq Ahmed alias Baicchya in possession of an AK-47 assault rifle in the port city of Chittagong.

## Mujib's image

**FROM PAGE 12**  
'Bangabandhu' from the title of the annual agriculture award. The bill was passed yesterday with the AL boycotting the session.

The agriculture minister came down heavily on the AL for what he said putting all the blame on 'razakars' (wartime collaborators of the Pakistani occupation army) and for 'demeaning' Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by naming various institutions and establishments after him.

Responding to AL's attack on him for introducing the bill and calling him a 'razakar', the Jamaat leader said, "Awami League is its own enemy. There is no use putting all the blame on razakars all the time."

In this regard, Nizami said that following the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975, "no razakar had joined the Khandakar Mushtaq government, rather, the freedom fighters had joined his cabinet."

People belonging to the AL such as Abdul Malek Ukil and Mohiuddin Ahmed had spoken against the Mujib government in London and Moscow respectively, Nizami said.

He went on, " People like Sirajul Alam Khan, ASM Rob and Shahajan Siraj, who were AL forerunners in pre-independence days, formed JSD (Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal) in post-

## PM: Ziarat

**FROM PAGE 12**  
Saudi Royal Protocol made a special enclosure for iftar by the Bangladesh Prime Minister at the holy mosque complex.

Khaleda Zia performed her maghrib, isha and tarabi prayers at the Masjid-e-Nabbi.

The Royal Protocol arranged all hospitality and arrangements for the prime minister who is staying in the Kingdom as a Royal Guest of the Saudi government.

Saudi electronic media gave wide coverage to the prime minister.

Earlier, on her arrival at Madinah, the Bangladesh Prime Minister was given a guard of honour by a contingent of the Saudi special security force.

Khaleda Zia will stay at Madinah till Friday before flying for Jeddah by a special aircraft on way to Makkah, where she will perform Umrah.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin and Prime Minister's Political Secretary Muhammad Mosaddeq Ali are, among others, accompanying the prime minis-

independence period and their student wing -- JSD Chhatra League -- gained more popularity than the original Chhatra League."

Nizami also claimed that the now-defunct Rakkibahini had killed 40,000 JSD activists during the AL rule following independence.

## Indian FM

**FROM PAGE 1**  
anti-Indian activities. He also alleged that the Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka has become 'the hub of ISI activities for promoting terrorism and insurgency in India'.

He claimed that major insurgent groups have established training camps in different parts of Bangladesh and said the Indian High Commission in Dhaka had conveyed its concern over the matter.

The remarks by Sinha came close on the heels of veteran CPI (M) leader Jyoti Basu's statement that terrorist activities in West Bengal were on the rise due to "the growing presence of fundamentalist elements in Bangladesh."

"This is bound to happen when so many fundamentalist elements are operating across the border," he had told reporters last weekend after attending a meeting of the party's politburo.

Basu made the comment on a day when West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee met Deputy Prime Minister LK Advani and sought additional para-military personnel to curb growing activities of various terrorist groups in the state.

## BIWTA drive

**FROM PAGE 12**  
Kamrangirchar yesterday, raising the number of demolished structures to 289 along the foreshore of the river.

Deputy Director of the BIWTA Saiful Haque Khan told The Daily Star that the team resumed the demolition drive with the help of police.

The BIWTA team has run its drive in Fatullah, Kamrangirchar and Keraniganj over the last seven days. Yesterday was an additional day of the drive that cost Tk 80,000 a day.

Kamrangirchar Police Station confirmed the arrest of the seven people. No case was filed until yesterday evening, though, police said.

The decision on the launch of the demolition drive was taken at the meeting of a ministerial taskforce on November 13.

Shanir Akhra, Demra, was injured when a bus hit him at about 8-30 am.

He was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where he succumbed to his injury at about 9:15 am.

Our Staff Correspondent from Chittagong writes: Two persons were killed in separate road mishaps in the city and district yesterday.

The dead were identified as Abul Kalam Azad, 45, a police sub-inspector of Khulshi Police Station in the city, and Reazuddin, 3 of Patiya.

Sources said SI Azad was run over by a Dhaka-bound passenger bus on Zakir Hossain Road at around 10 am.

He was rushed to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) where the doctors declared him dead.

The namaz-e-janaza for the police officer was held at Dampara Police Ground after autopsy in the afternoon.

Reazuddin, 3, was killed on the spot when a sand loaded truck hit him in front of Shahachar Mazar under Patiya in the morning.

## Saifur

**FROM PAGE 12**  
teachers have to dissuade students from putting up such resistance, meeting sources said.

However, he said, the government cannot impose any decision on the universities because of their autonomous status and so they should work out their own mechanism in this regard.

The meeting also discussed in detail the fallout of acute budget deficits on Khulna University, Islamic University, Kushtia and Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Sylhet.

So intense is the fund crisis that some staff, working under development budget, have been working without salary for months now, the minister was told.

The UGC informed Saifur that against a demand of Tk 3.96 crore for a period of 18 months (from July 1999 to December 2000), Tk 3.49 crore was disbursed in the 2000-01 fiscal.

It requested the finance minister to arrange a fund of Tk 4.5 crore so that the universities can give salary to those staff. The minister agreed to give Tk 3 crore.

Budget deficit under the education head at the public universities have soared to Tk 55.71 crore between 1995-96 and 2001-02 due to inadequate government allocation, appointment of excess manpower, etc.

In the current fiscal (2002-03), the government allocated Tk 277 crore in the budget for public universities against a UGC demand of Tk 310.20 crore.

In this context the UGC requested the minister to increase allocation to offset the deficit.

## Launch fares

**FROM PAGE 12**  
doubled on the eve of Eid. But the ticket seller of a Barguna-bound launch claimed that the fare was not raised.

All cabins of the launch have already been booked and the fare of a single-bed cabin increased to Tk 600 from Tk 400. And the fare for a deck passenger on the Dhaka-Barisal route increased from Tk 60-65 to Tk 112.

The Bangladesh Railway started sales of advance tickets on Monday and will run special trains to ease the rush of homebound passengers.

The Gabtali Inter-District Bus Terminal was found free from ticket touts yesterday due to army deployment.

The terminal is the hub of over 550 buses to at least 36 southwestern and northwestern districts. The buses transport an estimated 10,000 passengers, twice the normal, on 50 routes a day before Eid.

When approached, some ticket counters at the terminal said the tickets were sold out, but fares were not raised.

An employee of Kaleque Enterprise said the bus service sold tickets at the usual price. A Shyamoli Paribahan employee said transport owners did not raise fares due to the anticrime operation.

## Speedy Trial

**FROM PAGE 1**  
In the case filed with Sutrapur police station, it has been alleged that Mohammad Mohsin, 18, and Mohammad Saem, 19, of Sharat Kumar Das Lane under Sutrapur thana were picked up from their houses by a gang allegedly led by Rabid Hasan Sumon on September 15, 2000.

The gang took the two to Gandaria Rifle Club and tortured them for Tk 50,000 ransom.

Later, the gang killed the youths, slashed their bodies into 12 pieces and dumped those into a manhole. Police recovered the pieces from the manhole the following day.

Mohammad Amin Miah, father of Mohsin, one of the two victims, filed a murder case accusing 14 people including Sumon.

The government on November 21 transferred 30 important cases pending with different courts to the newly formed six tribunals for speedy trial.

## Hasina: HR violation

**FROM PAGE 12**

ing political opponents.

The international community, the opposition leader said, cannot "turn a blind eye to these dark developments in Bangladesh and should denounce this".

Hasina, whose lecture was on "Cooperation in South Asia," said the efforts to find a solution to the problems of poverty, illiteracy and economic decline in SAARC have become hostage to hostilities between India and Pakistan.

Pointing out that the track record of SAARC has not been very encouraging so far, the Awami League chief said resolution of the common problems facing the countries of the region appear to have held hostage by disputes between India and Pakistan which need to be solved bilaterally.

She said SAARC countries were afflicted with extreme poverty, poor infrastructure, terrorism, cross-border trafficking of drugs, weapons, women and children and all the problems could be solved by a common programme and its time-bound implementation.

But such a common plan of action was missing in SAARC for the last several years, Hasina added.

Singling out poverty as the factor responsible for increasing number of youths joining the ranks of terrorists, she said, "If you can arrange food, jobs and decent living for them, the youths will not be attracted to terrorism."

Hasina suggested promotion of

disputes between countries of the region could be taken up bilaterally. If the issue proved very difficult to be resolved, then a third country could take the initiative to bring the two sides to the table on the basis of mutual understanding.

She said SAARC countries should strictly adhere to the charter of the regional association which bars members from raising bilateral disputes in the forum.

In this context, the Awami League chief recalled her own trip to New Delhi and Islamabad as Prime Minister soon after India and Pakistan conducted nuclear tests in a bid to break the ice between the two South Asian neighbours.

Hasina also listed how her government had solved the Ganges water-sharing issue with India and the "deep-rooted" Chakma ethnic problem without any third party mediation "which is unique in the history of conflict resolution".

She said it was a great disappointment to find SAARC had failed to enhance economic co-operation in a manner ASEAN and North America and Europe had done and the flow of trade and investment in South Asia is among the lowest in any economic grouping in the world.

Hasina suggested economical communication link among SAARC capitals saying this would promote tourism and trade among the countries.

Earlier on Tuesday, Hasina called

on Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and was understood to have discussed bilateral issues.

The 30-minute interaction between the two leaders was officially termed as a "courtesy call" by Hasina but there is no official word on what transpired at talks between them.

Later, Hasina had a dinner meeting with Indian External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha yesterday.

The Awami League leader's meetings with senior Indian political leaders assumes significance against the backdrop of recent humps in relations between New Delhi and Dhaka following the spar on issue of reported presence of Al Qaida elements in Bangladesh.

Indian Deputy Prime Minister L K Advani's remarks that Al Qaida militants were present in Bangladesh and that terrorist activities from that country had increased following the change of government there last year have drawn sharp rejoinder from Dhaka.

While denying the charge, Bangladesh alleged India is not responding to its request for the hand-over of "criminals" who took shelter in West Bengal following the anti-crime crackdown in Bangladesh.

Hasina arrived at New Delhi on Monday night on a five-day visit to India, her first since being voted out of power last year.

## Bangabandhu's name dropped

**FROM PAGE 1**

But Agriculture Minister Motiur Rahman Nizami, who introduced the bill last Monday, did not accept the JP lawmakers' amendment. Nor did he accept their proposal to send the bill to a select committee for scrutiny and public opinions.

Last Monday, the Awami League (AL) lawmakers walked out of the House over the introduction of the bill. As the government turned down their plea for withdrawal of the bill, the AL lawmakers went on a boycott of the fifth parliamentary session that came to an end yesterday.

Responding to the proposals by the JP lawmakers for sending the bill to a select committee for scrutiny and public opinions, Nizami said, "That will unnecessarily kill time and the agriculture award programme will be postponed in that case."

The minister belonging to the Jamaat-e-Islami told the House that the Bangabandhu Award was first introduced on a presidential order in 1973, but the award was not given until 1978.

It was renamed the President's Award for Agricultural Development by an ordinance in 1976 and the late president Ziaur Rahman started giving out the award in 1978, recalled Nizami.

The award got back its previous name "Bangabandhu Award"

through an amendment in 1997, he said. Nizami claimed that his predecessor in the agriculture ministry, Motia Chowdhury, put forward three names to rename the award at a cabinet meeting in 1997 -- Bangabandhu Agriculture Award, National Agriculture Award and National Agriculture Medal.

But the cabinet settled for a new name "Bangabandhu Award" instead of choosing any of the three, claimed Nizami. "We're going to accept the second name (proposed by Motia Chowdhury)...we can't help it, if AL leaders Abidus Samad Azad and Suranjit Sengupta took offence at the rename."

Of the seven national awards of Bangladesh, none other than the said one bears a person's name, Nizami argued.

The seven awards are Independence Day Award, Ekushey Padak, National Family Planning Award, National Sports Award, National Film Award, National Children Award and Bangabandhu Award.

"We decided to bring uniformity by dropping the word 'Bangabandhu' from the nomenclature of the award," Nizami explained.

About the AL boycott, Nizami said he should not be singled out for blame. The decision on renaming

the Bangabandhu Award was taken at a cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, he pointed out.

Earlier, both GM Quader and Hafizuddin Ahmed came down hard on the mainstream political parties that they said engaged in naming and renaming various institutions.

The JP lawmakers suggested that the government introduce another award instead of renaming it.

## ADB breathes

**FROM PAGE 12**

fuelled buses and 2,000 CNG-fuelled auto-rickshaws would be imported. Three workshops would be set up to convert vehicles into CNG-run ones. The RPGCL will also carry out technology development and training programmes, bring in new safety codes, standards and regulations on the use of CNG for transports and also carry out promotional campaigns.

However, the implementation of the project would not be a complete success unless the ADB agrees to provide loan for the \$700 million fourth Natural Gas Development Project. This project remains uncertain as the ADB has imposed a harsh condition that Bangladesh has to export gas to India to get fund.

## Another AK-47 seized in Ctg

**FROM PAGE 1**

bullets, 80 were locally made and had the name of BOF (Bangladesh Ordnance Factory) at Gazipur inscribed on them.

Sources said Rafiq claimed that he was the president of the Chikdair unit of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal, the ruling BNP's youth front, in Rauzan. He also claimed that he had close relations with a former BNP lawmaker from Rauzan. Rafiq also said he used to receive money from the former lawmaker, also a former leader of the now-defunct NDP.

However, Chittagong (north) district BNP President Golam Akber Khondoker denied that Rafiq had any link with the local chapter of the Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal.

Our Bogra correspondent reports that the army arrested three people in the town. They however yesterday released former lawmaker and expelled general secretary of district Awami League Ferdous Zaman Mukul after interrogation. Mukul was picked up from

his Jaleswaritola residence on Tuesday night.

Meanwhile, police arrested a young man impersonating as an army man in Charmatha area in the district on Tuesday night. Shafiqul Islam, 28, had tried to realise money from Charmatha Autorickshaw Owners' Association.

In Sirajganj, army arrested a local BNP leader and wanted criminal Saiful Islam in Chandaikona village in Raiganj upazila.

In Pabna, the army arrested two persons in Sathia and Aitalkola. Mohammad Ali, a listed criminal, was held in Ekdanta and Elias Ali, general secretary of the Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal's Sathia thana unit and listed criminal in Karamja Bazar. And in Jhenidah, the joint forces arrested three criminals including a listed one, according to our correspondent.

On the whole, the troops arrested 133 people, including 14 listed criminals, across the country during the last 24 hours ending at

8:00am yesterday. A home ministry press release said 16 firearms were recovered during the time including three pistols, two revolvers, one shotgun and two pipe-guns.

A press release of the police headquarters said they hauled up 1,557 people including four 'identified' criminals across the country during the last 24 hours ending at 6:00am yesterday.

Police also seized 14 firearms along with 12 bullets during the period. The 'identified' criminals are Akash and Saikat alias Shawkat of Chittagong city, Jahangir Hawlader of Madaripur and Sheikh Ahmad of Laxmipur, the press release added.

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police in a press release said yesterday they arrested 132 people including 14 listed criminals during a special drive in the capital. They also seized 16 firearms along with 284 bullets. The arms include three pistols, two revolvers, two pipe-guns and a shotgun.

## Brief but busy session

**FROM PAGE 1**

Two private members' bills were also introduced in the House during the session and both the bills were sent to relevant parliamentary standing committees for scrutiny.

Lawmakers from the treasury and opposition benches submitted 74 questions for the prime minister to reply, but the Speaker selected only six of them, all by the treasury bench members. Ministers responded to 608 of 694 questions accepted by the Speaker.

The House also heard 42 call attention notices on issues of urgent public importance and three resolutions by private members.

However, it did not hold any general discussions on pressing national issues like the ongoing army crackdown on crimes, deaths linked to military interrogation, reported move to export gas to India and price-hike of essentials as demanded by the opposition.

Before prorogation of the

session, Local Government, Rural Development (LGRD) and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said the AL boycott of the proceedings was pre-planned.

Leader of the House and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia was absent from the House as she is now in Saudi Arabia for umrah.

"The House became lively with the participation of the opposition, but they left it on a lame excuse," Bhuiyan said.

Referring to the AL demand for general discussions on a number of issues, he said the House could have discussed one or two issues had the opposition stayed back. "We had no problem in discussing issues like gas. They started the process of exporting gas. Whatever decision we will take on gas will be taken following a discussion in the parliament."

Turning to the anti-crime army drive, he told the House that the government had to go for the drive to combat the law and order downside created by the past AL

government.

"Deployment of the army in aid to civil administration is nothing new in the country. The previous government deployed the army eight times in the past five years," Bhuiyan said.

"Whatever the reason is, our (BNP) people are being caught in larger number than theirs as we are not interfering in the drive," he said.

Responding to an opposition query, the LGRD minister said a special police team called the Rapid Action Team would be there to fight crimes once the joint drive is over.

Commenting on AL chief Sheikh Hasina's current visit to India, he said: "We are concerned whenever she goes abroad where she always speaks against the country."

Earlier, Jatiya Party leader Roushan Ershad, speaking for a faction of the opposition, proposed that the army be integrated in the process of governance.

## 2 journalists quizzed

**FROM PAGE 1**

entered the country using fake identities and visited various places to gather twisted information. "Their motive seems to be to know whether Bangladesh has Taliban and AL-Qaida network and highlight in foreign media that there is no communal harmony in the country."

Counsels of the arrested, Barrister Rokun Uddin Mahmud and Advocate Khondakar Abdul Mannan expressed concern over security of their clients. They alleged that they were not allowed to meet the arrested and were also not given documents of the case. Family members of the arrested are totally unaware where they were kept," Rokun Uddin told BBC.

Pricilla's sister Premanjan Raj told BBC she went to police station and court but was not allowed to meet Pricilla.

Sources said the two foreigners after coming to Bangladesh on November 6 were engaged in a series of 'clandestine' activities with an apparent motive of portraying Bangladesh as an 'Islamic fanatic' country. For this, they visited Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Khagrachhari and different parts of the capital.

In a statement, Pricilla's mother Hasna Begum said her daughter has been working as a translator and interpreter since her student life. On November 23, she left home to work on a daily basis as an interpreter for the two journalists, she added.

She went on, "Some dailies portrayed Pricilla as an associate of the two journalists, which disheartened us very much."

She believed that truth would come to light through investigation.

Meanwhile, Meser Ali, driver of the vehicle that took the two journalists and their guide to Benapole, gave a judicial statement before a Metropolitan Magistrate yesterday. Arrested as an accused, Meser later turned a witness in the case. He said the three had visited several places in Jessore and Satkhira and took video footages and statements of several people before going to Benapole.

"They also met two correspondents of two Dhaka dailies," Meser said. He was released after his statement was recorded.

The BBC issued a statement on the arrest of the two journalists. It said the two, Zaiba and Bruno, were remanded for five days, but Channel 4 chiefs are still not sure what they have been charged with.

In a letter to the Bangladesh High Commission in London, following a request from Channel 4, BBC news chiefs have asked for their immediate release.

BBC's head of current affairs Peter Horrocks wrote: "I write to express the concern of BBC Current Affairs at the arrest of the filmmakers Zaiba and Bruno in your country. These two journalists are well known to the BBC and we know them to be journalists of high integrity."

"We call on your courts to respect their rights as film-makers and we are confident they would not break the laws of any country. We respectfully request they are released immediately."

The international press watchdog, Reporters Sans Frontiers, has termed the arrests a "serious attack on press freedom".

## AL agitation

**FROM PAGE 12**

Mohammad Nasim, former home minister, said that the people's mandate for running the Jatiya Sangsad in a democratic way has been marred by the BNP-Jamaat government's autocratic attitude. "They would not allow the elected representatives to speak against their anti-people activities. The European Union Parliament adopted a resolution criticising the Operation Clean Heart, but we are not permitted to talk against it in our own parliament," he said.

"The people's representatives are entitled to speak in the Jatiya Sangsad and enact laws for the people. But when we protested the introduction of the anti-people 'Speedy Trial Tribunal Act 2002' on November 24, they did not pay any heed to our opinion," he said.

"We will not withdraw this act after we come to power, we will hold trial of the BNP men under this very act," Nasim warned, addressing the prime minister.

Pointing to the amendment of the 'Bangabandhu Award Fund Ordinance, 1976' that was passed at the JS session on November 25, he termed erasing of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's name "a naked manifestation of political vendetta".

"The country's sovereignty is threatened as the well identified anti-liberation people like Nizami now dare

to propose to erase Bangabandhu's name from the ordinance which was promulgated 26 years ago," Nasim said.

Senior AL Presidium member Abdul Jalil warned that the present government was conspiring to turn the country into a 'Nabhya Pakistan' (New Pakistan).

Among others who addressed the demonstration are former Law Minister Abdul Matin Khasru, former Forest and Environment Minister Sayeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Suranjit Sengupta, Advocate Rahmat Ali, Omar Ali, Habibur Rahman Molla, Salauddin Badal, Abdul Mannan, BCL General Secretary Nazrul Islam Babu, former BCL president Enamul Haq Shamim, and former GS Ajoy Kar Khokon.

A procession was brought out in the city after the demonstration. It started from Muktangan and ended at the AL office.

## Ex-chief whip

**FROM PAGE 1**  
issued arrest warrant against Abul Hasnat Abdullah and his three sons -- Salek, Ashik and Moin -- on Monday for possessing illegal arms and ammunition which were recovered by army personnel from the house.

The court also asked them to surrender before it by November 28.

## Pop music

**FROM PAGE 12**

lifetime achievement award.

The 'King of Pop' dropped into a CD store unannounced, without bodyguards, and no one at first noticed he was there.

"I'd like to go shopping again for CDs in Berlin," Jackson said, adding: "It's just unbelievable. No matter where I'm always being followed...I need the experience that I can walk into a store as a completely normal person going shopping."

Jackson had a busy week in Berlin visiting tourist sites, meeting poor families, attending charity auctions -- and getting caught up in controversy for dangling his baby son out of a hotel window.

German police had started a probe into whether Jackson had

committed a crime by dangling his son from the fourth-floor window of his five-star hotel before hundreds of fans last week, a frightening moment captured on film and widely broadcast.

Jackson apologised, saying he was caught up in the emotion of the cheering fans. He had held his baby, whose head was covered by a towel, over a balcony with one arm. Fans screaming his name on the street below gasped in horror.

Berlin police opted against starting a formal investigation.

Jackson also dismissed criticism about covering the faces of his children with veils -- believed to be an attempt to thwart potential kidnappers -- as they toured Berlin's zoo.

## EC sticks to plans

**FROM PAGE 1**

government since its request had been turned down, he said, "We hope we will hold the elections smoothly with help from the government."

The government found itself on increasingly fragile footing after the Attorney General's Office termed the LGR