

## Peace sans democracy

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tion of mass destruction represents, globally, a multibillion-dollar industry and notwithstanding all the rhetoric to the contrary, there were no visible signs of its abatement.

The former PM termed it a sheer tragedy that the teeming millions live in abject poverty in the countries of so-called underdeveloped world whereas they could benefit so much even from a marginal reduction in the size of this industry of mass destruction.

"More arms we build up for ostensibly noble and defensive purposes the less we have for poverty reduction, human development and empowerment of the poor," she said.

Referring to the end of the cold war in the 90s, Hasina said people had expected a reversal in the trend of arms buildup, but "unfortunately, the world seems to have become more dangerous, less secure and uncertain."

She told the meet that even if a fraction of resources spent on war preparations and war was diverted to programmes aimed at human development, dramatic changes would take place in the life of millions of poor people all over the world.

Peace is considered to be a fundamental human right to be attended, protected and carried forward all the time.

Peace is a wonderful state in which all people can lead a valuable and meaningful life in accordance with their own wish, talents and ability flourishing unhindered, the Awami League president observed.

She called for banishing wars, hostilities and violence forever in order to attain such a state of tranquility for mankind. This civilisation, she said, had enough of these evils ever since its emergence. Time has come to say goodbye to them, once for all.

The former PM apprised her audience of the previous AL government's effort for improving socio-economic condition of the poor and womenfolk through pro-people steps and reforms. She also mentioned her government's efforts to strengthen democracy and ensure human rights in Bangladesh.

But she deplored that after the last general election, people in general, and Awami League members and supporters in particular were subjected to "inhuman torture and terrorism."

"They were not allowed to live in their own homes -- they had to flee their homes to save their lives. People have been killed, tortured

## Stop filling

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public works ministries in stopping the move to fill up the wetland.

The rally made a three-point demand: an end to illegal construction, clear zoning of the water body and beautification of the area.

It cautioned that the filling-up of the wetland would create water-logging in different areas, including Moghbazar, Eskaton, Green Road, Hatirpul, Kalabagan, Kathalagan and Paribagh.

Presided over by BPA General Secretary Abu Naser, the rally was addressed by, among others, Advocate Abed Raza, Golam Kibria, Ahmad Mazhar, Meher Biswas and Dr Nuruddin.

Naser said that once there were 17 canals in the city, but all vanished. The government should let the water body live for the sake of city dwellers, he said.

Many organisations including Bishwa Sahitya Kendro, The Hunger Project, Work for a Better Bangladesh, BELA, Hunger Free World, Sylhet Division Unnayan Sangstha, and Welfare Organisation took part in the rally.

and maimed. We have seen looting, arson and indiscriminate rape of women and children. Even a girl aged 3 was gang-raped by ruling party goons."

In her tirade against the present government, the opposition leader alleged that "a systematic political and religious persecution is pursued by the four-party alliance government with impunity".

She complained all this happened in an orchestrated manner indicating the implementation of a "blueprint to change the political and demographic mosaic of the country."

About the anticrime drive going on in the country, Hasina noted that 34 people had already died in custody, which is "of course a gross violation of human rights".

The opposition leader urged all -- whether in the government, civil society, the media or any other sector -- to contribute to making the world peaceful.

"We must forge a worldwide grand alliance for peace. We owe peace to all our loved and dear ones. We must not fail to leave them in legacy. This suffering of mankind must be put to an end, today, if possible, through our honest and sustained endeavours."

## Sumi Khan

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interest of a certain quarter."

She said that during interrogation, police officials wanted to know why she had visited Chittagong port recently.

Sumi said that she had gone to the port office a few days ago to collect some information for a news story on Kamaphuli bridge.

"But I got surprised why the police officials interrogated me only about that although I went to the port office absolutely just for professional reasons. It still seems to me very mysterious," Sumi said.

"My detainment could also be a warning to press freedom," she apprehended.

Assistant Commissioner of CMP Hafiz Akhter, Officer-in-Charge of Bandar Police Station Jafar Ahmad, Special Branch official Nesar Ahmed and some others interrogated the female journalist.

When contacted, CMP officials declined to say anything about Sumi's detention.

## Road accidents

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his injuries at Shibganj Health Complex. His identity could not be known.

Another injured, identified as Rozbul, 17, was admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

In Bagerhat, two people were killed in separate road accidents near Mathabhangna Bridge in Mollahat upazila on Dhaka-Mawa highway on Thursday night.

Police said Ukliuddin Talukder, 60, of Kulia village in Mollahat upazila was crushed under the wheels of a sand-laden truck. Later, police seized the vehicle.

A bicyclist, Samad, 50, hailed from Rasulpur in sadar upazila was killed when a Khulna-bound motor-bike knocked him down on the road.

Two cases were filed with local police.

In Shariatpur, an unidentified rickshaw driver was killed and 15 others were wounded in a road accident at Premtala on Shariatpur-Naria road in Palong thana yesterday morning.

Witnesses said the mishap took place when a Shariatpur-bound bus hit a rickshaw, killing its puller on the spot.

Fifteen of the bus passengers, who sustained injuries in the incident, were admitted to sadar hospital and released after first aid.

## Buriganga

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Haji Enayetullah said he had earth filled his own land for the 'noble purpose of setting up an industry and creating employment opportunities for the youths of this country'. He said that he had received a notice from the deputy commissioner's office about two months ago, which asked him to remove the encroachment within seven days.

"Following that, I went to the DC office and presented my case before the AC Land with all relevant documents. The officials told me that my documents were perfectly all right, but they are yet to give me anything in writing," Haji Enayetullah said.

"You see, I pay tax for that land, I also have a clearance from the Board of Investment. Why did they issue all these papers in my name in the first instance if they have to cancel those now," Haji Enayetullah said.

When contacted, the Executive Chairman of the Board of Investment, Mahmudur Rahman, told The Daily Star that when someone comes to Bol for registration, which is again not mandatory, the company gets the registration without any problem. It is not the responsibility of the Bol to check whether the land on which the project would be implemented is clear of disputes.

"But when the investor asks for our help to install gas, electricity or

other facilities we issue the recommendation letter in the name of the prospective company only after receiving a clearance letter from the deputy commissioner," said Rahman. He added that the DC in his clearance letter confirms the status of the land of the project.

In the case of the Esker Vegetable Oil and Refinery Private Limited, owned by Haji Enayetullah, the registration procedure was completed with Bol, but Haji Enayetullah has yet to ask for any help from the Bol.

## Crime gangs

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The navy had conducted a search in the Bay for the mysterious boxes but could not recover those.

Besides, two unclaimed containers loaded with smuggled arms were seized from the yards of Chittagong port in 1993. The arms were handed over to the army.

Investigation into the incident stopped midway due to mysterious reasons, sources said.

Since the seizure of the two containers, smugglers seem to prefer offloading of consignments of arms at the outer anchorage.

Another big consignment of sophisticated arms was seized at Cox's Bazar in 1994. The arms loaded in trucks were being taken to the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Those were later handed over to the army.

## Tinni murder

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arrest.

The list may be changed if fresh names come out during interrogations, they said.

Talking to newsmen yesterday, ASP Abdur Rashid who heads the CID team investigating the murder said, "We hope to make a headway in the investigation after questioning the listed persons".

CID sources said Tamalika, who was questioned on Thursday, might be quizzed again.

They said the hunt is on for Ovi and some other absconding acquaintances of Tinni.

Unidentified miscreants killed on Tinni, a model and actress and dumped her body under the Buriganga bridge.

Keraniganj police recovered the body on November 16. The body bore marks of injury.

After four days, the body was handed over to Anjuman Mofidul Islam, a charity, for burial as none claimed it.

The murder came to light when Tinni's family members identified the body seeing her photograph in a newspaper.

Keraniganj police handed over the case to CID on November 23. CID police exhumed Tinni's body from Jurain graveyard in the city on Monday last for a second autopsy.

## Maria's killers

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brought her daughter along to buy iftar.

Sources said the criminals intended to kill Faruk, who was recently employed by Sutrapur police to keep an eye on the local criminals involved in hijacking incidents in the locality for a long time.

Faruk filed a case against six persons with Sutrapur thana Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the three youths -- Amin, 20, Chanchal, 20, and Iqbal Hossain, 35, who were arrested Wednesday night in connection with Maria's murder, were sent to the Dhaka Central Jail yesterday at the end of a one-day remand.

Police had produced them before the court on Thursday and filed a petition seeking a five-day remand, but the court granted remand for just one day.

During the remand yesterday, police failed to get any information from the three youths. Police said the three denied any involvement in the murder.

## Khaleda

**FROM PAGE 1**  
In the afternoon, the Prime Minister left for Jeddah by a special royal aircraft.

Chief of Protocol Abdul Aziz Iliyas and other senior officials of Saudi Government saw her off at the airport.

On her arrival at Jeddah International Airport, Khaleda was received by Royal Chief of protocol of Jeddah Mohammad Nazer and other senior officials of Saudi Government. Later, she arrived at Makkah from Jeddah in a ceremonial motorcade.

The Prime Minister will perform Umrah at Makkah. She will return home on December 4.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohamadz Nasiruddin, PM's Political Secretary Mosaddek Ali and Bangladesh Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sarjil Hassan accompanied the Prime Minister.



Leaders and activists of the Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (BPA) stage a rally yesterday, demanding an end to the filling-up of a water-body south of the Sonargaon Hotel in the city.

## Saleem Samad remanded

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Police said Samad, also Bangladesh representative of Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF), acted as a guide to the two foreign journalists.

Police earlier raided his brother's house in the city on Wednesday but did not find him.

Producing Samad before the CMM's court yesterday, BD police sought 10 days' remand to gather information about the 'actual motive' of the two foreign journalists.

Police alleged that Samad helped the two journalists in their anti-state activities. Saleem denied the allegation saying, "I only worked as an interpreter of the two foreign journalists."

After hearing, Magistrate Shafiq Anwar placed him on five days' remand.

From the court, Samad was again taken to the DB headquarters. He was being interrogated by DB officials, sources said yesterday evening.

The sources said more journalists might be picked up for their alleged involvement with the foreign journalists. Several DB teams have

already left Dhaka for the places the two journalists visited in different parts of the country.

"All the persons who accompanied the two foreign journalists during their visit to different parts of the country or were associated with them will be interrogated. Police will also talk to those interviewed and photographed by the two journalists," said a police official.

The sources said legal action will be taken against any body found associated with the two foreigners in gathering "anti-state information".

The two foreign journalists -- Italian Led Poldo Brono Sorrentino and British Zaiba Naz Malik -- who worked for British Channel-4 TV network were arrested on Monday last while they were crossing Benapole border.

Police recovered from them video footages and interviews of a number of persons, taken in Chittagong, Jessore and Satkhira.

Their local guide Moniza Pricilla Raj, a NGO representative, was picked up from Goolando in Rajbari while she was returning to Dhaka after seeing them off at Benapole

border. The three were produced before the CMM's court on Tuesday, which placed them on five days' remand for interrogation.

Earlier, one Didarul Islam of New Airport area in the city filed a seditious case against the two foreign journalists, Saleem Samad and Pricilla Raj with Motijheel thana.

Meanwhile, the Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) has protested the arrest of Saleem Samad who is a member of the organisation.

In a joint statement, DRU President Shahjahan Sarder and General Secretary Motahar Hossain Masum alleged that incidents of torture and harassment of journalists in the country increased "alarmingly" in recent days.

They demanded immediate release of Samad and an end to the alleged torture and harassment of journalists.

Bangladesh Federal Journalist Union (BFJU) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) also protest the arrest of Samad and demanded his immediate release.

## 2 accomplices of Liaquat

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said.

He had led a procession brandishing firearms in Shaheb Bazar area in Rajshahi city in presence of the then home minister at the last leg of the Awami League rule.

The army also arrested a youth and recovered a revolver from his possession.

In Jhalakathi, joint forces arrested five activists of outlawed parties from their hideouts in Ramchandrapur union, our correspondent reported.

They are Siraj Munshi, Jahirul Islam, Farid Majhi, Nazrul Islam Khan and Nesaruddin. They went into hiding after launch of the anti-crime drive.

Our Satkhira correspondent reported that BDR personnel raided Harihalhi and Tangrakhalhi areas in Kolaroa upzila on Wednesday, arrested two persons and seized mobile phones and spares, watches and other goods worth Tk 73 lakh while being smuggled out of the country. The arrested are Jahangir Hossain and Samir Kumar.

In Jhenaidah, army arrested seven people including outlawed Sarbahara Party leader Giasuddin and Union Parishad chairman Zahur Haq, our correspondent reported. Giasuddin is wanted in a number of criminal cases.

The rest five are Toffazzel, Amir Ali, Noor Muhammad, Nirapada Gosh and his wife Anjana Gosh.

The army also seized a loaded pipegun, 302 bottles of phenisidol, one kilogram of ganja, Indian clothes and 20 Indian cows.

Our Mymensingh correspondent reported that joint forces in separate raids arrested 10 people from Bhulaka and Trishal areas in the town and recovered heroin from their possession.

In Meherpur, one Mahmud Sagar was arrested on Thursday for impersonating an army captain and taking money from people promising jobs in the army.

Sagar, 31, of Kesturi village in Laxmipur had married a girl at another village in the upzila about a month back and took money from some local people promising them jobs in the army.

In Chapainawabganj, BDR personnel recovered a US-made revolver along with three bullets from Thotapara area in the border. Being suspicious, BDR men challenged two persons carrying a bag. But they ran away leaving the bag, from which the revolver was recovered. The revolver was deposited with Shibganj police.

The army so far arrested 7,531 people including 1,763 "listed criminals" and seized 1,249 firearms along with 26,831 bullets since launch of the countryside crackdown on criminals on October 17.

The police headquarters in the city in a press release said police picked up 1,493 people, including eight "listed criminals" and seized four firearms during the last 24 hours ending at 6:00am yesterday.

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## Press freedom in times of crisis

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Qaida and other extremist elements are present in Bangladesh. Both have made allegations but India has added that the Pakistan embassy in Bangladesh is the centre from which activities are being carried out.

Major western periodicals have also reported that Al-Qaida, Harkat-ul Mujahadeen and other extremist elements are operating here. Bangladesh government has denied all the accusations.

But accusations and denials may not add up to much without media supporting that claim. In the last six months, there have been far too many reports for the matter to be swept away. But the response of the Bangladesh government has been to raise voices rather than demand proof of guilt or present evidence of innocence by ensuring greater transparency in dealing with the issue.

The national media has generally taken a position of supporting that denial but it also must demand to know what are the evidences and if the accusers have provided any. If there is evidence that should be laid out for all to see and scrutinise. And if Bangladesh has nothing to hide, it should invite all to come and see. Arrest and intimidation will only make others more suspicious.

The situation looks even more difficult because of the interment of two Channel 4 journalists and two

local journalists working with them. This has caused international outcry and the manner in which they have been taken in is almost destined to be counter-productive. It will make the whole world wonder what Bangladesh has to hide. Since the team was working on Islamic fundamentalism, and it comes at a time when so many reports are circulating, the very conclusions that this government is trying to avoid will emerge. Especially, when we have the Jamaat-e-Islami and other religious constituency-based parties as part of the government, who doesn't have a track record that is helpful in such a crisis.

Why the government didn't move against them as soon as it became known what they were doing is a mystery that needs probing. It was so easy to get rid of them if they had entered on false visa declarations if that was the intention. Their wait is either a sign of inadequate efficiency or some other plan that many now feel may be linked to curbing media freedom.

Is it really a threat? Some of the names of people interviewed are already known and they certainly don't represent even the mainstream Islamists in Bangladesh. The documentary would have crashed under the weight of its own lack of quality. To charge them with 'anti-state activities' for doing a video on minority

repression and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism is suicidal for Bangladesh in the present context.

The government is also in an uncomfortable situation. If they are tried in, it loses because trying European journalists will mean a price tag almost no country can pay. Bangladesh may become an international pariah state. And if they are allowed to go, it will mean a collapse of credibility of the entire actions taken and that they were right. Confiscating all the films will be worse and letting it be shown will be no better as it has received huge publicity.

Why they were not deported as soon as it became known is a question the media has a right to ask on behalf of the people.

As for the local journalists, it seems being part of the international media is being considered "seditious" a charge that has lost all seriousness of the term due to misuse. To deny media -- national or international -- the right to ask questions is to support curbing of freedom and that will generate the most destructive image that Bangladesh can have and doesn't need at this time.

**Dangerous over-enthusiasm?** Some must tell this government that one can't browbeat the global media and nor are they as easy to coerce as the two local journalists now in remand whose sole crime

seems to be to have worked as for them as professionals. If the police didn't act even when the matter was in the national media, how would Saleem Samad and Priscilla know that working for them was seditious.

This is no time for over-enthusiasm. The very things that the government is doing is generating the image that it wants to avoid. By taking in an entire team of journalists including two women and resorting to rhetoric that makes the media look as the enemy will not get it better media anywhere.

As an elected government, it has the responsibility to ensure freedom of media, transparency and responding to criticism with facts and willingness to let the media work freely. It also must realise that if it lets the Khatib of Baitul Mukarram to trash the USA in the presence of the Bangladesh President, conclusions will be drawn and for which the media can't be held responsible.

Many will cheer the arrest and the subsequent actions but the professional media people supporting this government should be heard because they all know that it's right now that the media should have the freedom to investigate, question and report.

## AL brushes aside

**FROM PAGE 12**  
Azad termed the foreign minister's statement uncalled-for.

He also urged Khan and the BNP-led ruling alliance not to make such statements against the opposition leader anymore.

He was critical of the foreign minister's remarks on a European Parliament's resolution against the Operation Clean Heart in Bangladesh.

"If he (Moshed Khan) had the slightest idea about the Euro Parliament adopts a resolution, he would not have commented like this," said Azad.

On Thursday, the foreign minister told reporters that the European Parliament adopted the resolution following Hasina's visit to Brussels and accused her of appointing a lobbyist, Dr Mahmud Hasan, for it. Dr Hasan, who pursued higher education in Europe, is an aide to the AL chief.

Referring to Hasina's speeches in Brussels and the USA in recent months, Azad said the world community welcomed her deliberations.

"Do they (the government) think Hasina made the US State Department, Amnesty International and other human-rights groups at home and abroad to condemn

human-rights violations in Bangladesh?" Azad asked.

When the journalists on Thursday asked the foreign minister if international magazines, European Parliament and the Indian Parliament were working at Hasina's dictates, the minister retorted: "These are hired people from media."

Azad said Hasina's visit to India had no link with the Indian leaders' remarks about al-Qaida presence in Bangladesh.

"Her (Hasina) visit has nothing to do with the Indian allegations. She could have visited India six months back or six months later. Maintaining good relations with neighbours is a good diplomacy."

Referring to Hasina's visit to New Delhi, Moshed Khan said on Thursday, "It's too much of coincidence that Indian leaders have started making inconsistent statements while the opposition leader is there. Has anything changed overnight as regards Bangladesh-India relations?"

AL General Secretary Zillur Rahman and senior leaders Abdul Jalil, SAMS Kibria, ASHK Sadique and Motia Chowdhury, among others, attended the iftar party.

## Rain spoils first ODI

**FROM PAGE 1**  
But until the rain intervened, the full house got their moneys worth through some exciting cricket.

Sent into bat the high-flying West Indies top-order struggled for a change against the disciplined Bangladesh bowling attack. The visitors could score only 164-4 in the first 40 overs. But just when Bangladesh were getting confident of restricting the mighty Caribbeans to an attainable target, in strode Ricardo Powell to turn the match on its head with a savage 88 off 51 balls.

The Jamaican right-hander smote half a dozen of sixes and seven boundaries in his hurricane knock. Middle order batsman Daren Ganga chipped in with a 55-ball 44 inclusive of two sixes while Ramnaresh Sarwan and opener Chris Gayle added 39 and 38 run respectively.

Young leg spinner Mohammad Ashrafu took two wickets from his expensive nine overs that yielded 71 runs.

Then it was the turn of seasoned campaigner Vasbert Drakes to devastate the Bangladesh top order with a four-wicket blast with the new ball.

Although rattled at 52 for four, the home side were showing signs of a comeback with Sanwar Hossain and Alok Kapali playing confidently. They shared 38 runs for the undefeated fifth wicket before rain intervened. In-between, Ashrafu thrilled the spectators with a 25-ball 29 with a six and four boundaries. But his little gem came to a premature end when Chris Gayle took a stunning diving catch at slips off Drakes.

"We had a chance of winning if 25 overs were completed. According to the Duckworth-Lewis method, we needed to score 137 in 25 overs not losing more than four wickets for the victory. It was very much within our reach since Kapali and Sanwar were set in the middle," said Bangladesh coach Mohsin Kamal after the match was officially called off.