

Dr Zohora Kazi  
& Prof Akhter  
Imam get  
Rokeya Padak

UNB, Dhaka

Decorating two pioneer woman academics in higher education with Rokeya Padak, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday called upon all irrespective of political affiliation to contribute towards further advancement of the country's womenfolk.

"The country and society will not move forward into enlightenment if women are kept backward, in the dark," she told a function for distribution of Rokeya Padak 2002 at Osmani Memorial Hall in the capital.

This year, two eminent woman personalities were selected for the Rokeya Padak 2002. They are elderly physician professor Dr Zohora Begum Kazi and professor Akhter Imam.

The 90-year-old Dr Zohora Begum Kazi, the first Bengali Muslim lady physician and medical academic in this subcontinent, has been adjudged for the medal for her contributions to medical science, particularly in gynaecology. She served as head of Gynaecology Department in the Dhaka Medical College.

Professor Akhter Imam, the first woman teacher of Dhaka College and the first provost of Rokeya Hall of Dhaka University, was honoured with the prestigious award for her contributions in the field of education. She is now 85.

Akhter Imam obtained her Honours from Calcutta University and did her Master's from Dhaka University in Philosophy, securing first class in both. She was also the head of Philosophy Department of Dhaka University.

## Shahriar sent to Ctg jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detained writer Shahriar Kabir has once again been transferred to a jail in Chittagong.

He was earlier sent to the Kashimpur jail in Gazipur from Dhaka.

Shahriar's family members yesterday went to Kashimpur jail to meet him. But the jail authorities informed them that he was transferred to Chittagong early in the morning.

Shahriar could not sign his vokalatnama to represent his lawyers in the court till yesterday as the jail authorities did not allow any lawyers to meet him.

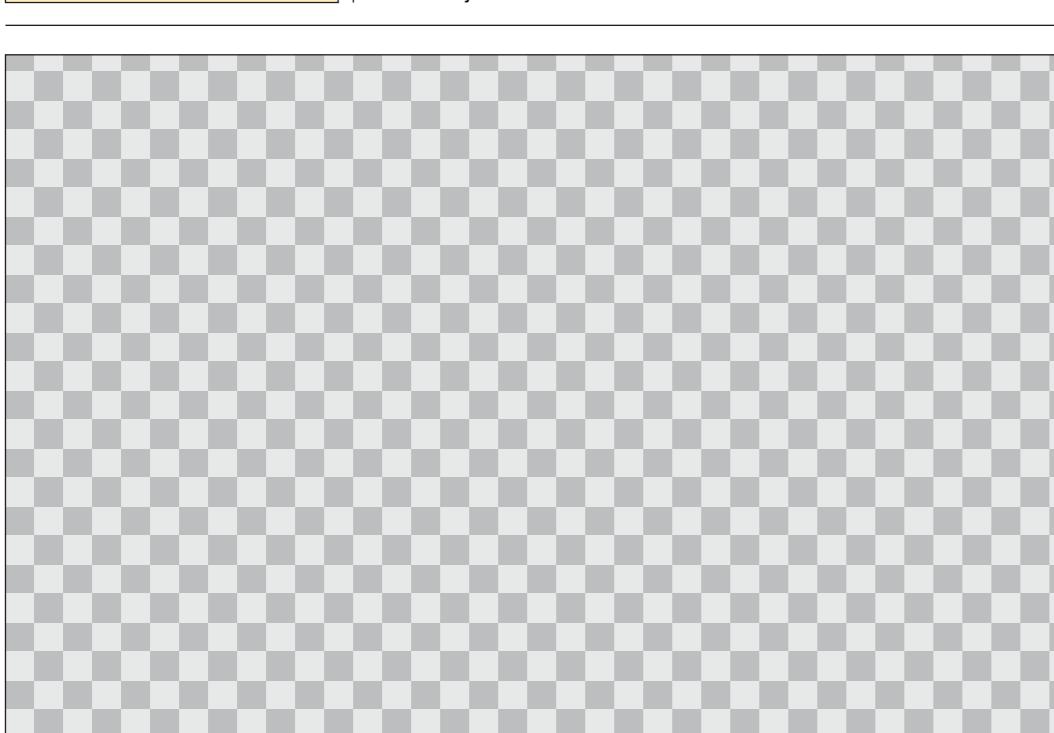
Family members alleged that the jail authorities did not provide him any division in jail despite a High Court order.

Shahriar was arrested under Section 54 on December 8 and was later implicated in a sedition case.

Meanwhile, AL leader Tofail Ahmed has been sent to Kushtia jail yesterday. He was earlier sent to the Kashimpur jail from Dhaka.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Dec 23		5-17 pm
Dec 24	6-38 am	
<b>Prayer Timings</b>		
Dec 23		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	5-30	6-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-22	5-28
Esha	7-30	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation



Four persons arrested by the Department of Narcotics Control for possessing narcotic stimulants and foreign banknotes in the city yesterday.

## Road accidents kill 16 in four districts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 16 people were killed and 71 others injured in road accidents in Faridpur, Sylhet, Noakhali and Feni districts yesterday.

Of them, six were killed in Faridpur, four in Sylhet and three in Noakhali and Feni each.

Our Magura Correspondent reports: Six people were killed and 40 others injured when a Satkhira-bound bus from Dhaka overturned and fell into the roadside ditch near Aruakandi bridge in Madhukhali upazila of Faridpur district at around 11-45 am yesterday.

The accident took place at about 3-05 pm when two autorickshaws collided with a minibus near the main gate of Luckatoora Tea Estate. The minibus was trying to overtake another minibus.

Two of the dead were identified as Rustom Ali, 35, son of Mohammad Ali of Barsala Manglarpur in Sylhet sadar and his daughter Tamanna, 7 and ex-UP member Surj Ali, 62, identity of the other could not be known. Of the injured, nine were admitted to the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital while four others to a private clinic.

In Noakhali, three people were killed and seven others injured as a truck rammed a passenger tempo at Kalikapur on Feni-Laxmipur road yesterday, according to UNB.

Police said the accident occurred at noon, killing tempo passengers.

All the dead were bus passengers.

The injured were admitted to

Faridpur Medical College Hospital.

Our staff correspondent from Sylhet writes: Four people were killed and 13 others injured in a road accident on the airport road here yesterday.

The accident took place at about 3-05 pm when two autorickshaws collided with a minibus near the main gate of Luckatoora Tea Estate. The minibus was trying to overtake another minibus.

Two of the dead were identified as Abdus Sattar, 25, Sawkat, 30, Shakhat, 28, Al-Amin, 35, Rezaul, 40, Ohidul, 32 and Lalu, 15.

The injured, five were admitted to the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH). The rest were admitted to the Pabna General Hospital, Chatmohar Health Complex and Bhangura Health Complex.

Sources said, the two trains were of Eron International, an Indian railway firm in charge of fitting railway tracks.

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## 7 railway men killed as freight trains collide

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Seven railway workers were killed and 25 injured when two freight trains collided at Saraknagar Koidanga area under Bhangura Upazila in Sirajganj on Saturday night.

The accident disrupted rail communication between Sirajganj and Ishwardi for seven hours starting 11:00pm Saturday.

According to railway officials, one freight train, on colliding with another, overturned.

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## Transport dearth makes rickshaw ban a misery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Keeping rickshaws off a stretch of the Mirpur Road has created serious problems for citizens.

The authorities concerned have failed to provide an adequate number of public transports to solve the problem.

The situation is going to worsen for thousands of people living around the Mirpur Road, as three wheelers with two stroke engines will not be allowed to move on the city roads from January 1. Sources said the authorities would not be able to provide any alternative mode of transport throughout the month of January.

However, Communications Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda has said that the government has taken adequate steps to face the situation that will arise after the complete withdrawal of the three wheelers with two stroke engines in the city.

Addressing the launching ceremony of the launching ceremony

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## 'Drug trafficking on alarming rise'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Drug trafficking is accelerating at an alarming pace in the country, noted the speakers at a seminar yesterday in the city.

The seminar on drug abuse prevention and rehabilitation was organised by the Centre for Sustainable Development and Research (CSDR).

In his keynote paper, Director General of narcotics control department Mohammed Salam said they have tracked 3452 cases of drug trafficking between January to June this year.

He added that at least 4140 persons were arrested and 9.335 kg

of Heroin, 3.542 kg of Charash, 0.023 kg Opium, 1270.37 kg Cannabis and 5814 Cannabis plant were seized. About 4,83,88 bottles and 149.65 litres of Phensedyl together with 488 ampoules of Tidigesic injection were also seized.

The number of cases, arrested and seized is almost double compared to the same period in 2001.

Availability of drugs has increased as Bangladesh is located between the two major opium producing areas known as the Golden triangle and the Golden Crescent, the speakers noted. Moreover, the porous borders with India make it easier to smuggle

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Students queue up under police guard for application forms for MBBS admission to the Dhaka Medical College yesterday. (Story on page 1)

## Mymensingh blasts a ploy to hook opponents: Hasina

UNB, Mymensingh

Opposition leader and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina has again termed the Mymensingh cinema bombings a "stage-managed" ploy to hook government's political opponents and blamed the prime minister for the tragedy.

"This could not happen without government patronage and ministers should be interrogated to find the real culprits," she said talking to journalists at the Mymensingh Press Club yesterday noon.

The opposition leader said immediately after the bomb blasts, the prime minister visited Mymensingh and blamed the opposition for this dastardly act.

"How could the PM know that the opposition did such a horrible thing?" she questioned. "Is it possible

to plant such powerful bombs without the patronage of those who are now in power?"

Hasina criticised the prime minister's comment on the incident. "After such a comment of the prime minister, what would the probe committee do?" she asked.

Criticising the government, the Awami League chief said the charge-sheeted accused in the Uddi-bombing case is now a minister while a state minister is an accused in a case of smuggling.

She asked when army has been in operation and leaders and workers of opposition parties are on the run "to avert atrocities of the BNP-Jamaat" combine, who would dare to make and carry those bombs.

Hasina said the prime minister is accusing the opposition leaders and workers, harassing and torturing them as "she (PM) does not want

the real culprits tracked down".

She said all the bomb-blast incidents took place at entertainment places and observed that the attackers targeted the cultural activities in the country.

The former prime minister said foreign bomb experts had examined the splinters of the bombs and came to the conclusion that these bombs were made by experts.

"The chemicals used in the bombs are not usually used. So why the government is not finding out where these bombs were made and who made these? Why the FBI report on bomb blasts is not published?" she asked.

Hasina said 28 police officials were given bomb-related training during Awami League rule and questioned why investigation was not being carried out by those

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## 32 more criminals in army dragnet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seventy-eight people, 32 of them listed criminals, were netted in the Operation Clean Heart countrywide in 24 hours until 8:00am yesterday.

Also, the army-led joint forces recovered 14 firearms including one revolver, four pipe-guns, three rifles and two guns along with 149 bullets.

The latest spate of arrests pushed the number of people rounded up since the start of the anticrime crackdown on October 17 to 9,843 including 2,180 listed criminals. The joint forces have so far seized 1,770 firearms and 28,873 bullets.

In Sirajganj were arrested five people, including a Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader and the Krishak League (KL) president of Ullapara Upazila yesterday.

The arrestees are Khorshed Alam, the KL leader and former union parishad chairman, Shaheen, the JCD leader, and Osman Gani, Sujan and Harun.

Five listed criminals were arrested in Rajbari: Khalilur Rahaman, Abdul Jabber, Khalil Hawlader, Hasan and Ripon.

Alauddin Ali, Alamgir Hossain and Washir Sumon -- all listed criminals -- were arrested in Faridpur. On information from the arrestees, the joint forces seized one sub-machine carbine (SMC), one 303-rifle and two guns.

The joint forces in Borura Upazila, Comilla, arrested two people for alleged involvement in smuggling of foreign banknotes valued at Tk 7.60 lakh Saturday. A case was filed against Abdur Rob and Shafiqur Rahman.

Seven people, including a transport leader, were rounded up in Jamalpur. The joint forces also recovered 17 barrels of diesel, seven kilograms of marijuana and seven bottles of Phensidyl in the district.

Mujibur Rahman Farazi, general secretary of the Truck Labour Union, was arrested in Rajbari.

The meeting reviewed the progress of preparations for the elections, scheduled to be held between January 25 and March 16, including finalisation of policies on election monitoring, said an EC press release.

## EC bars use of children in electioneering

UNB, Dhaka

The Election Commission (EC) has imposed restriction on the use of children in electioneering activities including meetings and processions during the upcoming Union Parishad elections across the country.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the commission held yesterday with Chief Election Commissioner MA Syed in the chair.

Election Commissioners Safur Rahman, MM Munsef Ali and AK Muhammad Ali and secretary in charge of the Election Commission Secretariat SM Zakaria were present in the meeting.

The meeting reviewed the progress of preparations for the elections, scheduled to be held between January 25 and March 16, including finalisation of policies on election monitoring, said an EC press release.

