

# Firm up raids

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ensure security of city-dwellers.

A decision to deploy additional BDR troops was also taken to maintain law and order.

Each police station of the capital were directed to seize at least 50 unauthorised rickshaws as part of a drive to throw out unlicensed rickshaws from the streets of Dhaka, meeting sources said.

The meeting was informed that an additional team of strike force equipped with tow-trucks would be deployed in the city from 11:00pm to 7:00am to take away broken down vehicles left on the road.

Police were ordered to immediately

## Businessman missing for a month, feared abducted

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg**

Another businessman is feared to have been abducted in the port city as he has been missing for last one month.

Police arrested three suspects but the whereabouts of Azizul Haq Rashed, 28, is yet to be known.

Rashed, a broker of imported vehicles, is the son of Sirajul Islam of Amanbazar under Hathazari upazila.

He went missing since October 19 from Reazuddin Bazar. Rashed's younger brother Azad filed a case with Panchlaish Police Station, accusing five on November 15. Earlier, two general diaries (GDs) were filed on October 20 and 22.

Azad alleged that an unidentified caller demanded a ransom of Tk 50 lakh for Rashed's release and threatened him with his brother's death if the matter goes to police.

Panchlaish police arrested Rashed's cousin Firoz, his wife Shamima Akhter and brother-in-law Kashem on November 16 and remanded them for four days.

Police, however, believe family discord might be the reason behind Rashed's going missing.

Sources said Rashed and Shamima had a love affair that might lead Firoz to abduct Rashed.

On October 19, Rashed and Shamima were shopping to Reazuddin Bazar. Shamima returned to her residence but Rashed went missing since then, sources added.

## JP (Ershad)

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He requested the JP lawmakers to return to the House.

The speaker also urged the JP to join parliament proceedings.

The JP legislators then entered the House amid applause from the ruling alliance lawmakers.

"We are satisfied with the statement of the minister, so we returned to the House," JP lawmaker GM Quader told The Daily Star later.

The JP legislators staged a walkout in parliament on Sunday protesting a deputy minister's remarks against party legislators from Rangpur, alleged discrimination in development works and anomalies in the relief distribution in monga-hit areas.

The government side held a meeting with the JP parliamentary party on Tuesday to resolve the problem.

Meanwhile, no initiative has been taken as yet to bring the main opposition Awami League back to the House.

# Sgt Ahad

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proper conviction, the judge observed.

The judge also criticised Ahad's colleagues Sergeant Anwar, SI Moimuddin Ahmed, SI Mesbahuddin and Patrol Inspector Sahabuddin for neglect of duty.

He said the policemen, who were on duty at Shapla Chhatar in Motijheel where Ahad was killed, could have fired blank shots or teargas canisters to scare the muggers off.

The judge dubbed the police officers as 'ineligible' for law enforcement and asked the authorities to consider his view.

The convicts with death penalty are Kangali Zakir and Taleb Hossain Rana, and Zakir Hossain popularly known as Kana Zakir was jailed for life.

The convicts can appeal to the High Court within seven days from the date of delivery of judgement against the verdict.

Zakir Hossain (2), Shahidul Islam, Syed Lal Miah, Abdul Aziz, Bachchu Bepari, Alauddin, Shah Alam, Nishan, Kabir and Abdur Rab were acquitted of the charges. Of them, only Rab has been evading arrest.

The on-trial prisoners were produced before court at noon and the judge took seat at 12:15pm and read out the highlights of the 59-page judgement in 45 minutes.

The convicts cried and protested innocence on hearing the judgement, while the acquitted broke into rapturous applause.

Both the prosecution and the defence wrapped up their arguments on November 3 after statements of 36 prosecution witnesses were recorded.

Sub-Inspector Mesbahuddin filed a murder case with Motijheel Police Station on October 28, 1999, the day

expedite river patrol on the Buriganga using work boats of the shipping ministry and prevent vessel overloading to ensure safety of launch passengers.

The meeting warned against overcharging homebound passengers during Eid holidays and asked police to work with the BIWTA (Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority) to prevent harassment of passengers over fare.

Authorities were also directed to take measures against ticket sale on the black market at bus, launch and train terminals.

Three mobile courts have already been posted at bus, train and launch terminals to punish transport operators overcharging passengers. Magistrates have been authorised to increase the penalty in some cases, meeting sources said.

The meeting also discussed the traffic situation and decided to extend duration of traffic duty until 1:00am instead of 11:00pm considering the Eid rush.

The meeting was informed that 20 mobile courts filed 5,975 cases so far and realised Tk 37.58 lakh in fines for infractions. Twenty-nine people were arrested and 13 of them sent to jail for failing to pay fine.

## Road mishaps kill 7 in Feni, Habiganj

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Seven people were killed and eight others injured in separate road accidents in Feni and Habiganj yesterday.

Of them, four were killed in Feni and the rest in Habiganj.

In Feni, a road mishap at Temohani on the Feni-Majiddee Highway left four people killed and eight others injured, according to BSS.

The accident occurred in the evening when a passenger bus collided head on with a tempo.

Tempo passenger Nur Ahmed, 56, died on the spot, while three other passengers of the vehicle succumbed to their injuries at Feni Sadar Hospital. Their identity could not be known. The injured were also admitted to the hospital.

In Habiganj, three people were killed when a Sylhet- bound passenger bus collided head on with a private car.

Two of them died on the spot while the other succumbed to injuries at Habiganj Sadar Hospital.

All of the victims were passengers of the private car. Police seized the bus, but its driver managed to escape.

A case was lodged with Bahubal Police Station.

## CNG set-up

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show hosted by Clean Cities International, the US Department of Energy and the Trade Centre of the US Embassy in Dhaka on November 18-19 at Hotel Sheraton, Dhaka.

The show opened up an opportunity for the US companies to meet the CNG fuelling station buyers.

Funding under an Asian Development Bank (ADB) programme is expected to be available for 30 stations by this year. But the USAID feels that hundreds of stations will be needed in future to support the rapid conversion of vehicles.

Ahad was murdered.

The investigation officers pressed charges against 13 people on June 13, 2001, and the trial began on May 18 last year after the court framed charges against them on March 19, 2002.

Kangali Zakir, Zakir Hossain, Taleb Hossain, Bachchu Bepari and Abdul Aziz confessed to their part in the murder under Section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code on different dates of hearing, but the judge could not convict them.

## Ex-AC Akram

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Later, Akram filed a criminal appeal before the High Court against his conviction order.

He was suspended from service during trial and sacked after the court ruling.

Shamim Reza Rubel, 24, a student of the Independent University, was picked up by a team of detective branch (DB) of police led by AC Akram from in front of his Sideswari residence on July 23, 1998.

Reza was tortured to death in the DB custody the same day.

## Speaker rejects

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any specific issue, some had inconsistency, while others could be addressed under existing law.

Meanwhile, the speaker accepted a notice submitted by ruling BNP lawmaker Abdul Gani yesterday and sent it to the standing committee of privileges for examination.

In his notice, Gani alleged that columnist Abdul Gaffar Chowdhury undermined parliament and its lawmakers in a commentary published in a Bangla newspaper.

## Khaleda performs Umrah

**UNB, Dhaka**

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia performed Umrah at Kaaba Sharif in Makkah Tuesday evening.

She was accompanied, among others, by her youngest son Arafat Rahman, State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Muhammad Nasiruddin, Political Secretary to the PM Alhaj Mosaddek Ali, Bangladesh Ambassador to Saudi Arabia SK Sarjil Hassan and Consul General of Jeddah Mohammad Zafar, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday.

The prime minister arrived at Jeddah King Abdul Aziz Airport from Madina at 13:50pm (Jeddah time) on Tuesday on her way to Makkah. Regional chief of protocol of the Saudi government and officials of Bangladesh consulate warmly welcomed her.

The prime minister then directly went to Makka Al Mukarrama and had her Iftar with thousands of devotees at Haram Sharif. After offering maghrib prayers there, she performed Umrah.

She also offered her Esha prayers at Haram Sharif.

Khaleda will stay in Makkah till November 22 and leave for Dhaka on November 23.

## Two Jubo Dal men hurt in clash over drug money

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna**

A fierce clash over drug money between two rival groups of the ruling BNP left two Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal leaders seriously injured at Kadamtala Tuesday night.

Sources said Alamgir Hossain, 40, general secretary of ward No. 21 unit of Jubo Dal, and Bellal Ahmed, 26, were undergoing treatment at Khulna General Hospital after suffering severe stab injuries during the clash at 9:30pm.

Eyewitnesses said the clash began following an altercation between the two groups over realising toll from drug traffickers at Kadamtala, who allegedly operate in collusion with a group of BNP activists and a section of policemen of the river traffic outpost.

Both groups used bombs, machetes, clubs and iron rods during the hour-long clash before being dispersed by police.

Police arrested three people after a case was lodged in connection with the incident. The arrestees are President of ward No. 21 unit of BNP Abdus Sattar Molla, Rob Sarder and Milton.

Two shops in the area were looted and vandalised by supporters of Sattar Molla who led the attack against Jubo Dal activists.

All 12 men accused in the case belong to a group loyal to Nazrul Islam Manju, secretary of the city BNP.

## BSF kills one at Rajshahi border

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi**

The Indian Border Security Force (BSF) shot dead a Bangladeshi national near Manikchak border in Godagari yesterday morning.

The victim was identified as Rafiqul Islam, 35, son of Fayez Uddin of Char Alatuli village in Chapainawabganj.

Rafiqul entered India to buy daily essentials from Lalgola Tuesday. The BSF shot him and dragged his body away when he was returning home with two of his Indian relatives.

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) in Poladanga border area in a letter asked the BSF at Renu camp to return the body immediately.

## Japan's PM

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has been re-elected prime minister. The vote yesterday was expected, since Koizumi's coalition secured a majority of seats in the powerful lower house in a general election 10 days ago.

Koizumi took office in April 2001, pledging to reform the economy by stopping wasteful government spending, privatising more industries and strengthening the ailing banking sector.

So far, he has faced heavy resistance from old guard members within his party, the Liberal Democrats. His success in rekindling the economy has been limited and now Koizumi is under heavy pressure from voters and the opposition to make good on his promises.

Now he must also grapple with the deeply controversial issue of whether to back the US-led effort to rebuild Iraq by sending in Japanese troops.

Tokyo's plan to dispatch troops was put on hold earlier this month because of security concerns.

Koizumi said yesterday that Japan will not participate in any battles in Iraq, but will do its utmost to help reconstruct the country. He adds that the government needs to carefully consider safety conditions in Iraq when sending troops or civilians.

# Bhuiyan invites AL

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there be any unparliamentary word used by any member, that is usually expunged after scrutiny.

The BNP secretary general also touched upon some pressing issues like the price hike of essentials, law and order and monga in northern districts.

He admitted that prices of some items had increased for three reasons -- the price hike in the international market, inclement weather and "conspiracy".

"But it must be seen whether the government was sincere to bring down the prices. Of course, this increase is temporary and it would be brought under control shortly," he told the House.

About law and order, Bhuiyan said the government was making efforts to improve the situation by enacting laws and holdings speedy trial.

He criticised the Awami League for releasing the list of 101 "godfathers", naming members of parliament, to tarnish the country's image abroad.

Bhuiyan said people know well who were real godfathers during the Awami League's rule. He mentioned the names of Shamim Osman of Narayanganj, Joynal Hazari of Feni and Abu Taher of Laxmipur.

On the monga situation, he said this phenomenon in the months of Aswin and Kartik is not unusual in the country. The government had taken allout measures to tackle the situation, caused this year by prolonged rains. However, he said no-one had died of starvation thanks to effective steps taken by the government.

He rebutted Sheikh Hasina's remarks that whenever the BNP comes to power, hunger and famine stalk the country, saying that people did not forget the famine of 1974 during the

# JS session prorogued

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of all parties to join parliament proceedings to strengthen democracy.

In the absence of the main opposition, parliamentary party leader of the Jatiya Party (Ershad) Rawshan Ershad delivered a speech on behalf of the opposition. She urged the leader of all House and leader of the opposition to sit for a dialogue to resolve all disputes between the two sides for the sake of democracy and development.

Responding to a request from the LGRD minister to expunge unparliamentary words, if any, used in the four-day session, the speaker informed the House it had already been done.

Mannan Bhuiyan made the request with reference to a demand by the AL general secretary.

On AL's recent list of godfathers, Bhuiyan said, "The move is aimed to shift their (AL) previous misdeeds on to us and tarnish the country's image abroad."

Admitting price spiral of some essentials, he said the government has taken all steps to check the price hike.

Turing to law and order, the minister said, "We are not claiming total success in curbing crimes but we are trying sincerely."

Brushing aside opposition allegation that people are dying of starvation in the monga-hit northern region, Bhuiyan said, "Not a single person has starved to death in any northern district." The situation there is an usual one at this time of the year, he added.

About opposition leader Sheikh Hasina's visit to northern districts, Bhuiyan said the opposition is trying to derive political mileage out of the situation there since it has no other anti-government issue.

Before passing the Code of Civil Procedure (Third Amendment) Bill, 2003, the House rejected several amendment proposals by Kader Siddiqui of Krishak Samik Janata League and GM Quader of the JP.

Quader criticised the bill saying it will deprive the poor of justice. He attributed the delay in disposal of civil suits to inefficiency of law officials of the

## Question time

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servants, while others said they were bound to attend parliament.

"I hope the secretaries concerned will present," Speaker Jamir Uddin Sircar said in his observation.

Sircar said he was at the helm of six ministries in the past when the secretaries would be present in the gallery.

Moudud, who first argued that the Jatiya Sangsad secretariat should issue a special instruction to the secretaries, came around to say that he would direct the cabinet secretary to convey the decision to other secretaries.

Huda disagreed with the first argument of the law minister, saying, "The secretaries are bound to be present at the Jatiya Sangsad. There is no need to issue special instructions."

Saifur also echoed the voice of the communications minister.

The shipping minister wondered how the secretaries, who would sit in the gallery far from the ministers on the floor, would assist the ministers in parliamentary deliberations.

Abdul Alim, a lawmaker of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party and the chairman of the public undertakings committee, raised the issue on a point of order and demanded a ruling from the speaker.

He asked the speaker to take legal action if any secretary did not obey the direction.

Awami League rule when 30,000 people had starved to death.

The BNP leader told the House since the opposition has no political issue, the opposition leader is visiting the northern region to discover any girl like "Bashanti" of 1974. "But that situation does not exist now," he said.

Jatiya Party leader Rowshan Ershad, whose party returned to the House after the resolution of their problem with the government, said a consensus is essential between the two parties to make parliament effective.

## Children work

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street work, it wants to monitor the progress towards achieving the set goals.

Other objects of the survey are to asses the occupational risk and health hazards, the extent of exploitation of working children, demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the families of working children and average earning, wages and hours of work.

It is estimated that about 56 percent of the children were engaged in the agricultural sector, 25.4 percent in production and transport and 14 percent worked as sales workers.

It says 49.5 percent of the working children did not get salary, as they were employed in the family farm or business, and 28.6 percent were employed as paid day labourers.

Some other key findings of the survey are: the monthly average income was Tk 1,009 and 36.7 percent worked full-time, 63.3 percent part-time.

The survey that used an integrated multipurpose sample design was based on the 2001 population census. It included 40,000 households and 1,000 establishments into the sample in rural and urban areas.

government.

But Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed, who piloted the bill, said it will bring a qualitative change to the judicial system.

Moudud said considering the economic condition of the poor justice-seekers and opinion of lawmakers of all parties, lawyers and civil society members, the compensatory cost for filing false cases has been fixed at Tk 20,000 against Tk 50,000 in the third amendment bill.

The bill also provides for discouraging unilateral imposition of court injunctions, specially hampering development works or on matters of public interest. In such cases, it has been made mandatory to hear the government side before issuance of such injunctions, he added.

Earlier, the Code of Civil Procedure (Second Amendment) Bill, 2003, was adopted by the Jatiya Sangsad and it was due to be effective from October 1. But the implementation was suspended through a presidential ordinance.

## Systems loss in electricity supply drops by 2pc

**BSS, Dhaka**

Chronic systems loss in electricity distribution, which has been an element of concern in power sector, has reduced by about two percent in the current fiscal year.

Replying to a question from Mohammad Mosharaf Hossain from Feni-3 constituency, State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources Iqbal Hasan Mahmud told parliament that the systems loss in 2001-2002 fiscal year was 27.97 per cent that has come down to 25.60 per cent.

He said his ministry has taken up extensive programmes to further reduce the systems loss.

The programmes include ensuring meter for all consumers, providing computerised billing, introducing pre-paid billing system, transforming distribution division as strategic business unit to run as cost and profit centre, and contracting out commercial activities in some areas where systems loss is worse.

## Saifur

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population.

He said the survey would send a misleading signal and create setbacks in the basic economic management that depends on survey data.

He said any departure from the practical situation might earn the country a bad name on the international front, especially among development partners.

"Who has prepared this survey and what modalities have they followed?" the minister snapped, adding the survey would portray Bangladesh as a country of child labour.

"It (the survey) should be modified taking into consideration the real life scenario," he felt.

The inaugural session of the seminar, organised at the Parishankhayan Bhaban, was also addressed by, among others, Planning Division Secretary M Fazlur Rahman and BBS Director General AKM Musa.

## Hasina asks govt again to resign on monga issue

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha**

Leader of the Opposition and Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina has reiterated her demand for the government to step down for failing to tackle the *monga*, a famine-like situation that has afflicted several northern districts.

"This coalition government that cannot provide people food has no right to stay in power," she told a public meeting at Fulchhari Pilot High School here yesterday.

Hasina was on the last leg of her four-day visit to the *monga*-affected districts of Nilphamari, Kurigram, Rangpur and Gaibandha.

She said the government has pushed the country toward famine through murder, loot, rape and anarchy. During the AL rule, people had at least two square meals a day because there was no food crisis, she added.

Hasina said wealth allocated for the poor is being looted by ruling BNP goons.

People will never forgive those who steal their food under the VGF (Vulnerable Group Feeding) programme, she said.

She said the AL has tried its best to extend all possible help to the *monga*-affected people and called upon the rich to come forward to the aid of the destitute.

Presided over by Moteleb Mondol, president of Gajaria union Awami League, the meeting was also addressed among others by AL presidium member Motia Chowdhury and Ashikur Rahman.

## 11 burnt

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village physician, told The Daily Star.

"We suddenly heard a gunshot and to our horror found smoke sipping through the wooden floor at around 12:50am," he said.

"Some 15 minutes later, as we did not hear the robbers anymore, we opened the door to see what's happening downstairs. All we saw is flames leaping wildly," Bimalendra went on.

"I jumped out of the window and hid in the paddy field," he said. "I was too frightened to know what was going on there."

When the fire died down, he went to the house and found his 11 family members dead. They are Tejendra Lal Shushil, 70, his wife Bakul Shil, 65, their second son Anil Kanti Shushil, 42, and Anil's family including his wife Smriti Rani Shil, 30, and three daughters - Rumi Shil, 11, Sonia Shil, 7, and 4-day-old Kartik Shil. Tejendra's three nieces and daughter of Shachindra Lal Shushil -- Babuti Shil, 25, PraeAnny Shil, 15, and Bakul Shil's brother-in-law Debendra Shil, 75.

Bimalendra filed a case with Banskhalhi Police station, but no-one was arrested.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, now in Makkah to perform Umrah, expressed shock at the killings and directed the authorities to deal with the culprits.

She said people responsible for the incident must be found out immediately and handed over to the law-enforcers.

After the incident, Home Minister Ataf Hossain Chowdhury went to the village and ordered setting up of a police camp. He also asked police to immediately arrest the killers.

## Actress Prachi

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Judge handed out death sentence to 'Kangali' Zakir (Zakir Hossain) and Taleb Hossain Rana (Taleb Rana or 'Dhakar Badsha') and rigorous life imprisonment and Tk 5,000 fine to Zakir Hossain ('Kana Zakir'). The 10 others were acquitted.

"It is not a just punishment for the crime they committed," Rahat, nephew of Ahad, said.

In the judgement, the court said the nature of the murder is so heinous and gruesome that lesser sentence of imprisonment cannot meet the demand of justice in this case.

"Sergeant Ahad did not compromise with the muggers and sacrificed his life for the interest of the nation, but died for the negligence of his colleagues who were stationed there with arms," the court said.

"Police officers who did not know how to use arms to protect their colleague cannot play role to protect and save life and property of the people. It will be safer if those police officers do not remain in service."