

## Bomb-making

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The police also seized from his possession a book titled 'Shibirer Karma Paddhati' (Strategy of Shibir -- the student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami) and a hand-written note stating "You have been directed to follow honest path and kill the enemies of Allah."

Meantime, law enforcers arrested six people including an alleged regional commander of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) in Gaibandha and two imams in Barisal in the last two days suspecting their link to the banned Islamist outfit.

Besides, a lawyer of Satkhira was expelled yesterday from the district bar association for life for threatening five local lawyers with death. The accused lawyer sent letters to them on December 13 in the name of JMB and threatened to kill them.

Our correspondent in Kushtia reports: Security guards of local daily Andolaner Bazar at Madanpur in the town challenged 16-year-old Sohel Rana around 5:30pm yesterday when he was roaming around the newspaper office suspiciously.

"As I attempted to search his body, the youth asked me not to search his body and was claiming himself innocent," said security guard Shyamal Chakraborty.

Being informed, editor of the daily rushed to the scene and ordered to search Sohel. The bomb-making materials were found in a bag he was carrying and in the pocket of his panjabi. He was later handed over to police.

Son of Ameer Ali of West Abdalpur village in Sadar upazila of Kushtia, Sohel claimed himself a class-X student of Bishnudia Hafezia Madrasa in Sadar upazila. He said he was admitted in the madrasa around one and a half years ago.

"I am a worker of Islami Chhatra Shibir and my leader is Tofazza Hossain of Islamic University who has been assigned to recruit youths to Shibir in Bishnudia area," Sohel told local journalists including The Daily Star correspondent.

A police team from Kushtia Sadar Police Station was conducting a drive to arrest Tofazza who is a student of Al Quran department of Islamic University.

Our Gaibandha correspondent says: Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested Abdul Jalil, a regional commander of JMB and alleged matchmaker of JMB's operations commander Siddiqui Islam alias

Bangla Bhai, in Shaghata upazila yesterday.

A teacher of Munshirhat High School in Shaghata, Jalil was arrested earlier in connection with the August 17 serial blasts, but was released later on bail.

Our Dinajpur correspondent adds: Police arrested Moinul Islam, general secretary of regional unit of JMB, on Wednesday with some books on Islamic Jihad, leaflets and bomb-making circuits. The arrestee was placed on a five-day remand yesterday for interrogation.

Meanwhile, Thakurgaon police arrested two JMB trainers -- Ferazul Islam and Raju -- in the district on Wednesday. They were also taken on a five-day remand yesterday.

Barisal police yesterday arrested two Imams in Barisal following information extracted from Mamun, who carried out bomb attack in Jhalakathi killing two judges, reports BDNews.

The arrestees are Hafez Mohammad Sirajul Islam, imam of Rupatali Jame Mosque and Mohammad Abul Khayer, imam of Mridhabari Jame Mosque, in the city.

Injured Mamun was captured from the spot of the bomb attack in Jhalakathi and sent to Dhaka for treatment. He was brought to Barisal for interrogation on Thursday.

Our correspondent in Satkhira reports: In an emergency meeting yesterday Satkhira Bar Association expelled its member advocate BD Zaman for life for sending letters to five lawyers of Satkhira Bar in the name of JMB threatening to kill them.

Meanwhile, Khulna district commander of banned JMB Ruhul Kuddus who was arrested on December 14 gave confessional statement before a Satkhira magistrate yesterday, confessing to his involvement in the August 17 serial blasts on Khulna Court premises.

Our Netrakona correspondent says: JMB suicide squad member Alamgir Fakir alias Alam was taken on a fresh four-day remand yesterday.

Meanwhile, a court in Chittagong sent two JMB activists --Milan Islam alias Mithu and Akash-- to jail yesterday, on completion of their 10-day remand.

## Hasina hits out at PM

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Hasina blamed the BNP-Jamaat coalition for attempt on her life in the August 21 grenade attacks last year.

She alleged former president Ziaur Rahman granted indemnity to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's killers while she (PM) offered blessings and promotions to them.

"You have come to politics through murders and you have come to power over people's blood, and the trend continues. You can kill me any moment...You killed 26,000 people including Shah AMS Kibria, Prof Mohammad Yunous (of Rajshahi University) and Mamtaz Uddin (ex-PM from Bogra). You can kill anyone. People will bring you to justice."

"If I have to die like my father, mother and brothers for establishing rights of the people, I am ready to die. You (PM) cannot resist people's movement by issuing threats ... Threats will not work in case of those who are not afraid of death," the AL chief went on.

The former prime minister accused the government of harbouring Islamist militants and their godfathers in the cabinet in a bid to cling to power with the help of anti-liberation forces.

Describing the militant outfit JMB as Jamaat-er-Moodhe BNP (BNP inside Jamaat), Hasina said that the ruling alliance is now killing people by using militant suicide squads after the murder of people in the name of Operation Clean Heart and with the help of party cadres and Rab members.

Turning to other issues, Hasina said this government does not want reforms in the caretaker system as it fears people's verdict following spiralling terrorism and corruption, prices of essentials and politicisation.

But the people will compel the government to quit through movement, she added. There is no other alternative but to force the government of the four-party alliance to step down, and save the country from being an abode of Islamist extremists, Hasina stressed.

She called upon the people and 14-party leaders and workers to visit villages and form committees to track down militants and make public corruption and irregularities of the BNP-Jamaat government.

If voted to power, AL will root out militancy, bring down prices of essentials within the reach of general people, establish food security, open all closed industries and supply natural gas to Rajshahi, she promised.

### HUMAN SEA

It was a human sea at the Madrasa Maidan, the rally venue, while the city wore a different look with streams of people walking along all the streets, braving day-long winter drizzles.

Thousands of people started to enter the city on buses also from Sirajganj, Pabna, Natore, Chapainawabganj, Naogaon, Bogra and Joypurhat districts from 10:00am.

By 2:00pm, there was no space at the Maidan that can accommodate around one lakh people, and on the

roads leading to it. Several hundred megaphones were installed to enable people to hear speeches of the 14-party leaders.

Unprecedented security arrangements were made around the rally venue while five hundred AL volunteers were specially assigned to assist police in maintaining law and order.

Intelligence officials of Rab and the police swept the entire venue repeatedly with metal detectors and bomb disposal units.

The rally was also addressed by, among others, Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain, AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil, party leaders Abdur Razzak, Suranjit Sengupta, Motia Chowdhury, Tofail Ahmed, Obaidul Kader and Mohammad Nasim, Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon, General Secretary Bimol Biswas, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (Nu) chief Hasanul Huq Inu, General Secretary of Shamyabadi Dal Dilip Barua and Gano Azadi League leader Nurul Islam.

Dr Kamal Hossain, meanwhile, asked the government to find out who were prompting the prime minister to make 'reckless remarks'.

"Responsibility of this government has climaxed, and that is why they are calling patriots as traitors. Those inside the government, who harbour militants for going to power, are behind making reckless comments", the eminent jurist said.

He also said it is not fair that the ruling BNP resorted to criticism of the opposition without resolving vital issues including the August 21 grenade attacks and militancy.

## Sramik League

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## Microsoft faces

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The EU said it was "left with no alternative" after giving Microsoft every chance to comply with its ruling.

In a landmark ruling in March 2004, the world's biggest software firm was found guilty of abusing its position, hit with a record fine and told to open up its systems.

Microsoft was also ordered "to disclose complete and accurate interface documentation which would allow non-Microsoft work group servers to achieve full interoperability with Windows PCs and servers".

## Govt to import

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decided to import sugar to control the local market as its price has recently increased.

But the ministry has not yet taken the decision about how the imported sugar will be distributed in the local market, he added.

The adviser also said the government will take stern action against the unscrupulous traders who have stockpiled sugar to create an artificial crisis.

Sugar is now selling at Tk 50 to Tk 54 a kg in the local market.

## Ahmadiyyas

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north gate to drum up support for today's siege aimed at pressuring the government to declare the Ahmadiyyas non-Muslims.

Simultaneously, another faction of the anti-Ahmadiyya fanatics under the banner of International Khatme Nabuwat Movement, Bangladesh (IKNMB) will hold a morning-to-Asr rally in the city's Mukhtangon today demanding enactment of a law declaring the Ahmadiyyas non-Muslims. After the Asr prayers, the religious zealots will march towards Dhaka Central Jail for 'voluntary imprisonment'.

The IKNMB last year announced a one-year programme to force the government to declare Ahmadiyyas non-Muslims.

The panicky Ahmadiyyas, who have been suffering a hate campaign for about two and a half years, said at a press conference on Monday such 'gherao' programmes are nothing but pretexts for attacking them, their mosques and homes. They sought protection from the government.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner SM Mizanur Rahman said they have already deployed forces at the Ahmadiyya base and will take adequate security measures to check any violence today.

A number of rights watchdogs and civil society organisations also have vowed to stop any fanatic attack on the minority Muslim sect.

The activists of Manobadhikar Bastobayan Parishad, Naripakkha and Ain-O-Salish Kendra will take position at the Ahmadiyya headquarters in the morning to stop any attack. The South Asian Peoples' Union against Fundamentalism and Communism, and the Ektattur Ghatok Dalal Nirmla Committee have declared solidarity with them. The activists of the organisations will gather at the Central Shaheed Minar at 10:30am and then will march to Bakshibazar.

The IKNMB expelled Noor Hossain Nurani, who was then the Nayebe Amir, on September 9 last, after he had suspended the anti-Ahmadiyya programme due to the prevailing situation in the country. IKNMB President Mahmudul Hasan Mamtazi and Secretary General Nazmul Haq alleged Noor took bribe from the Ahmadiyyas for suspending the action programme against them.

Noor formed the KNMB in the third week of November.

## 9 journalists

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Journalists got a hand-written letter posted to the Jhenidah Press Club that was sent by "Three-party Communist-Leftists", an alleged ally of the opposition.

"You the nine still play the role of police's dalal [informers] and when the police kill innocent people, you describe them as crossfire," the letter reads.

"We have already received instructions from the party high command to kill you immediately", says the letter.

The letter also termed the OC of Sadar Police Station and six ruling BNP leaders (names not mentioned) as "class enemies" and vowed to kill them immediately to avenge the killings in "crossfire".

The journalists mentioned in the letter are: Mizanur Rahman of the Jangtara, M Raihan of the Sangbad, Abdul Hai of the Bhorer Dak, Asif Iqbal Kajal of the Dinkal, Saiful Mabud of the Janakantha, Azad Rahman of the Prothom Alo, Mithu Sikder of the Gramer Kagoj, Azizur Rahman Salam of the Janata, Alauddin-al-Azad of the Naya Diganta.

Jhenidah Sadar OC Md Azizul Huq said over cell phone that necessary security measures would be taken for the journalists' safety.

## Doctor's negligence

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Gulshan-2 where they consulted Dr M A Mobin Talukder, who is a medicine consultant and diabetologist, and also trained in cardiology. Immediately an ECG was performed under his supervision. As the chest pain was severe, he administered nitroglycerine spray and the patient felt a little better.

The family alleged that they did not get a proper and detailed reply when the anxious old parents asked the doctor about their son's condition. The doctor just said that there was some problem in the patient's heart and he advised to perform an exercise tolerance test (ETT) later to get a better idea of the condition of the patient's heart. Family sources said the doctor insisted that they deposit money for ETT though the centre did not have facility for such a test. The center authorities said they would get it done at their Kalabagan branch.

Meanwhile, the patient again developed chest pain following the ECG. As Mrs Mahbuba asked the doctor how an ETT could be performed on his son in such a critical condition, the doctor still demanded depositing the money, saying that it would be done the following day.

Meantime, blood was drawn for a test following which the patient's condition worsened. Then the doctor asked Abi's parents to shift him to any specialised cardiac centre as the centre did not have facilities to manage such a critical patient. He also suggested buying a nitroglycerine spray from a dispensary on the way to hospital. Abi's parents took him to National Heart Foundation and Research Institute at Mirpur where he was declared as "brought dead".

The patient had to climb down the stairs from the first floor, unaided by the attending doctor and his staff at Saleh Memorial, the parents alleged.

The doctor even did not explain fully the real situation of Abi, they added.

Asked about the incident, Dr MA Mobin said the condition of the patient was all right following the ECG when

he was administered nitroglycerine. When the patient subsequently developed chest pain he advised immediate transfer to a specialised cardiac centre. He claimed that he took all necessary steps to relieve the patient at his centre. When the patient's condition deteriorated, he referred the patient accordingly. In answer to the question why he allowed the patient to walk down the stairs in such a critical condition, Dr Mobin pointed to the limitations of the centre.

In case of inadequate support to attend to a critical cardiac patient, doctors should refer serious cases to a specialised cardiac centre immediately after the initial treatment, an eminent cardiologist of National Institute of Cardiovascular Institute (NICVD) said.

Chances of survival in a cardiac arrest are reduced by 7 to 10 percent with every minute passing without defibrillation (correcting an irregular heartbeat by using an electric impulse) and any stressful condition in such a critical cardiac condition can be life threatening, he added.

A doctor's responsibility, sincerity, humanity, and above all proper knowledge and skill are vital to save a patient's life, said the lamenting parents who would never get back their son.

They said they want that people should be aware about the general condition of clinics so that no patient dies in the future like their son.

Valuable time was lost when the doctor was insisting on the ETT test, which was to be done at another location, the parents said, adding that in case of serious conditions of patients, doctors should also assist in finding alternative treatment facilities and not just say, "Take the patient away to another clinic."

## Wonder onion

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northwestern region. "I spent Tk 2,000 for cultivating the new variety of onion on a small piece of land and sold the output at Tk 8,000," said Abdul Hamid of Baraishpur village in Natore district.

He however said seeds of the new variety are not available in the market. Mayezuddin of Istwardi said he cultivated this onion on 5.6 hectares of land, spending around Tk 90,000 and earned Tk 1.5 lakh from the output per hectare.

To popularise cultivation of the new type of onion, the NCDP project organised 333 field demonstrations in 16 districts of the region and distributed 300kg seeds last year.

As the farmers have started growing the crop, they would develop its seeds at their own initiative, and those would be distributed among other farmers gradually, said Arun Kumar Saha, agriculture project implementation officer of the ADB.

"It is an important breakthrough in the agriculture sector of Bangladesh and I think import of onion would stop within three to four years," said Dr Shaharuk Ahmed, an expert in the government's Department of Agriculture Extension.

This variety could be produced on about four lakh hectares of high land, which normally remain out of production after the harvesting of Amon paddy.

Meanwhile, 'apple kul' is another

variety popularised among the farmers by the NCDP project. The variety is bigger in size and more tasteful than the other varieties of kul.

"The land in northwest Bangladesh is high and free from seasonal flood. This land is very fertile and suitable for producing high value crops and fruits round the year," said Hua Du, ADB country director.

She visited different areas and was impressed to see the enthusiasm among the farmers about cultivating new high yielding varieties.

The NCDP covers 61 upazilas of 16 districts in the region.

Under the project, farmers are cultivating high yielding vegetables and spices, including cabbage, garlic, ginger, tomato, potato, bean, papaya and cauliflower.

Many women are also engaged in production of high value crop. "I cultivated cauliflower on one bigha, spending about Tk 5,000 and already earned Tk 8,000," said Sandhya Rani in a Bogra village. The crop would bring her at least another Tk 5,000, she hoped.

Launched in 2001, the NCDP will be completed in 2008 at a cost of Tk 341 crore. Of this, the ADB provided Tk 236 crore and the rest came from the government fund.

## Polls on time

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to make Bangladesh a failed state.

Pointing finger at the 14-party opposition combine, she said: "They have joined hands to turn Bangladesh into a vassal state and put the country into the hands of terrorists and bombers."

She said the four-party coalition wants to make Bangladesh a self-sufficient country and steer ahead the development programmes for the welfare of the countrymen.

Referring to the opposition's demand for ousting Jamaat-e-Islami from the coalition, Khaleda said: "You cannot split the four-party. The coalition is there and it will be there."

BNP leaders, activists and supporters from Jessore and its neighbouring districts Narail, Satkhira, Jhenidah and Magura attended the meeting. They were carrying portraits of late president Ziaur Rahman, Khaleda Zia and Tarique Rahman.

The BNP activists chanted slogans against the opposition and the militants.

The prime minister announced that work would start very soon to establish a science and technology university in Jessore. She also promised to solve the waterlogging problem in Bhabadaha area of the south-western district town.

Khaleda also urged the people to help the BNP-led coalition government to nab the bombers and directed the police to arrest the absconding terrorists.

Tariqul Islam said Awami League did not bring the culprits to book who were behind the bomb blasts including that at Ramna in Dhaka and Udicchi gathering in Jessore, rather falsely implicated many BNP leaders and activists in the cases.

"But the present BNP government has not compromised with any one concerning the bomb attacks," the environment minister said.

Social Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Muhammad Mujahid, BNP Vice President Sarwari Rahman, lawmakers Kazi Alauddin, MAM Aminuddin and Muhaddis Abu Sayeed, Political Secretary to the PM Harris Chowdhury, party central leader Mafiqul Hasan Tripti and local leaders TS Aiyub, Kazi Manirul Huda, Syed Saberul Haq Sabu spoke, among

## Rivals kill 3

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killed in Meherpur are Swapan Sheikh, 30, and Momin Uddin, 39, while the other Janajuddha cadre, Tomcher Ali, 50, was killed in Chuadanga.

Meherpur police said PBCP-Communist War members around 11:00pm on Wednesday picked up Swapan and Momin from their homes at Chadpur in Gangni upazila. They took them to a nearby field and slaughtered them around 2:00am yesterday.

The police recovered the bodies and sent them to Meherpur Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

In Chuadanga, PBCP-Communist War at 11:00pm on Wednesday called Tomcher Ali, 50, to the crossroads of Soagh over the cellphone and ambushed him. They killed Ali there around 3:30am yesterday.

Ali of village Bhogaibogali in Alamdanga upazila was a convict for six years.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Rony Biswas, introducing himself as a regional leader of PBCP-Communist War, called Gangni police, Alamdanga police and local journalists over the phone and claimed responsibility for the three killings.

Two cases were filed with Alamdanga Police Station and Gangni Police Station against Rony and his accomplices for the murders. Police officials said special drives have started to capture the outlaws.

## Warid Telecom

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licence, the secretary of the country's telecom watchdog, Abdul Hakim, said.

"We formally handed over the licence after they deposited the licence fee of 50 million dollars and taka 200 million (three million dollars) as bank guarantee fees," he said.

In September, the group signed a one-billion-dollar deal with the Bangladesh government. It singled out the country's fast-growing mobile phones as the main sector into which it would put funds.

More than half of the amount will be invested in GSM or Global System for Mobile Communication technology, the group's chief executive Bashir Ahmad Tahir said, adding they want to make the investment "as soon as possible".

## Saifur sees

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plastic fair as chief guest at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre.

"These birds grow up in the country by eating our crops and then leave," he told the audience from the plastic industry that is facing criticisms from the environmentalists, as plastic products of certain grades are not biodegradable.

In defence of his remark the minister said that indigenous birds at different wetlands in the country, including the Hakaluki and the Chalan Bil, could not be found in winter due to the disturbance caused by the foreign birds.

He said these migratory birds come from Siberia to Bangladesh in search of food and they gobble up frogs, paddy, and different types of insects and crops. They are also potential carriers of bird flu, he added.

Criticising the Dhaka-based environmentalists, Saifur said they (environmentalists) always carried away by their sentiment and suggest people not to hunt or eat the birds.

"But it is not a matter of sentiment; we have to be more realistic in this regard," he opined.

## Finance, agri

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Ruling BNP legislator Shafi Ahmed Chowdhury, a member of the standing committee on agriculture ministry and also vice chairman of the BFA, submitted a paper to committee chairman Abdul Mannan, alleging that some dishonest fertiliser traders overinvoiced their imports and imported the entire requirement of the year at one go, thereby putting pressures on the dollar reserve.

Another BNP lawmaker, Motaah Hossain, told The Daily Star last night that he and Jatiya Party lawmaker GM Kader also co-signed the paper prepared by Shafi, and asked the agriculture ministry to present a detailed picture of fertiliser subsidy at the next meeting of the committee, billed for January 22.

Kader however denied having signed the paper. He said there were discussions at the committee meeting that the finance and agriculture ministers should meet soon and resolve the crisis arising out of non-release of fertiliser subsidy.

Due to illness, committee chairman Abdul Mannan did not respond to any query, and no one picked up telephone at his residence yesterday. Committee members -- Agriculture Minister MK Anwar and former state minister for agriculture and now State Minister for Civil Aviation Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir declined to say anything on the meeting's outcome.

In his paper, Shafi said it would be better if the government provides cash incentives directly to the farmers, instead of providing 25 percent subsidy to fertiliser importers.

BFA Chairman Kofluddin Ahmed told this correspondent yesterday that unless their dues were paid by this month, the importers would have to pay high bank interests against their loans.

"We don't mind if the government chooses to do for direct cash incentives to farmers. Then we'll go back to our previous open market policy where selling prices of imported fertilisers will be determined by market forces," he said.

## United move

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secure the highest possible advantages from the trade packages like Aid for Trade, Non-Agriculture Market Access (Nama) and Trade-Related Investment Measures (Trims).

Business leaders, government officials, economists and trade experts participated in the meeting chaired by ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman at the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) auditorium in the city.

In his opening remarks, Mahbubur Rahman said the developed countries have sacrificed but a little in the December 12-18 Hong Kong talks, as they agreed to shed only 3.5 percent of their export subsidy by 2013 and remained rigid on continuing with the \$300 billion domestic subsidy.

He emphasised a comprehensive, all-out, preparation for negotiation in the upcoming meetings to ensure gains in the areas like agriculture and non-agriculture market access, service sector and free movement of natural persons.

Commerce Secretary Faruk Ahmed Siddique said, "Our major worry is that the developed nations, especially the USA, may keep all Bangladesh apparel products out of the duty-free