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## Govt ready to give FBI full-access to evidence

Waits for US response

REZAUL KARIM and ASHFAQ WARES KHAN

The government is ready to provide full access to evidence to the FBI to investigate the January 27 grenade attack in Habiganj that killed former finance minister SAMS Kibria and four others.

A highly placed home ministry source said the government is now awaiting response from Washington

regarding its request to send detectives to investigate the attack.

"We have not yet received any official response from the US government. We are in touch with the US embassy in Dhaka and they assured us that they will communicate Washington's response as soon as it is available," the source added.

A source in the US embassy confirmed that the decision to send the FBI now rests with the US government.

Close communication between Dhaka and Washington at different levels is going on regarding the terms of investigation, according to the US embassy source.

Meanwhile, Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Christina Rocca called Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan on January 30. Rocca informed Morshed that she would convey Bangladesh's request to

Washington, the source said.

A US embassy press release said Rocca categorically said for FBI assistance to be useful, the US believes it would be important for the government to establish clear terms of reference and to make other provisions to ensure that the FBI consultants are given full access to all relevant evidence and witnesses.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6



Awami League lawmaker Mirza Azam wrestles with a policeman at Dainik Bangla intersection in the city during yesterday's hartal trying to prevent police from arresting his party workers.

## Wounded Khulna reporter flown in to CMH

OC closed; human-chain today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Daily Sangram Khulna Bureau Chief Sheikh Belaluddin Ahmed, the most severely injured in Saturday night's bomb blast at the Khulna Press Club, was flown yesterday to the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in the capital.

Meanwhile, officer-in-charge (OC) of Sadar Police Station was closed to the police lines last night for negligence of duty during the bomb attack. Iqbal Hossain, OC of Khan Jahan Ali Police Station replaced him.

Belaluddin, also the president of Metropolitan Union of Journalists (MUJ) of Khulna, was rushed to the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

## Cop killed, 80 hurt in hartal clashes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A policeman was killed and at least 80 people were injured yesterday as the country passed off the last of six hartal days in two weeks called by the main opposition Awami League (AL).

Police constable Ashraf Siddiqui, 45, succumbed to his injuries at the Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) after being hit on the head by an object while chasing away hundreds of agitated opposition activists at Jogali of Nalitabari upazila in Sherpur at around 11:00am.

"One officer was killed and five

others were wounded, one of them critically," said Sherpur Superintendent of Police Nibas Chandra Majhi, adding that Ashraf died on the way to the hospital.

Among the four other policemen injured, assistant sub-inspector (ASI) Nurul Islam Mollah was admitted to MMCH where doctors stated his condition to be critical. ASI Mizanur Rahman, Constable Mizanur Rahman and Sulaiman were admitted to the health complex at Nalitabari upazila.

The Nalitabari police arrested Wahidur Rahman but no case was filed till filing of this report at 6:00pm. Ashraf's death was the first

casualty since the AL and its left allies enforced series of countrywide shutdown following the Habiganj grenade attack on January 27 that killed former finance minister SAMS Kibria and four others.

The 14-opposition parties, led by AL, also called another three-day general strike in Chittagong from Monday, but changed their heart at the request of business leaders in the port city. They will now enforce an eight-hour hartal today.

Apart from the death at Nalitabari, Sunday's hartal marked clashes here and there as the government beefed up security after

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

## Hartal at Ctg reduced to 8hr for today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Awami League and other opposition parties yesterday curtailed their 3-day hartal to eight-hour in Chittagong for today at the request of business community in the port city.

Emerging from a meeting with the business leaders, Chittagong Mayor and city Awami League (AL) general secretary ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury told the press that the opposition parties would enforce a strike, from 6:00am to 2:00pm, considering the appeal from business sector.

"We will go ahead with an eight-hour hartal tomorrow (Monday) as a token protest against the police

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

## Security upped as opposition, alliance meet on street today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The spectre of violence looms as the ruling alliance led by Bangladesh Nationalist Party and mainstream opposition parties by Awami League take up streets today with programmes to counter each other.

The ruling alliance will hold rallies in the capital and districts this afternoon apparently in a bid to take control over the street while the opposition parties have already taken the streets in full force after the killing of former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria.

Against this backdrop, the home ministry yesterday instructed law enforcers in different districts to be

on alert for clashes between the rival party workers. Additional policemen will be deployed at different strategic points in the capital.

The ruling alliance's country-wide rally programmes today coincide with the opposition's demonstrations in districts and upazilas raising the fear of street violence.

After Thursday's top-level meeting of the ruling alliance that decided to face the opposition on streets, anti-hartal elements allegedly backed by the government clashed with the hartal supporters at different places across the country including Dhaka in last two days of general strikes.

AL policymakers are considering

intensifying the anti-government movement with tough programmes that may include fresh hartals in the next week, different types of demonstrations and a grand rally in Dhaka to counter BNP's showdown. Senior leaders of the AL, meanwhile, are trying to have the Left 11-Party Alliance on board in the demonstration programmes, said party sources.

AL Central Working Committee (ALCWC) with Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina in the chair will sit tomorrow to set the party's strategy in the anti-government movement and to fix the next programmes.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



PHOTO: STAR

The shrinking Buriganga...the river was once wide here at Kamrangirchar. Today it is only a thin strip as grabbers have filled up the shores. The filthy water only confirms what fate awaits this river.

## Two more JMJB men held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police yesterday morning arrested two more operatives of Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) in Bagmara upazila.

Acting on information coughed up by a group of JMJB men arrested earlier, police nabbed Abu Zafar Sardar, 28, and Masud Hasan, 28, at their homes in Ramraja village. They were shown arrested in a case for an assault on police on January 24.

Police said they have squeezed out many important information from the JMJB Bagmara chief Abdus Sattar Master and 24 other JMJB men while they were on a nine-day remand and are now scrutinising and verifying those.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

## HABIGANJ GRENADE ATTACK BNP closely observes arrests of party men

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

The ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party high-command is closely observing arrests and detention of a section of local BNP leaders and activists for suspected links with the January 27 grenade attack.

Besides, the party is currently assessing whether the detainees are likely to have carried out the attack that left former finance minister SAMS Kibria and four others dead in Habiganj.

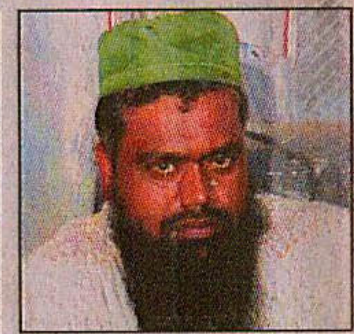
Meanwhile, 10 days into the investigation of Habiganj grenade attack, investigators' suspicion centred mainly around local BNP

leaders and activists with six BNP leaders and activists being arrested and many others picked up.

Vice-president of Habiganj BNP AKM Abdul Quaiyum, who was picked up last Saturday in connection with the attack, was officially declared arrested under section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code and taken on eight days' remand yesterday.

A BNP source told The Daily Star that the ruling party is currently gathering information about the local BNP leaders and activists who had been either picked up or arrested as suspects in the January

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7



## Bangla Bhai plans to flee in a week

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Siddiqur Rahman alias Bangla Bhai is preparing to flee the country within a week, sources in Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB)

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

## Hasina asks cops to remain alert against govt's 'evil design'

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League (AL) President and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the police to uphold the constitution and remain alert against 'evil design and conspiracy' of the alliance government.

Alleging that the ruling party cadres killed a policeman at Nalitabari in Sherpur yesterday, she said the BNP-Jamaat is now trying to shift the blame to the opposition as part of 'its design to suppress the movement.'

"Through such machination, the failed regime is trying to obstruct the spontaneous 'oust-government agitation and put the police administration as an adversary of the people," Hasina said in a post-hartal press statement.

She said "identified armed cadres of Chhatra Dal and Jubo Dal were let loose under the police protection" at the beginning of the three-day hartal in Dhaka and elsewhere of the country.

"The extreme communal forces also took to the street under the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

## 3 outlaws killed in 'crossfire'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, from Kushtia

Three outlaws were killed in two separate encounters with police at Ataikula and Faridpur in Pabna district early yesterday.

At least five police, including an officer-in-charge, were also injured in the 'shootings' between the law enforcers and the members of outlawed Sarbahara party, police said.

The dead included Abdus Samad, a regional leader of Sarbahara party, and Nasir Uddin and Nazrul Islam, top cadres of the outfit.

**ATAIKULA SHOOTING**  
Police said Samad died at about 2:45am at Kojjuri village in Ataikula upazila when he received bullets during the shooting between the law enforcers and the outlaws, who started opening fire on police to rescue their leader.

Samad, who was arrested at Laxmipur village on Saturday evening, was taken to Kojjuri to seize hidden firearms following his statement.

Police recovered one gun with four bullets and three sharp weapons from the spot.

According to police, Samad, son of Javed Ali, was an accused in six criminal cases.

**FARIDPUR ENCOUNTER**  
Nasir Uddin and Nazrul Islam died on the spot at about 4am at Kalikapur in Faridpur upazila following an encounter between a police team, led by Officer-in-charge Projit Kumar, and the Sarbahara men. The OC was also injured in the incident.

Police raided the village following an information that a group of Sarbahara men were taking preparation to attack another outlawed Purbia Banglar Communist Party (PBBCP-Janajuddho).

As police chased the Sarbahara men, the outlaws opened fire on police, triggering a two-hour shooting. At least 40 shots were exchanged during the gunfight. Police retrieved three pipe guns and seven bullets from the spot.

Police said Nasir was an accused in six cases while Nazrul in four cases.

## Another found Nipah virus positive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Another person has been found Nipah virus positive after experts carried out tests on suspected patients from the virus-infected areas in Tangail.

The experts from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Atlanta, US, have recently confirmed they found another positive case of deadly Nipah virus after examining blood samples of patients from Tangail, sources said.

The samples were sent to the CDC in the last week of January.

"We officially don't know anything about another positive case of Nipah virus," said Dr Anwar Ali, deputy director of Disease Control Department. He however said the situation in Tangail is under control.

Twelve people, all from Bashail upazila in Tangail, have died of Nipah virus since January 5.

To determine the actual nature of the disease, Bangladesh twice sent the specimens of severely sick and mildly ill patients to the CDC last month. Health Directorate officials told The Daily Star.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

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