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## Outlaws kill 3 ansars at outpost, loot arms

### One outlaw killed during shootout with Natore lawmen

STAR REPORT

Outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) activists shot dead three ansar members, injured several others and looted at least 10 firearms and huge ammunition attacking a police outpost in Singra upazila in Natore yesterday evening.

One of the outlaws was also killed when the ansar members retaliated against the attack. In a separate incident, a gang of criminals attacked a police team and snatched away an arrestee from custody leaving five cops injured at Jamtali Railway Station

in Kamarkhanda upazila of Sirajganj district on Tuesday night. In Natore, the attack on Bamihah police outpost took place when the district police administration was busy ensuring the security of the prime minister who addressed a public meeting in Naldanga, our

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### Free degree edn for women if reelected

#### Pledges PM at Natore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday at a meeting in Natore pledged free education for female students up to the degree level if the alliance government is reelected.

The BNP chairperson also unofficially introduced the four current MPs from Natore—State Minister for Sports and Youth Fazlur Rahman, Deputy Minister for Land Ruhul Quddus Talukder, Mozammel Haq and Kazi Golam Morshed—as also the candidates

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### AL out to split ruling alliance thru' blasts

#### Claims Jamaat, denies militant links at Paltan rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday staged a huge rally in the capital to rebut the opposition claim of its Islamist militant links.

The major Islamic partner of the coalition government blasted the main opposition Awami League (AL) for what it said hatching conspiracy to split the ruling alliance through bomb blasts and other

terror acts across the country.

The Jamaat leaders vowed to keep the four-party coalition intact and go for the next general election unitedly.

Addressing the Paltan Maidan rally, a major show of strength in Jamaat politics, they called upon the people in general and members of the civil society in particular to remain alert against any 'external

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### Finance agrees to release fertiliser subsidy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The finance ministry will release the subsidy to the importers of non-urea fertilisers after it receives the bills from an inter-ministerial committee responsible for fixing import price. The ministry will also release the last year's arrears of Tk 66 crore.

A high level meeting chaired by Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman

yesterday decided that the subsidy will be disbursed according to the existing regulations of the current fiscal year.

Meantime, Bangladesh Fertiliser Association (BFA) yesterday decided importers will supply their subsidised stock to the dealers, ending the strike in force since December 19.

However, BFA Chairman

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### Pry teachers continue to fast for their demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Non-government primary school teachers yesterday continued their fast unto death at the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital to press their one-point demand for nationalisation of their jobs.

The teachers again postponed their earlier scheduled programme to lay siege to the prime minister's office (PMO) yesterday in response to a call from the PMO to have a meeting with the PM today, organisers of the programme said.

"If the government does not sit with us by 1:00pm today, we will lay siege to the PMO afterwards," said Akkas Ali, general secretary of

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### BULLET-HIT BUSINESSMAN DIES

## Angry shop-owners call non-stop strike in Mirpur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Wounded business leader Aftab Uddin, shot by extortionists on Sunday, succumbed to his injuries yesterday afternoon, sparking violent protest by thousands of businessmen in Mirpur area.

Around 5,000 traders of different markets in the area shut down their shops and brought out a procession with batons in their hands after Maghrib prayers as the news of Aftab's death spread.

The angry protestors damaged at least a dozen vehicles as they paraded from Mirpur-1 to Mirpur-10 several times, prompting law enforcers to put roadblocks at the

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PHOTO: STAR

Shopkeepers in Mirpur in the city keep their shutters down last night, hearing the news of local businessman Aftab's death.

### 31ST NIGHT Revellers to face cops, Rab, doctors on streets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A huge contingent of law enforcement members will rule the Dhaka streets on the 31st night to tackle unruly New Year revellers and ward off any subversive act.

The home ministry at a meeting yesterday decided not to allow any unrestrained celebration and that if anyone found drunk on the street will be arrested.

The meeting, chaired by Minister for Home Luthfozzaman Babar, directed the police and crime-busting Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) to conduct special

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### Hefty borrowing from banks as aid dips

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON

A decline in foreign aid and net sale of savings instruments have forced the government to borrow Tk 4,368 crore from the banking system in the first five and a half months of the current fiscal year.

Sources apprehend the government borrowing that includes Tk 3,500 crore from the Bangladesh Bank (BB) may fuel inflationary trend.

The government had borrowed only Tk 60 crore from banks during the corresponding period of last fiscal year.

A BB official said the government borrowing has increased due to a decline in foreign aid, especially as the development support credit (DSC) of the World Bank was

not released during the period.

During July-September of this year Bangladesh received foreign aid to the tune of \$209 million, that shows a 76 percent decline from \$864 million received during the corresponding period of last year.

The net sale of savings instruments in July-September this year fetched Tk 442 crore, which is 45 percent of last year's Tk 803 crore.

A finance ministry source said the World Bank has recently approved a DSC worth \$200 million for Bangladesh. The government expects to get the money by this month, which will help reduce the borrowing to some extent.

Besides, the government has recently raised the interest rate of all types of savings instruments in a

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### AL demands resignation of CEC

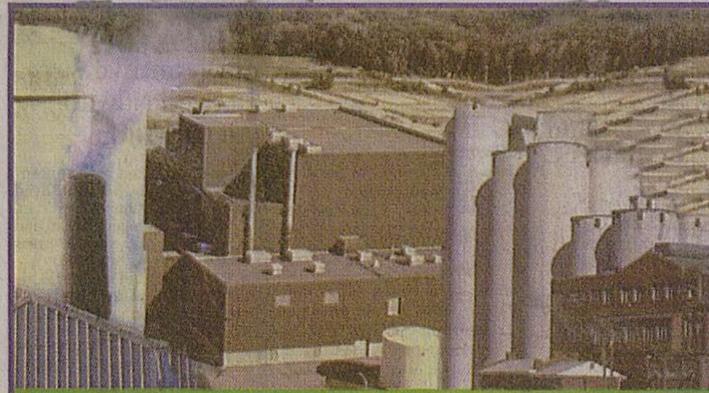
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Main opposition Awami League yesterday demanded immediate resignation of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Aziz.

An AL Central Working Committee (ALCWC) meeting at the party's Dhanmondi office yesterday also demanded halt to the CEC's unilateral voter list preparation and decided to stage demonstrations across the country on January 1 to press home their demands.

The move for preparing new voter lists by the CEC ignoring two election commissioners' opinion proves that there are conspiracies to keep the supporters of the AL and its ally out of the voter lists, the ALCWC meeting said.

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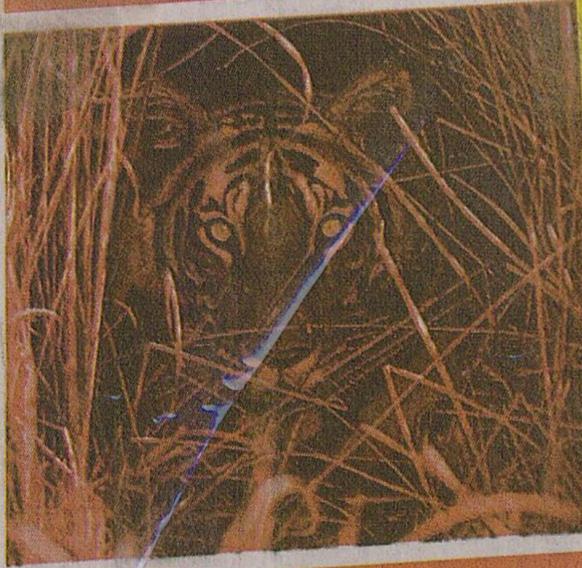
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