

## Nation recalls

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collaborators -- Razakar, Al-Badr and Al-Shams -- abducted frontline Bengali intellectuals and professionals on December 14 and killed them to cripple the nation intellectually.

The killers drag renowned academics, literateurs, doctors, engineers, journalists and other eminent personalities out of their houses in Dhaka and massacred them at Rayerbazar and other killing fields in the city.

The martyred intellectuals include Prof Muneir Chowdhury, Dr Alim Chowdhury, Prof Muniruzzaman, Dr Fazle Rabbi, Sirajuddin Hossain, Shahidullah Kaiser, Prof GC Dev, JC Guha Thakurta, Prof Santosh Bhattacharya, Mofazzal Haider Chowdhury, journalists Khanderker Abu Taleb, Nizamuddin Ahmed, SA Mannan (Ladu Bhai), ANM Golam Mustafa, Syed Nazmul Haq and Selina Parvin.

The day returns with families of the martyred intellectuals still waiting to see punishment to the perpetrators of the wholesale killing of the best Bengali minds.

Families of many martyred intellectuals had lodged cases since 1972 seeking justice. Until March 1973, a total of 42 cases were filed against the Razakar, Al-Badr and Al-Shams but over the years files of the cases gathered dust only.

On September 24, 1997, Farida Banu, sister of slain intellectual Giasuddin, filed a case and subsequently some police investigations were carried out. But as the old files and police records became untraceable, things did not advance much.

Political, cultural and civil society organisations will commemorate the tragedy that took place only two days before the fall of the Pakistani army on December 16 after the bloody war that left some three million Bengalis killed.

To mark the day, different sociocultural and political organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes, including seminars, discussions and wreath-laying at Mirpur and Rayerbazar monuments in Dhaka.

President Iajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina delivered separate messages on the eve of the Martyred Intellectuals Day.

Black flag will be hoisted atop important government offices as a mark of condolences on the Martyred Intellectuals Day.

Bangladesh Betar and TV channels will broadcast special

## Women

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today.

Barrister Sigma Huda, wife of Communications Minister Nazmul Huda, and 12 other women leaders claimed in the petition that the act is unconstitutional and that it has not demarcated the constituency. As a result, the petitioners said, the 45 women could be elected from a singleseat.

They also said if a woman wanted to be elected as a member of parliament in the reserves seat, she should be affiliated with a political party having representation in parliament, which is against Article 66 of the constitution.

Women-rights activists and civil society members earlier had filed two writ petitions with the High Court challenging the provision of 45 reserved seats and the court issued show-cause notices on the government. The matter is now pending with the court. In the meantime, the government on November 29 enacted the women reserved seats election act and gazetted it on December 8.

Senior lawyer Dr M Zahir and Advocate Asaduzzaman will move the case for the petitioners.

## Biggest away

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an innings and 131 runs.

Resuming on 170-8, overnight batsmen Mazarul Islam and Tapash Baisya lasted just 5.2 overs before falling to the pace duo of Irfan Pathan and Zaheer Khan in the space of four deliveries.

Tapash, who hit successive boundaries off Zaheer in the morning, smashed a magnificent cover drive off Pathan to reach 29 but next delivery he gave a high catch at square-leg to Sachin Tendulkar while trying to fend off a short pitched ball.

It was Pathan's first six-wicket haul in a Test innings which helped the left-arm seamer finish the match with 11 for 96 (5-45 and 6-51), the best ever figures by an Indian bowler on foreign soil. He was adjudged man-of-the-match.

Left-handed Manzurul, who had completed his maiden Test fifty in the last over on the third day, hit four boundaries including three off Pathan to reach 69 off 116 balls. But he soon followed his overnight partner when a mistimed pull against Zaheer went to wicketkeeper Dinesh Karthik off the glove.

Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar admitted that apart from the return of Mashrafe-Bin-Mortuza after a long lay off, they were a total failure.

Ganguly, who did not field on Monday due to a mild fever, returned to celebrate India's win and praised Pathan and Tendulkar's match-winning efforts. He was also happy to have four day's rest before going into the second Test in Chittagong, which starts on December 17.

programmes and newspapers will bring out special supplements.

Awami League will hold a discussion on the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum premises tomorrow afternoon while the opposition leader will meet members of some martyred families at her Dhanmondi office this afternoon.

A cultural programme would be held at Liberation War Museum this evening.

Dhaka University will hold a discussion marking the day at Teachers-Students Centre (TSC) at 10:30am.

Protesting the construction of public toilets in close vicinity of Rayerbazar monument, the sons and daughters of the martyred intellectuals will stage a token hunger strike for an hour from 10:00am today.

Bangla Academy will hold a discussion at 11:00am on the life and work of the martyred intellectuals. Shilpakala Academy will also organise a discussion at 10:30am.

## Ministry to slash number of forest check posts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Ministry of Environment and Forest has identified forest check posts as the source of corruption and decided to slash their number.

"We've found each check post to be overstaffed as a result of their hectic lobbying to get posted there. There are allegations that these staff have link with timber smugglers," said Environment Minister Tariqul Islam.

The minister expressed the hope that timber smuggling will be halved once the forest check posts are downsized. The staff of the dissolved check posts will be transferred to forest areas to guard forest resources, he said.

There are 50 check posts across the country including 16 in the Sundarbans and 15 in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

According to administrative setup, each check post is comprised of five staff, but a probe has found seven to 10 employees at each.

## 5 die

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outlaws at Failabazar in Rampal upazila at 1:55am yesterday.

Outlawed Biplobi Communist Party (BCP) cadre Rabiul Islam, 30, also was killed early yesterday in 'crossfire' between police and outlawed operatives at Hazari-danga village of Courchadpur upazila in Jhenidah.

DHAKA  
A gang including Kamal and Milon attempted to mug police Sub-inspector Mominur Rahman and Sergeant Abul Kalam Azad as they were walking past Lion Eye Hospital at about 1:30am, police said.

The criminals also stabbed and seriously wounded Mominur.

As the two policemen shouted for help, members of 'Cheeta' and 'Cobra' rushed to the spot. The gang fired on the law-enforcers, who returned fire, leaving Kamal and Milon dead on the spot.

Police seized two revolvers, four bullets, one 'chapati' and a knife from them.

Barisal  
A team of Rab-4 arrested Ripon from Sangsad Bhaban area in the capital Sunday noon, our Barisal correspondent reports.

Ripon was brought to Barisal and handed to Rab-6 stationed at Barisal Sunday night.

Rab sources said taking Ripon with them, members of the elite force raided a hideout of outlaws on the bank of the Mongla canal at Norotom village in Banaripara upazila at around 5:30am. Ripon was fatally injured in crossfire between Rab and outlaws while fleeing and died on the spot.

Rab members seized a revolver and a light gun loaded with eight bullets from the spot.

A Rab press release said one Rab member was injured in the operation.

Ripon was an accused in more than a dozen cases, including for bomb attack at Baniachang Church in Gopalganj, six murders, arms loot from Ansar members, abduction and toll collection.

Locals brought out processions in Banaripara upazila hearing the news of Ripon's death.

Khulna  
Rab raided Saguna Dakshinpara in Rampal upazila and arrested 'Kana' Rezaul, our staff correspondent in Khulna reports.

He was killed in crossfire as joint forces came under armed attack by accomplices of the arrestee during an arms recovery operation. The two sides traded 30 rounds of fires in which Rezaul was killed and a police constable injured.

A revolver, a shutter gun, a foreign-made revolver and two rounds of revolver bullets were found on him.

He was an accused and a suspect in more than 40 criminal cases filed with several police stations of Bagerhat district, police said.

Kushtia  
Police arrested Rabiul on Saturday and recovered three powerful bombs acting on his confession, our Kushtia correspondent reports.

Police later went to village Hazaridanga to seize arms from outlaws. Accomplices of Rabiul opened fire on police and they retaliated. Rabiul was killed in crossfire as he tried to escape by jumping from police van, police said.

Police sent the body to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

## LUGGAGE THIEVERY Irked Biman fliers board Indian flight

BSS, Dhaka

Twenty-two Mumbai bound aggrieved passengers of Biman Bangladesh Airlines yesterday left for their destination by an Indian Airlines flight under Biman's arrangements.

Earlier, the passengers refused to leave Dhaka on the plea of loss of valuables from their hand luggage while being in the custody of airport customs, a PID handout said.

A total of 65 passengers came to Dhaka on December 10 in Biman's flights-BG-073 and BG-079—from Bangkok and Hong Kong. The passengers were booked on BG-029 flight for Mumbai the following day.

While reporting to the customs for their hand luggage, the passengers learnt that some of their valuables were 'gone' (lost) while in the custody of the customs.

This made the passengers unruly and in consequence, 48 of them refused to fly without their goods. The embarrassed officials of Biman did their best to pacify the passengers, the handout added.

The matter was immediately brought to the notice of the State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism, Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin.

Meanwhile, 43 passengers agreed to board the aircraft, though the rest 22 passengers refused to leave.

The minister ordered a probe into the matter and instructed the authorities concerned to take disciplinary action against the officials involved.

The remaining 22 passengers left yesterday for Mumbai by an Indian Airlines flight via Kolkata, the handout added.

## 46 bridges

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ment agreed to raise the assistance to Tk 128 crore and the number of bridges to 46, said sources.

Earlier the DFID had conducted a survey on the roads and highways in southwestern districts and found 106 bridges to be in need of immediate reconstruction. The survey also found that the bridges were anything but ready to cope with the increased rush of the highway traffic.

It identified 36 bridges to be in worst state and committed to provide the necessary fund to repair those. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed in 1998 between the government and DFID accordingly, said the source.

Formation of a separate bridge management unit in the Ministry of Communications was one of the preconditions, the RHD officials informed the meeting. Now, as the government has opened a bridge management unit there is no bar to starting the construction work, they said.

A high official of the RHD told The Daily Star after the meeting that the reconstruction work would begin early next year after completing necessary procedures.

The bridges under the projects include, 12 on Faridpur-Bhanga Highway, one on Barisal-Jhalakathi Road, 12 on Barisal-Bhandaria Road, two on Bhandaria-Pirojpur Road, one on Dushuria-Natore, five on Jessore-Narail, four on Rangpur-Kurigram and four on Barisal-Patuakhali Highway.

## China to tax

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clothing exports to ease international concerns that mainland producers could flood markets when the decades-old quota system will be lifted next month.

In an instant reaction to The Daily Star yesterday, President of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) Anisul Haq said the Chinese move may help Bangladesh to overcome the post-MFA (multi-fibre arrangement) challenges to a larger extent.

"We are happy that the Chinese government has taken the decision to counteract unlimited growth. This will help us to better compete in the world apparel market," he said.

He, however, requested the importing countries especially US and EU to effectively monitor the duty system to ensure that the system gets implemented.

"Despite the Chinese decision, the US and EU should not also rule out possibility of safeguard measures in the quota-free period," the BGMEA leader said.

At present, China holds 16 percent of the world's total apparel market and hopes to raise the share to 50 percent after the expiry of quota.

The AFP dispatch adds: "We will impose export duties on certain textile products," Ministry of Commerce spokesman Chong Quan was quoted as saying by the China Daily.

China would tax its own textile goods based on volume rather than value as a way to encourage the production of higher-end textiles, Chong said.

Decades-long quotas that have governed the apparel trade will be lifted on January 1, according to the 1995 Agreement on Textiles and Clothing, which amended the multi-fibre arrangement.

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## Lost their loved ones

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army) picked up Selina, editor of literary magazine *Shilalipi*, from her Moghbazar residence. Sumon Zahid, her only son, can still recall the day that turned his fragile childhood world upside down.

His mother's body was found in the Rayerbazar killing ground on December 18 and later buried in Azimpur graveyard.

Sumon has long been trying to have the Outer Circular Road (the road from Mauchak to Moghbazar) named after her mother. He filed an application with the Dhaka City Corporation to that end. After a great deal of persuasion by him, the DCC had decided in favour of renaming the road.

On March 20, 2003, the DCC issued an order asking the shop and homeowners on the Outer Circular Road to replace the old signs with new ones reading 'Selina Parveen Road'. But the DCC officials did not take any steps to implement the order.

"I made repeated requests to the Dhaka City Corporation to implement naming the Outer Circular Road after my mother but to no effect," said Sumon.

"The DCC erected four concrete structures on the road without hanging any nameplate. I myself wrote 'Selina Parveen Road' on those structures but one morning I found that one of the nameplates was knocked down," said Sumon.

He also regretted that some officials of the Mayor's office misbehaved with him when he went there with the prayer for renaming

theroad.  
"Everybody wanted proof whether I was really a son of a martyred intellectual. To satisfy them I even had to collect newspaper clippings to substantiate my claim," he added.

Sumon said he never wanted any benefits from the government. All he longed for was the government recognition of his mother as a martyr to the independence of this nation.

Abu Musa Mohammed Masuduzzaman, son of late Professor Muniruzzaman said, "Everybody talks about the martyrs only when the December 14 is around while the rest of the year goes without showing a shred of respect for them."

Muniruzzaman, a statistics professor at Dhaka University, was brutally killed along with his younger brother and elder son as the Pakistani army.

Masuduzzaman, only an eight-year-old in 1971, was numbed by the terrible shock at the sight of his father, brother and uncle being killed right in front of his eyes.

"The gruesome picture still makes me tingle with horror and I guess I will never be able to erase the memory," he said maintaining that the family members of the martyred intellectuals are not honoured properly by the state.

"We used to receive some Tk 1500 from the government since after independence but in 1988 the government ceased giving us the money although my mother is still alive," said Masuduzzaman.

## Opposition agitates

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police barred opposition supporters from bringing out processions during the eight-hour hartal.

In the capital, leaders of the main opposition AL and its allies asked the BNP-led coalition government to step down immediately paving the way for early elections, and sit for a dialogue with opposition parties to form a neutral and non-party caretaker government.

Addressing separate rallies, they said people expressed 'no confidence' in the government on Saturday by joining the cross-country human wall. The ruling coalition should now quit showing respect to people's desire, they added.

The AL and its allies in the anti-government movement-- left leaning 11-Party alliance, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) and National Awami Party (NAP)-- went for yesterday's programme to protest the attacks on their workers in Bogra, Gaibandha and Chittagong on Saturday.

Addressing a rally in front of the party's Bangabandhu Avenue office, the AL leaders bitterly criticised LGRD and Cooperatives Minister and BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan for his remarks that the human wall programme was a flop because the number of people on the 1000-km route was small, excepting in Feni.

"If so, then Prime Minister Khaleda Zia should resign showing respect to the desire of people of her constituency," said AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil.

## Cabinet nods

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The finance ministry is likely to submit soon its recommendation about the appointment to the president who will then consult the prime minister.

Once appointed, the ombudsman shall not be associated with any coveted government post, the NBR proposal says.

Receiving the taxpayers' complaints the ombudsman will seek explanation of the NBR and suggest remedy if any injustice is found. If the NBR refuses to comply with the ombudsman's verdict, he will seek the president's intervention.

NBR feels that the presence of a tax ombudsman will boost public confidence about the tax payment system and encourage them to pay more taxes.

"Very few people actually pay taxes in Bangladesh," noted an NBR official. "In a country of 140 million people, we have less than 1.5 million people possessing tax identification numbers (TIN). And among them, less than half a million actually pay tax."

"While dealing with income tax, we see that payment by some taxpayers do not match with their lifestyles," the NBR official added.

A similar tendency to avoid payment of VAT and customs duty is also seen. "There is allegation that a section of dishonest tax officials take bribes to allow the taxpayers to dodge tax," the official said.

The NBR has taken a number of initiatives to encourage people to pay tax. In this regard, the role of the ombudsman becomes important, sources said.

The NBR has sought individual lifestyle statement from every taxpayer during submission of tax return and wealth statements from the civil servants in every five years. Typically they do not submit this statement.

### 11-Party rally

Leaders of the 11-Party at a rally at Muktangan blasted the government for 'attacks' on Saturday's peaceful demonstration.

They asked the government to stop such 'repression' on the opposition, and warned of tougher programme if it did not.

### JSD rally

JSD leaders at a rally in front of its central office threatened of forming human wall around the 'centres of power' of the government.

They said such programme would follow the current one of human wall on the highways. Mainuddin Khan Badal, Syed Zafar Sazzad and Shirin Akhtar, among others, addressed the rally.

Our Bogra correspondent reports: Most vehicles remained off the roads of the town during the hartal from 6:00am to 6:00pm. A small number of rickshaws however plied.

The local AL office was found closed during the hartal.

Our Gaibandha correspondent adds: Police foiled a procession brought out jointly by district AL, 11-Party, JSD and NAP in support of the hartal at rail crossing point of the town at about 11:00am.

## 8 Marines killed

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release of more information could place US personnel at risk.

As of Monday, at least 1,296 members of the US military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count.

## Hope pinned on Aminbazar power plant

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka is likely to have an uninterrupted electricity supply system when Aminbazar 230/132kv substation goes into commercial operation next month feeding the 230kv Dhaka Ring transmission line, claim officials of Power Grid Company of Bangladesh (PGCB) Ltd.

The substation, a PGCB project financed by Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Bangladesh government, will increase stability in electricity supply, transmission capacity and reliability of grid network of Dhaka city and greater Dhaka, reducing technical loss of 132kv transmission lines. It will also offload Tongi and Hasnabad 230kv substations of the PGCB to improve voltage level, they said.

Rampura 230kv Substation that began operation in 2002 already proved its success meeting at least 40 percent of electricity demand of the capital without any major collapse, the officials told journalists during their visit to the under-construction Aminbazar substation and Rampura substation on Sunday.

Dhaka now has a demand for about 1500mw electricity with an annual growth of 12 percent in demand, which the existing substations cannot feed, said Rampura substation's Deputy General Manager (DGM) Md Ruhul Amin.

"So, the stable 230kv ring around Dhaka city, envisaged in the Power System Master Plan (PSMP), is the optimal solution," he added.

The 100-km ring encompasses Ghorashal, Tongi, Aminbazar, Hasnabad, Meghnaghat, Haripur and Rampura transmission line.

The Dhaka Ring is already complete excepting from Hasnabad to Aminbazar and from Aminbazar to Tongi, which will also be complete next month, PGCB officials mentioned.

On completion, the ring will save any major power supply collapse in and around the capital and offload Tongi, Hasnabad, Kahirpur, Tangail and Manikganj substations as well as those in the capital.

This offload of the substations would help the industries immensely and gear up economic activities, hoped Md Mozammel Hossain, DGM of Aminbazar substation. Shamsuddin Ahmed, head of the ADB Energy Division, said Bangladesh has already achieved considerable success in the sector with the installation of Meghnaghat 450mw Power Plant, Rampura substation and development of the 230kv transmission jointly financed by the ADB and Bangladesh government.

But he said the government should now concentrate on more power generation as the transmission system has been developed and Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority (DESA) and Dhaka Electricity Supply Company (DESCO) are setting up new substations and expanding distribution capability through various projects.

## Shahudul

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eligible for government job. The meeting also withdrew his protocol.

Babar, when reached for comments, also would talk neither about Shahudul's removal, nor appointment of a new IGP.

A High Court division bench on January 27 found the IGP guilty of 'gross misconduct' in a contempt case and fined him Tk 2,000. He is to serve one month in jail in the event of failure to pay the fine. The court also punished three traffic policemen.

The police chief faced contempt proceedings for his remarks in a written reply to certain queries of the court in a suo moto rule after the three traffic policemen misbehaved with a sitting HC additional judge at Farmgate in Dhaka in June last year. A traffic police stopped the flag car of the judge on his way to court to let a police officer's vehicle pass.

The High Court in the suo moto rule ordered the IGP to explain the behaviours of his men, but he, instead, levelled counter-charges against the judge in the reply and defended the law-enforcers.

"The judge himself, by issuing the contempt rule against the traffic policemen, became liable to be prosecuted under the criminal law on charges of wrongful confinement, prejudicial act, obstructing public servants from discharging public function and threatening them," Shahudul had said in the reply.

Shahudul and others later filed an appeal petition against the January 27 verdict. But a full bench of the Appellate Division dismissed the petition Tuesday and upheld the HC judgement.

Legal experts citing the Public Servants (Dismissal on Conviction) Ordinance 1985 -- which says a public servant on his conviction for a criminal offence stands dismissed on the date of delivery of judgement or order convicting him -- say the IGP lost his job with the verdict of the highest court.

Following a writ petition filed by Advocate MK Rahman, the High Court on March 22 ordered the government to explain under what authority Shahudul has been holding the office of IGP after the January 27 judgement.

The High Court division bench of Justice MA Matin and Justice AFM Abdur Rahman, which earlier had punished Shahudul and the traffic policemen, felt embarrassed to continue hearing the writ petition on Sunday, as Shahudul's counsel Khondker Mahbubuddin, Ahmed insisted that he be given time to consult his client. The bench referred the case to Chief Justice Syed JR Mudasir Husain for a decision on the next course of action.

Mahbubuddin told journalists last night that he advised Shahudul to appeal to the president for acquittal from the punishment.

Shahudul, whose contractual service expires on March 30 next year, was in New York on a visit to the UN Peacekeeping Department when the court handed down the verdict Tuesday. He later went to Lyon, France to visit the Interpol Secretariat.

## UK, Japan to jointly

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Sources say the collaboration, however, is the start of a push by Britain, Japan, the World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to jointly support the government in realising its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP).

They will work out an action plan after going through the PRSP to be finalised in January, but preliminarily they said it is their intention to "build institutions that would last over governments and time and improve public knowledge of their rights of governance and law."

When asked about the nature of their input into the Bangladesh's PRSP, Suma Chakrabarti, Permanent Secretary of DFID, said, "As development partners we are getting behind the government, rather than imposing our views and positions."

"The Bangladesh government will continue to consult with all the stakeholders that is the strength of your system and would project a good image of Bangladesh," said Kazuo Kodama, deputy director-general of the Economic Cooperation Bureau of the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

Chakrabarti told journalists that during discussions with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday, they raised bipartisan approach to shared national interest such as the PRSP, which would ensure a "broad constituency of support".

They particularly marked women and children malnutrition and maternal mortality rates as areas of concern, but said all other sectors were on track to meet the MDGs.

Chakrabarti said they had agreed with the government on areas of weak governance and the government has an agenda to curtail corruption and improve law and order. "It is the government's agenda and we would like to support it."

He added that their shared motivations are to eliminate poverty and push Bangladesh to the next stage of development and to tackle barriers to growth, employment and investment.

Their collaboration in Bangladesh comes from the success of a similar collaboration initiative in Vietnam, Chakrabarti said.

They said these areas need to be developed in order for Bangladesh to gain from international trade, which will "particularly