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## Four bombs recovered in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police recovered four bombs from Kashipur area under Khalishpur Police Station of Khulna city yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, the law enforcers went to the spot at around 1:00pm and recovered the bombs from behind a tea stall.

The officer-in-charge (OC) of Khalishpur Police Station said the bombs were found in a polythene bag. The miscreants kept the bombs there for carrying out subversive activities, he added.

Police picked up a man named Sohrab Hossain, 27, from Kashipur area for questioning in this connection.

Meanwhile, KMP commissioner has put all the five police stations of the city on high alert asking all OCs to launch combing operations in their respective areas to arrest the listed and wanted criminals.

## AL prepares for 'manifold problems' next year

HASAN JAHI TUSHER

Awami League (AL) will take its future steps cautiously as the top party leaders fear that the party will have to deal with manifold problems next year.

Although the party has plans to speed up its activities for taking part in the next parliamentary election, it is yet to make it clear whether it will take part in the polls or not.

Besides, the party leaders are now in a dilemma about participating in the local government election scheduled for next year as the party chief did not show any interest in this regard.

Sources said most of the senior AL leaders are in favour of participating in the parliamentary election. But some pro-Hasina leaders might oppose it if Hasina is barred

from participating in the polls after being convicted.

There are also apprehensions that senior Presidium member Amir Hossain Amu leading the pro-reform leaders might take over the party leadership.

"We shall make plans very cautiously. The Awami League Central Working Committee will take all the strategic decisions," AL Presidium member Tofail Ahmed told The Daily Star yesterday.

"The new year will be the year of holding a free and fair election. We sincerely hope that the electoral roadmap announced by the Election Commission (EC) will be successful," he said.

Sources in the party said the detained party chief did not show her interest in taking part in the local government election. But she said the party leaders would not be

prevented from taking part in the election.

The AL Central Working Committee (ALCWC) will sit in the first week of January to discuss the matter along with other issues including observance of the homecoming day of Sheikh Hasina, trial of war criminals and taking part in the local government election.

Tofail said they would assist the EC in implementing the electoral roadmap. He also urged the caretaker government and the EC not to do anything which would hamper the implementation of the roadmap.

Sources said if Hasina is barred from contesting the polls after being convicted and the pro-reform faction take over the party leadership, the party might go for a movement either alone or with the help of its archrival BNP and other

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## US urges Pakistan to press on with polls

AFP, Washington/ Islamabad

The United States has appealed for calm and urged Pakistan, a staunch ally in the war on terror, to press on with its elections after the assassination of opposition leader Benazir Bhutto.

Condemning the "cowardly" suicide attack that killed her, US President George W. Bush urged Pakistanis Thursday to honor Benazir Bhutto's memory by continuing with the democratic process for which she so bravely gave her life.

The attack at an election rally in the Pakistani city Rawalpindi sparked deadly riots and fears for stability in the nuclear-armed country, as well as overshadowing next month's planned elections.

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FROM LEFT... British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury, Michigan State Senator Hansen Clarke, US Air Force Academy Professor Halimur Khan and Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday at the three-day conference of non-resident Bangladeshis being held at a Dhaka hotel.



Remains of a structure from the 1,800-year-old Jain dynasty discovered at Dandampir of Manirampur upazila in Jessore. A terracotta plaque, right, found at the site bears the image of the only female Jain Tirthankar, Mallinath.



## 1,800-year-old terracotta discovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna office of the Archaeology Department has discovered an 1,800-year-old terracotta plaque bearing the image of the only female Jain Tirthankar, Mallinath.

The rare terracotta piece was discovered after digging a large mound of earth at Dandampir of Manirampur upazila in Jessore on December 18 but the discovery was kept secret for security reasons.

"We did not immediately disclose the facts about this particular discovery for security reasons," said Shihabuddin Mohammad Akbar, director of the Khulna regional office of Archaeology Department.

He said the digging began in 2004-05 financial year under the

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## NEWS ANALYSIS

## Who will lead PPP after Benazir Bhutto?

HAMID MIR, from Islamabad

Just a few hours before her assassination on Thursday, Benazir Bhutto informed Afghan President Hamid Karzai about threats to her life. Benazir Bhutto was also warned that her meeting with Hamid Karzai just few days before the elections could create more troubles for her. She was advised to avoid meeting Karzai because some extremists would have another opportunity to declare that a Pakistani American agent met an Afghan American agent, but she ignored all the concerns raised by her close associates. Sources present in the last Karzai-Benazir meeting revealed that the Afghan president prayed for the safety of former prime minister of Pakistan and in return she responded, "Life and death is in the hands of Allah and that is why I have the courage to stare at the eyes of death without any fear."

During her last working lunch at her Islamabad residence on Thursday, her Security Adviser Rehman Malik expressed some concerns about her security in Rawalpindi. He was worried why his leader was not provided with jammers by the police on that day. He



Hamid Mir

wrote a letter to the interior ministry on Wednesday and requested more security. He was trying to contact the inspector general of police in Punjab province on Thursday, but he was not able to establish any contact with the IGP. On the other side, the organisers of the public meeting in Liaquat Bagh Rawalpindi informed Zardari House in Islamabad that they were ready to receive Benazir Bhutto with thousands of supporters. Despite all the security concerns, Benazir Bhutto once again decided to take risk and proceeded to Liaquat Bagh. When she reached the public meeting, many people noticed the

absence of police contingent outside Liaquat Bagh. Asif Ali Zardari was immediately informed in Dubai by a close friend that his wife was without proper security, but he was unable to do anything from Dubai. After delivering her last speech in front of a big crowd in Rawalpindi she was very happy and that was why she ignored the threat again. She started waving at her followers, popping out through the roof of the vehicle, on her way back to Islamabad. That was the best moment for the assassin to gun her down. She was

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## Aricha-Nagarbari ferry service on after 5 months

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Ferry service between Aricha and Nagarbari resumed yesterday after five months.

But the navigability problem in the Jamuna river might hamper the ferry service.

The service was suspended on July 30 as the Nagarbari ferry pontoon was badly damaged by floods. Although the pontoon was repaired after floodwater receded, the service could not be restored due to shortage of operational ferries.

Ferry 'Birshrestha Jahangir' was brought to the newly constructed Kazirhat ferry terminal to resume the service yesterday.

Earlier, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) took initiatives to build a permanent ferry terminal at Kazirhat. The construction works of the ferry terminal were completed on December 2.

"The ferry terminal was officially opened on Friday. Ferry 'Birshrestha Jahangir' which was brought from Aricha left the ferry terminal yesterday carrying vehicles," said Md Abdur Rahman who

has been given the responsibility to oversee the pontoon at Kazirhat.

A trial run using a ferry was done on Thursday, he said adding that the service would continue.

A BIWTA official said dredging is being done to keep the waterway navigable. The water level at Nagarbari-Kazirhat point now stands at 6 to 8 feet while it needs to be 8 to 9 feet deep for the ferries to ply the waterway carrying heavy vehicles. Now most of the ferries can carry only 8 to 9 vehicles.

## 'Lift emergency for the sake of democracy'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Press Club yesterday unanimously adopted a resolution demanding immediate withdrawal of the state of emergency for restoration of democratic process in the country.

The resolution was adopted at the additional general meeting (AGM) of the Press Club with its President Shawkat Mahmud in the chair.

Addressing the AGM, a number of members described how the emergency rule stands in the way

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## Law and order excellent: IGP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad yesterday said law and order situation in the country has improved this year in comparison to those of the previous years.

After the annual general meeting of Bangladesh Police Cooperative Society Ltd, held at Rajarbagh Police Telecom Auditorium, the IGP said, "We are doing good things but the mass people have to perceive it."

He said, "An excellent situation [of law and order] has been prevailing in the country since the six top

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## Endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles rescued

SHAHNAZ PARVEEN

Two globally endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles were rescued from sellers at Taantibazar in the capital by the Department of Forest and Wildlife Trust of Bangladesh yesterday morning.

The rescued turtles were brought to the city from Patharghata, Barguna by a seller named Mamun, who had bought both of them for Tk 4,800 from local residents.

The turtles were on sale at Taantibazar for Tk 10,000 each. Two other sea turtles were sold for Tk 16,000 each recently, according to sources.

The endangered sea turtles are often sold in the city for consumption, mainly in the old town and in Farm Gate area.

The Wildlife Management

and Nature Conservation Division of Forest Department filed a case under the Wildlife Act 1974 against Mamun, who was later sent to a court by police.

The rescued turtles started their journey back to a safe habitat yesterday evening.

Ishtiaq Uddin Ahmed, conservator of forest, said last night, "The turtles are already on their way to Potenga beach in Chittagong. A team comprising officials of the Department of Forest and Department of Environment are transporting the turtles in a pick-up van."

Olive Ridley sea turtles are one of the five species of sea turtles found in the waters of Bangladesh. The other four species are Loggerhead turtles,

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The Directorate of Environment officials seized two rare turtles at Taantibazar yesterday after a trader had brought them there to sell them.

## Kiwis clinch ODI series

REUTERS, Wellington

New Zealand produced a solid all-round performance to wrap up their three-match one-day series against Bangladesh with a 102-run victory under the Duckworth-Lewis method in the second game in Napier on Friday.

New Zealand had scored 335 for five in their 50 overs, with Peter Fulton top-scoring with 83, before rain forced the players from the field after the 43rd over of Bangladesh's innings.

The visitors had reached 181-6 when umpires Peter Parker and Tony Hill called the game off. Farhad Reza was on 11 while Mushfiqur Rahim on four.

Aftab Ahmed top-scored with 54, while opener Tamim Iqbal scored 43. New Zealand's Kyle Mills had figures of 4-40 off 10 overs.

Iqbal and Junaid Siddiqui gave the visitors a flying start, but after the pair and captain Mohammad Ashraful had been dismissed to leave them 68-3 in the 15th over, they never really challenged the total.

New Zealand fast bowler Mark Gillespie, who was smashed for 16 runs in his only over, left the field immediately afterwards with a shoulder injury and did not reappear.

Fulton was ably supported by the rest of the top-order with Jamie

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## BJP regains power in Himachal

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

India's main opposition BJP yesterday regained power in the northern state of Himachal Pradesh, dislodging Congress from power, to end the year 2007 on a high note politically, just five days after retaining the reins in the western state of Gujarat.

Out of the 68 seats in the state legislature, BJP bagged 41 seats while Congress won 21 seats.

In the previous elections in 2002, Congress had won 43 seats and BJP, the then ruling party, 16.

Among the prominent winners were outgoing Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh of Congress and BJP's chief ministerial candidate

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**Prayer Timing**

December 29

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5:30	6:05
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:00	4:15
Maghrib	5:27	5:30
Esha	7:00	7:30

Source: Islamic Foundation

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