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11 more cops closed for extortion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

A departmental investigation began yesterday against 11 policemen of the Hatgopalpur outpost in Jhenidah who were closed to the Jhenidah police line on Monday for appearing in uniform on the Dhaka-Jhenidah highway when they were not on duty, official sources said.

When contacted by telephone, Jhenidah Police Superintendent Akramuzzaman told The Daily Star that the 11 policemen were closed following a directive from the Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Khulna Range, adding that

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2 robbers lynched in Bagerhat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Two robbers were lynched by a mob at Kashimpur village under Bagerhat sadar upazila on Monday night.

They are Abul Hossain alias Abu 'dakat', 38, ringleader of notorious 'Abu Bahini' of the Sundarbans, and his second-in-command Haider Shaikh, 31.

Police said Abu along with his six accomplices stormed the house of shrimp trader Mahatab Shaikh at about 11:00pm. As the inmates cried for help, neighbours rushed to the spot, caught Abu and Haider and beat them two dead. The rest four

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Mild tremor shakes Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A mild tremor measuring 4.9 on the Richter scale jolted the port city of Chittagong and its surrounding areas yesterday morning.

The tremor, fifth of its kind in the month, began at 9:03am and lasted 24 seconds, said a seismic observatory official. Its epicentre was 225km off Chittagong Seismic Observatory in Ambagan in the city, the official added.

The city dwellers rushed out of their houses in panic, witnesses said. No casualty or damage of property was reported.

The official said the area is suffering a series of aftershocks following the major undersea earthquake on December 26. The fourth tremor shook the city on January 14.



Cattle are being brought in by trawlers to the capital for the Eid market. Sixteen cattle markets have been allowed this year in the city.

PHOTO: AKM MOHSIN

ADP suffers on judicial interference

Saifur says in meeting with CPD

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Judicial interference, pressures from vested quarters and corruption of some government officials hamper implementation of the annual development programme (ADP) and collection of revenues, Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday said.

Exchanging views with top officials of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), the finance minister and other officials of the ministry said court injunctions on hundreds of development projects have virtually bogged down the executive.

They also hinder the revenue collection.

A top official of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) told the meeting that a court of late had not only stayed the order of transfer of an official for corruption, but also directed the board as to at which desk that official should work.

Referring to an instance of corruption, Saifur Rahman told the CPD delegates that an official had halted the file of a development project for bribe despite approval of the highest body of the government.

The meeting between the ministry and the CPD officials was held in

the wake of the think tank's half-yearly review on state of Bangladesh economy. CPD released the report on January 15.

The review expressed concern at the price hike of diesel, slow implementation of development projects and high inflation rate. It, however, highlighted some positive sides of the overall economy.

Following the review, Saifur had invited the CPD officials to discuss the current economic situation and the challenges lying ahead.

CPD Executive Director Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya led the

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Law enforcers to keep watch on Eidgahs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law enforcers will keep Eidgahs in the capital and other places under their watch to avert any untoward incident during the Eid congregations, a home ministry meeting chaired by State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar decided yesterday.

The meeting on law and order also decided to check the Eidgahs a day before the Eid with metal detectors and search bodies of suspicious people.

Two high-powered committees will be formed one with the task to investigate allegation of toll collection by police personnel and the other to probe such allegations against transport workers and

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PDB promises seamless power supply during Eid

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB) has made all arrangements for uninterrupted power supply in the country during Eid holidays, beginning tomorrow.

PDB has formed a central monitoring team at Wapda building and vigilance teams. It has also set up zonal and divisional control rooms in each distribution zone so that any problem disrupting power supply can be solved instantly, according to a PDB press release.

If the electricity consumers face disruption during the holidays, they

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Early probe in 'crossfire' would have made law enforcers cautious

Former chief adviser Habibur Rahman says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former chief justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman yesterday said the law and order men would be more cautious if a report on every death in 'crossfire' was asked for since the first such incident occurred.

"We have belatedly decided to get a report on every death in crossfire. We ought to have asked for the report when the first incident of

death occurred. That would make the law and order men more cautious," said Habibur Rahman, also former chief adviser of caretaker government.

He said however the report is to be made under the Police Regulations.

Justice Habibur was speaking as chief guest at the closing session of a three-day conference on 'Human

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Father kills 3 daughters

UNB, Natore

A father killed his three daughters and attempted to commit suicide by taking pesticide at Kholabaria village on Monday night.

Neighbours and police said van driver Abdus Salam, 41, was unhappy as he was not blessed with son. He tortured and sent his wife Rokeya to her father's house a week ago.

On Monday night, he strangled Selina, 13, Helena, 9, and Rahima, 3, when they were asleep. Later, Salam took pesticide.

Neighbours informed police who recovered the bodies of three girls and arrested Salam in an unconscious state. He was hospitalised.

Agriculture seeks Tk 381 cr subsidy from finance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With irrigation getting costlier due to a recent diesel price hike, the agriculture ministry has submitted a Tk 381 crore subsidy proposal for finance ministry's approval.

Talking to newsmen at a press conference at his ministry yesterday, Agriculture Minister MK Anwar said he hopes the finance ministry will approve the proposal soon as farmers need lower irrigation costs for boro crops against the backdrop of

flood-induced losses in aman output.

Irrigation accounts for 28 percent of total cultivation costs in Bangladesh, the minister said, adding that eighty to ninety percent of the land is irrigated by the diesel-run pumps.

Irrigation costs in India are much lower than in Bangladesh, and causing an imbalance in the competition of agricultural products between the two countries.

He said presently 55 percent of

land is under irrigation while 10 percent increased production is possible if 35 percent more land can be brought under irrigation.

The government is restructuring the irrigation wing of Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADCO) to give priority to irrigation using surface water, he noted.

The government is trying to find out ways to reduce irrigation costs, using the experience of the irrigation

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PHOTO: PID

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia distributes land deeds among the landless at Harirampur in Manikganj yesterday.

Free edn for girls up to degree level if reelected

Announces PM at Manikganj rally

UNB, Manikganj

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday said Bangladesh will someday stand out as a role model in the world for its efforts to remove illiteracy the way it is appreciated for the innovative microcredit programme.

"Bangladesh is acclaimed abroad for its efforts to alleviate poverty and it will earn more appreciation for its

multifarious education programmes," she told a public rally at Sultanpur in Harirampur.

She announced that girls' education will be free up to graduate level if the BNP-led alliance returns to power in the next general elections.

She listed her government's pragmatic policies and programmes for the spread of education, like free schooling and cash incentives for

primary education, free education for girls up to higher secondary level and a Tk 400-crore programme for reaching out-of-school children.

Referring to the government's other development projects and activities, the prime minister urged the people to vote for the BNP-led alliance in the next general elections to continue the development

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KHILGAON FLYOVER

Saber sues Abbas for defamation

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) leader Saber Hossain Chowdhury yesterday sued Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas for defamation.

The case was filed with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka allegedly for giving false and defamatory statements in an interview to undermine the reputation of Saber, the political secretary to AL President Sheikh Hasina.

After hearing, Metropolitan Magistrate Emdadul Haq recorded statement of the complainant under section 200 of the Criminal Procedure Code and did not pass any order on the issue.

Saber told the court that on September 6 last year Mirza Abbas in an interview with the private television Channel i claimed this government alone has raised all the fund for construction of the 'Khilgaon Flyover'.

In fact, former prime minister Sheikh Hasina issued work-order for the construction of the overpass on May 29, 2001 and laid a foundation stone on June 2 the same year when

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Prayer Timing

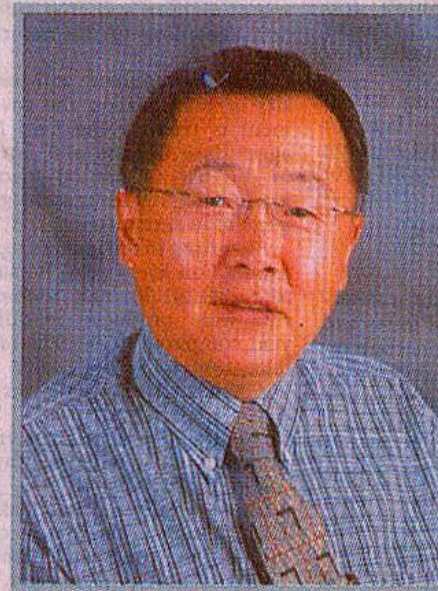
January 19

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-40	5-44
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

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President & Managing Director
South West Asian Headquarters
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