



## Condition of Mamata critical

SAKYA SEN MITRA, Kolkata

Trinamul Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee who was injured in a road accident on Monday was in a critical condition at the intensive care unit of a city nursing home last night.

She was being administered oxygen for respiratory problems since yesterday evening.

Mamata was admitted to Woodlands Nursing Home with chest pain following the accident.

The Trinamul leader was injured when her car was hit by a bus from behind while she along with a couple of close associates was going to attend a marriage ceremony Monday evening. The car was badly damaged.

Even though her associates

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

## Barisal, Sylhet city corpns polls on March 20

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) has fixed March 20 next year as the date for election to Barisal and Sylhet city corporations, according to EC sources.

The commission at a meeting with Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Syed in the chair yesterday 'finalised' the voting day and chalked out a tentative polls schedule for the two city corporations. The schedule will be officially announced later, the sources said.

As per the draft schedule, the last date of submission of nomination papers is January 23, scrutiny of nomination papers will be held on January 24 and the date for withdrawal of candidature is February 3.

Earlier, the EC had planned to hold the elections in the two cities in January but the 'existing situation' does not permit law enforcers to concentrate on security measures

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

## Corridor for houses along rail tracks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communications Minister Nazmul Huda yesterday asked the Bangladesh Railway (BR) to erect perimeter walls along the rail line in different city leaving at least seven feet for roads to let people walk along.

According to a press release sent by the city BNP of Ward No.38, the ministerial instruction came when Huda went to Arjotpara in the face of protests by the locals at the construction of a wall by the BR. The locals say the wall obstructs the existing passage for movement in the area.

If the construction conforms to the design, the wall will block the path, they told the minister.

The locals earlier had sought the intervention from the local MP Abdul Mannan who in turn brought along the minister to the area yesterday, the press release added.

The elated local residents later took out a procession hailing the ministerial move.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Dec 11		5-12 pm
Dec 12	6-31 am	
Prayer Timings		
Dec 11		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-15	5-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-12	5-17
Esha	7-30	7-45
Source: Islamic Foundation		

# Riot police swoop on AL rally in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The riot police went on the rampage forcing the main opposition Awami League (AL) to wrap up a scheduled rally in a hurry yesterday that urged the prime minister to consult the opposition leader in running the state.

Police picked up two opposition activists, clubbed many, laid siege to the Bangabandhu Avenue and made the road from Zero Point to the Golap Shah Mazaar off-limits to traffic.

The city unit of the AL organised the rally as part of a central AL programme, protesting the killings of innocents in a string of bomb blasts in Mymensingh, subsequent arrests of AL leaders and spread of propaganda against Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina.

Defying police assaults and dodging barriers, a handful of AL leaders and workers made their way onto the street in front of the party headquarters on the Bangabandhu Avenue and concluded the rally in haste, with a huge contingent of riot police around.

Police picked up Kowshik Ahmed Jasim and Selim

Sarwar of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student chapter of the AL. In protest, some agitated opposition activists smashed windowpanes of two vehicles near Zero Point.

An hour ahead of the rally, police in riot gear mounted guard at both entries to the Bangabandhu Avenue at 2.00pm and asked pedestrians, commuters and drivers to leave the thoroughfare.

At 2:30pm, police put up barbed-wire fences around the AL central office and closed entries to all adjacent business centres and shops.

Half an hour later, AL central leader Motia Chowdhury reached the rally venue and some women activists of the party followed her, overpowering policewomen in a brief scuffle.

When more party lawmakers and presidium members showed up at the party office later on, many workers and activists tried to join the meeting only to be

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4



Women activists of the Awami League try to push off police barricades during a rally, staged in the city yesterday to protest arrest of leaders and activists of the main opposition party.

## PM opens nat'l correctional institute for girl offenders

BSS, Gazipur

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday urged all concerned including representatives of educational institutions, media, voluntary organisations, religious and social leaders, lawyers, and social workers to work unitedly to supplement the government's efforts to revive social values.

Inaugurating a Tk 6.65 crore National Correctional Institute for Girls here, Khaleda Zia said her government has been attaching utmost importance to grooming children with good moral character and saving them from moral and social degeneration.

The government has taken initiatives to expand opportunities for institutional education for juvenile delinquents. She said steps would have to be taken to stop all sources of juvenile delinquency. She called for creating a massive awareness about the causes which encourage juveniles to commit offences.

The National Correctional Institute for Girls will provide care and treatment of juvenile girl offenders through a process involving social work, motivation, counselling, religious teachings, education, manual work, physical exercise and training for developing skills for income generation and self-employment.

With a capacity of 150, the institute has all the units like one Juvenile Court, one Remand Home and a Training Institute as in other correctional institutes now functioning in Tongi, Gazipur and Jessore.

The function was addressed also by Social Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujahid, Secretary of the Social Welfare Ministry, A M Abdul Zabbar and Director General of the Department of Social Service Martuja Hossain Munshi.

## Dhaka regrets SAARC summit postponement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka has regretted the postponement of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit, which was scheduled for next month in Islamabad.

"We deeply regret the postponement of the SAARC summit. But we want it to be held immediately," Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan told reporters at his foreign ministry office yesterday.

Khan said Dhaka would soon take an initiative for a fresh date of the summit. "I would like to open talks with the SAARC foreign ministers who would be attending the BIMSTEC (Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand Economic Council) meet in Colombo on December 20."

The foreign minister however refused to say who is to blame for the postponement of the 12th SAARC summit that was scheduled for January 11-13 in Islamabad.

To another question, Khan said there is no plan as yet to change the SAARC charter to avoid unilateral postponement of its summit.

Bickering between India and Pakistan forced the postponement of the summit on Monday, with Islamabad accusing New Delhi of sabotaging the meeting by stalling over the decision whether it would attend the summit or not.

# No clue to bomb blasts

NAIMUL HAQ and AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Police have not yet found any clue to the bomb explosions in Mymensingh town that left 17 people dead and wounded at least 200 others in four cinema halls on Saturday.

According to a senior official of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), who arrived here from the capital yesterday, the police are confident of uncovering evidences linked to the bombings.

"We have taken it as a challenge and we hope to catch the culprits soon," said Md. Nazmul Haq, SP of the CID.

But no one was arrested till writing of this report late in the evening yesterday. The officer in charge of Kotwali thana, however, said that he had a long list of wanted criminals and they would soon be brought to book.

Police arrested 48 people till Monday, and kept them in a single cell at the Kotwali Police Station, but so far the interrogations have not

produced any results.

All the 21 people, rounded up by the army on Monday and later handed over to police, were produced before the court yesterday afternoon. They included Alhaj Motiur Rahman, president of the Mymensingh district Awami League. They were sent to jail hazat, as their bail petitions were rejected by the court.

Meanwhile, ATM Faruk Ahmed, officer-in-charge of the Kotwali PS, told The Daily Star, "I am sure we will soon get some valuable information, especially in respect to the seized motorbikes, which may help in further investigation."

Meanwhile, the entire town wears a gloomy look as most of the people stayed off the usually crowded roads. "We have no idea as to who were behind this barbaric and cruel act," said Bidhan Rai, a 76-year-old man.

There were fewer rickshaws and vehicles on the roads, and the main shopping malls in the town attracted only a handful of buyers. After dusk, the entire town turned into a deserted place.

"Usually the roads remain busy the whole night, but since the bombing incidents, we have not seen many customers," said Pradip Shaha, a shop owner in Swadeshi Bazar Road in the town centre.

Army and BDR patrol vehicles closed all the entry and exit points to the town in order to restrict the movement of the suspected criminals, but none was picked up yesterday. Passenger buses leaving the city are being checked, while people passing by are asked to stop for interrogation.

"The city has turned into a mini cantonment," said the residents. All the four cinema halls have been shut down following the bomb attacks and army men are now patrolling the link roads leading up to the halls.

Three of the injured, admitted to the Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH), were shifted to the capital yesterday for better treatment. Two of them have been referred to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), while the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

## Jubo League leader slain in N'ganj Mob besieges police camp

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

The Jubo League president of Dhangarh Union in Bandar upazila here was shot dead by some local gunmen at the Dhangarh Bazar yesterday.

Amir Hamja Monju, 42, son of Hazi Malabar Matbar of Ispahani Bazar of Bandar, was the president of Dhangarh Union Jubo League, the student chapter of the main opposition Awami League.

Sources said six local miscreants led by Mizan and Shahidul attacked Monju in a tea stall at around 10:30 yesterday morning at Dhangarh Bazar. The chopped him indiscriminately and then shot him to be sure about his death. Firing they fled the scene.

Police did not act although the place of occurrence is only 20 yards away from the local police camp. The locals alleged that Sub-Inspector of the camp Mokbul was a mere onlooker to the killing. Protesting the police indifference, the locals besieged the camp. The mob also tried to set ablaze the residence of Mizan, one of the alleged killers.

Narayanganj district Police Superintendent Nur Mohammed went to the spot at around 1:30pm and persuaded the locals to wait

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

## Time extended for separation of judiciary

BSS, Dhaka

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday asked the government to ensure separation of the judiciary from the executive by January 26 next year, extending an earlier timeframe.

The full curf of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Mainur Reza Chowdhury passed the order following a prayer by Attorney General AF Hasan Arif for extended time for the separation.

# Army nabs state minister's son

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Army yesterday arrested Reza Ahmed Bachchu Molla, an alleged criminal and son of State Minister for Post and Telecommunications Ahsanul Haq Molla, in Daulatpur.

Our Kushtia correspondent said he was arrested when he surrendered to the army at Taragonia camp at 5:00pm yesterday.

Army was looking for Bachchu for long and raided his house several times.

Sources said Bachchu, organising secretary of Daulatpur upazila unit of the BNP, went into hiding soon after the countrywide joint drive began.

Sources said Bachchu is an accused in several cases including that of the killing of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) leader Kazi Aref. He was interrogating by army after his arrest.

Our Khulna correspondent

added that joint forces on Monday night arrested a district unit leader of the JSD from his house at Karnapur under Rupsha upzila on charge of terrorism and toll collection.

The army also picked up 85 persons including 19 listed criminals across the country during the last 24 hours ending 8.00am yesterday.

Troops also seized 16 firearms including three revolvers along with 57 rounds of bullets during the drive.

Our Madaripur correspondent said joint forces arrested the district president of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), Khalid Hossain Iyad. Khalid is one of the accused in the case regarding firing on the motorcade of the then opposition leader Khaleda Zia on June 17 last year. He was on bail.

In Netrokona, joint forces arrested former Awami League MP

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

# Police raid ADAB chief's residence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Following the resignation of some 25 NGO executives from the Association of Development Agents in Bangladesh (ADAB), police yesterday raided the residence of ADAB President Quazi Faruque Ahmed and arrested Awami League central leader Montaj Uddin Ahmed Mehed.

Plainclothesmen raided the ADAB president's Pallabi residence in the city at about 11 am and ransacked various papers and documents. Police took away some photographs of the ADAB leader and invitation cards for his son's wedding.

Faruque, also president of Proshika, was not at home at that time, family sources said.

Chief executives of 25 non-government organisations (NGOs) including Fazle Hasan Abed of BRAC and Khushi Kabir of Nijera

Kori resigned from ADAB protesting "controversial decisions, unconstitutional steps and undemocratic practices" of the present leadership of the apex NGO body.

With the resignation of these chief executives, the NGO leadership has become seemingly divided into two groups, and a new polarisation among the development organisations is expected.

Police, when asked, however did not mention any reason for the raid. They said they complied with the directive of higher authorities. They suspect that Faruque might have link with subversive activities. But the ADAB president denied this in an interview with the BBC.

Different non-government organisations in separate statements condemned the police raid at the ADAB president's residence and

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3



People stream out of the platform area at the Kamalapur Railway Station yesterday as they return to the capital after an elongated Eid-ul-Fitr vacations.

# Rising arsenic contamination Community based national programme suggested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

World Bank (WB) country director Fredrick T Temple yesterday emphasised formulating a comprehensive community based national programme to mitigate the rising arsenic contamination in the country.

Like the success of the Oral Rehydration Saline (ORS) programme, Temple wanted the arsenic mitigation problem to succeed.

He was exchanging views with

local journalists here at Pabna Community Clinic (PCC) auditorium this afternoon after inaugurating the eight day long celebration of the clinic's 12th anniversary and victory day. Correspondents of different national and local dailies were present at the meeting.

Appreciating PCC activities in detecting arsenic contamination in the district, Temple also suggested the government consider encouraging private sector enterprises like the PCC in the mitigation programmes.

"A community based system as the PCC can serve as the model for fast solutions to problems", he opined.

The country representative of WB, however, came down heavily upon the government's role in arsenic mitigation.

Replying to a question, the WB country chief said shortcomings of

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

## Shuvra Dev placed on remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Popular singer Shuvra Dev, arrested on Thursday and sent to jail custody, was placed on a one-day remand yesterday.

Shuvra was arrested on charge of attempting to smuggle top criminal Abdur Rashid alias Kala Faruque out of the country as a member of a cultural team. Faruque was later killed in police custody on November 5.

Another arrestee in the same case, Nazrul Islam Qureshi, production director of Impress Telefilm Limited (Channel-I), was also placed on a three-day remand yesterday.

Detective Branch (DB) of police produced Shuvra and Qureshi before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM's) Court, Dhaka

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2