

Alleader
killed in
bomb attack

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A prominent shrimp trader and a front-ranking Awami League leader, was killed in a bomb attack at 3:34pm yesterday in front of a private clinic where he went to visit his ailing wife.

Rahima Khatoon, the wife, was injured severely in a road accident on December 21 on her way to Khulna from Tala upazila with her husband, Syed Sirajul Islam, 45, on his motorbike.

According to police, the shrimp trader hailing from Ataroi village of Tala, Sathkhira, came under the attack by unidentified miscreants while he was about to ride away on his motorbike from Khulna Surgical Clinic. One of the three bombs hurled by miscreants hit him on his back.

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Convict on the
run gunned
down

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Armed assailants gunned down a convicted criminal in the Advocate Habibur Rahman Mondol murder case at Dhaka's Shyampur yesterday, following a dispute with other members of his gang.

A gang chased Bheezal Alamgir alias Alam, 27, who was sentenced to life imprisonment, following a row between them and shot him in the head from behind in Dhaka's Lane at about 12:45pm, police said.

Surtrapur police said Alam was an accused in two other criminal cases.

The miscreants ran towards Demra area to escape arrest. Later, Demra police held Sajjad, and H a r r u n

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Air France flights cancelled amid terror fears

AP, Washington

Intelligence warnings of possible terrorist plots to use aircraft against American targets yesterday prompted cancellation of six Air France flights between Los Angeles and Paris and triggered intense security talks between US officials and their foreign counterparts.

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The flight cancellations added to Christmas holiday tensions that have been high since President Bush raised the national terror alert level to orange, the second highest level, on Sunday. US security officials have been closely monitoring activity at airports, train stations and public buildings. Police randomly stopped cars near the US Capitol on Wednesday.

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Opposition's UP meet hits snags

Parties pursue separate lines of anti-govt actions

REAZ AHMAD

An opposition-sponsored convention of Union Parishad (UP) chairmen and members scheduled for January has become uncertain as political parties seem inclined to carry on with their separate anti-government programmes rather than operating under the umbrella of a unified authority.

A meeting of the coordination committee of the Awami League (AL), Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD)

convention being held anytime soon is slim as political parties are preoccupied with their individual programmes.

Earlier on November 9, the four opposition parties decided to hold the national convention in early January to muster public opinion against "marginalisation of the UP by pitting it against the newly formed Gram Sarker".

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Sources said chances of the

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Santa Claus distributes gifts among children at Sonargaon Hotel in Dhaka as part of Christmas celebrations yesterday.

Rivals kill 3
outlaws in
Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Three underground operatives were hacked to death following a gunfight with their rival party men at Borobebel Hatirgara village under Faridpur upazila of the district yesterday morning.

The dead are Nazrul Islam, 30, Ilu Fahkr, 28, and Maznu Praman, 35. All of them hailed from Hulal Union of the upazila.

Police and locals said the clash erupted at about 11:00am as a sequel to previous rivalry between the two groups.

The feuding groups traded gun

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Over 60 die
as Boeing
crash off
Benin

AGENCIES, Cotonou, Benin

A Boeing passenger plane crashed into the Atlantic Ocean just after takeoff in the West African country of Benin yesterday, killing over 60 passengers, witnesses and airport officials say.

Witnesses said they saw at least 30 bodies strewn on the beach near the airport in the main city Cotonou, where the Beirut-bound plane crashed in the Gulf of Guinea.

Fishermen and volunteers scrambled to drag bodies out of the water as they were washed ashore by waves, prompting screams of horror from onlookers on the beach.

It was not immediately known how many people were aboard the plane nor which airline was involved. Airport officials said the

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3 killed as bus
runs over
them in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Three persons were run over and killed by a bus on Arakan Sarak (Chittagong-Cox's Bazar highway) at Padua in Lohagara upazila of the district yesterday.

The victims are Reazur, 18, Russell, 14, and Ismail, 35.

Police and witnesses said the Cox's Bazar-bound passenger bus knocked a bicycle and a rickshaw throwing the three on the road before crushing them under its wheels. The bus was seized but the driver fled.

Bicycle rider Reazur was killed on the spot while Rickshaw passenger Russell died at Lohagara Health Complex and Rickshaw puller Ismail succumbed to his wounds at Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

A case was filed with Lohagara Police Station.

BNP-backed
CBA defies
BB order to
relocate office

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling BNP-backed collective bargaining agent (CBA) of Bangladesh Bank (BB) remains indifferent to the authorities' instruction to relocate its office from the bank's main building to its annex.

Two CBA leaders resisted the central bank's attempt Wednesday to shift its office and allegedly called the persons trying to do so names. Finally, the two leaders locked the CBA office so that no-one could 'interfere' with their business.

Two months ago, the BB took its first disciplinary action against 10 unruly union activists who had barged into the BB governor's chamber and called him

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Prayer Timings

December 26		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-00
Juma	12-15	1-20
Asr	3-40	4-00
Maghrib	5-26	5-31
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

Five ansars linked to Shibir's bomb making

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Five ansars yesterday appeared in court on count of abetting Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) activists in making handmade bombs in an abandoned residential hotel in Khulna city.

Noor Mohammad, 35, Rajab Ali, 26, Humayun Kabir, 24, Hamidur Rahman, 26, and Matirul Islam (age unknown), recruited as ansars in 1999, have been named as accused under the Explosives Act before sending them

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Disabled girl raped in Noakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Miscreants raped a teenage disabled girl at Dehpur village under Sadar Upazila in Noakhali Tuesday.

According to sources, one Dr Enayet called the 15-year-old girl, daughter of a milk-seller, at his chamber on her way to her sister's residence at a nearby village in the evening.

Later, Dr Enayet, Ahsan Ullah, 35, Moslehdin Molla, 40, Yunus, 22, Abdul Quader, 35, Abdur Rabb, 32, Khalilullah, 35, Abdul Hossain, 38, Idris, 36, and seven other unknown youths allegedly took the disabled girl to a fish farm owned by Ketu Mian and gangraped her, sources said.

Locals recovered the girl in criti

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Children play with toxic sewage water from Dhaka pouring into the Balu river from the Buriganga near Banarsi Residential Area, in the upstream of the Shitalakkhya confluence.

JU students
withdraw
hunger strike

JU CORRESPONDENT

Students of Jahangirnagar University (JU) Wednesday night withdrew their fast-unto-death demonstration after 37 hours, as the JU authorities and JU Teachers Association (Juta) reached a consensus on resumption of classes and examinations.

The decision came at around 11:50am, following a circulation by the authorities assuring the students of the resumption from December 27.

Vice-chancellor Prof Jashim Uddin Ahmed and President of Juta Prof Amin Mohammad Ali separately visited agitating stu

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