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## War criminals must be tried urgently, fairly

Says Amnesty chief

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Amnesty International's (AI) Secretary General Irene Khan said not only Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina, the chiefs of BNP and Awami League respectively, but all

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## ILL-GOTTEN WEALTH ACC sues AL leader, ex-SP, pourea chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-corruption Commission filed a case yesterday against Advocate Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, religious affairs secretary of Awami League (AL) yesterday on charges of accumulating wealth through illegal means and for concealing information about his wealth.

In another development yesterday the ACC filed two cases against a former police superintendent and a municipality chairman for building up massive wealth beyond their known sources of income and for concealing information about assets to the watchdog.

Assistant Director of the ACC Mozahar Ali Sardar filed the case against Abdullah with Ramna police station.

In the case the complainant said Advocate Abdullah mentioned in his statement that he owns wealth valued over Tk 38.33 lakh, though ACC investigation reveals that he owns wealth worth over Tk 42 lakh.

ACC Deputy Director Zulfiqar Ali in his case statement against former police super Mohammad Mujibul Haque said he amassed wealth worth about Tk 5.27 crore beyond his known sources of income, adding that the former cop also concealed information on Tk 2.15 crore in his statement to the commission.

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## al-Qaeda urges attacks on Bush during ME tour

AFP, Dubai

An American member of al-Qaeda urged Islamist militants to target US President George W. Bush "with bombs" during his trip to the Middle East next week, in an message posted online yesterday.

Bush should be welcomed "not by flowers and applause, but with bombs and car bombs," said Adam Gadahn, a convert to Islam who has been indicted for treason by a US jury.

The audio message is the first al-Qaeda warning of 2008, and follows a message from the network's chief Osama bin Laden on December 30 in which he warned Muslims against supporting Iraq's US-backed government and promised the "liberation of Palestine."

The bulk of the 50-minute tape attributed to Gadahn is in English, although the call to bomb the US president is made in Arabic.

"I send this urgent call to our brothers the Mujahedeen, mainly in Palestine and the Arabian Peninsula, and in the region in general, to be ready to welcome the Crusader, the butcher Bush... not by flowers and applause, but with bombs and car bombs," he said, according to a translation.

The message was posted on a

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| Prayer Timing |       |        |
|---------------|-------|--------|
| January 7     |       |        |
|               | Azan  | Jamaat |
| Fajr          | 5-30  | 6-05   |
| Zohr          | 12-45 | 1-15   |
| Asr           | 4-00  | 4-15   |
| Maghrib       | 5-30  | 5-35   |
| Esha          | 7-00  | 7-30   |

Source: Islamic Foundation

# US mulls covert Pak operation

Hillary for US-UK watch on Pak nukes; Musharraf says Benazir bears sole blame for deadly attack

AFP, Washington

The US administration is considering granting the Pentagon and CIA new authority to conduct covert operations in the tribal areas of Pakistan where al-Qaeda is showing new strength, The New York Times reported on its website late Saturday.

US White House hopeful Hillary Clinton on the other hand said she would propose a joint US-British team to oversee the security of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal if she is elected president.

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf meanwhile told US television that slain former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto alone bears the blame for the attack that killed her and many of her supporters last month, and rejected government culpability.

Citing unnamed senior officials of Bush administration, The NY Times said the plan calls for giving Central Intelligence Agency agents broader powers to strike selected targets inside Pakistan, in some cases using intelligence provided

by Pakistani sources.

Up to now, most counter-terrorism operations in Pakistan have been conducted by CIA operatives based in Afghanistan, the report said.

If the plan is given final approval, the US spy agency would continue to do the same, but would be able to call for help from the US military or deputise some special operations forces of to act under the authority of the agency, according to the paper.

The Pakistani military reacted

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PHOTO: STAR

A BDR member puts serial number on the wrist of a customer at a fair price outlet on Azimpur Colony ground to prevent her from purchasing rice for the second time on the same day.

## Fresh clashes in Lanka as monitors begin pulling out

President's peace adviser quits

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan security forces clashed with Tamil Tiger separatists and exchanged artillery fire in the north as Norwegian-led monitors began pulling out before a truce runs out, officials said yesterday.

The defence ministry said at least 10 guerrillas were killed and a soldier wounded in fighting since Saturday along a de facto border marking rebel-held territory.

The fresh clashes came as the Norwegian-led Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission said it was winding down its operations before a February 2002 truce brokered by Norway formally ends on January 16.

The rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) said they lost the head of an intelligence unit

following a mine attack carried out by government forces who infiltrated a rebel-held area on Saturday.

Shanmuganathan Ravishankar, who holds the guerrilla rank of colonel, was killed along with three other Tigers, the pro-rebel website Tamilnet.com said.

Sri Lankan officials have denied carrying out attacks inside rebel-held territory, but said there had been heavy long-range exchanges of fire in the region since the truce was formally declared dead last week.

Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse's top advisor on the peace process quit Sunday, after the government scrapped an Oslo-brokered truce with Tamil Tiger rebels.

Jayantha Dhanapala, a diplo-

mat and former candidate for the post of UN secretary general who was appointed as peace advisor in December 2005, said he was quitting for "personal reasons," in a statement released by his office.

The move followed the government's decision to withdraw from a 2002 truce, despite mounting international concern that the island's military could slip back into full-scale war with Tiger guerrillas.

Close confidants of Dhanapala said he was embarrassed by the turn of events, with the government pressing for a military victory after scoring several battlefield successes against the rebels last year.

There was no immediate reaction from the government, which

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## WAR CRIMINALS' TRIAL

Staff Correspondent

Sector Commanders' Forum (SCF), a platform of sector commanders of the Liberation War, will visit six divisions of the country to mobilise public opinion against the war criminals.

As part of the initiative, the SCF will visit Khulna on January 16, sources at the SCF told The Daily Star last night.

During their visit, the SCF will hold meetings with different socio-cultural organisations and exchange views with freedom fighters and local journalists, the sources added.

Meanwhile, the previously scheduled convention of the forum has been rescheduled from December 13 of last year to March this year.

Since its birth on October 2007, the Sector Commanders' Forum has been vocal in their demand over banning of 'anti-independence' forces such as Jamaat-e-Islami from national elections and trial of leaders of Jamaat and other forces that had committed crimes against humanity while opposing the Liberation War of the country.

## Changes made in civil admin

Cultural Secy made OSD

Staff Correspondent

The government yesterday brought some important changes in the civil administration by making a secretary OSD and by promoting three additional secretaries to acting secretaries to different ministries.

According to official notifications, the government made Cultural Affairs Secretary Abdul Haq Chowdhury an officer on special duty (OSD) while Chairman of BTMC Md Sharful Alam was made the acting secretary to the ministry.

Additional Secretary to the Finance Ministry ATM Fazlul Karim was appointed as the acting secretary to the Rural Development and Cooperatives Division of the Ministry of LGRD and Cooperatives while Additional Secretary to the Establishment Ministry Iqbal Mahmud was made the acting secretary to the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications.

## Irene's talk on HR, democracy tomorrow

Staff Correspondent

Amnesty International Secretary General Irene Khan will deliver a keynote speech on "Human Rights: Countering the Disappointments of Democracy" at Cirdap Auditorium in the capital at 4:00pm tomorrow.

Former adviser to caretaker government Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud, and former attorney general AF Hassan Arif will also speak at the discussion jointly organised by The Daily Star and Prothom Alo.

All are invited to attend the discussion.



PHOTO: STAR

A gaping hole on the main road in front of Mir Hazirbagh bazar in the capital's Jurain area. The locals contacted the authorities concerned several times, but no initiative has been taken to repair it.

## Qatar to recruit more Bangladeshi workers

Deal signed with Doha

Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh yesterday signed an additional protocol with Qatar to send more workers, especially professionals, to the gulf state and to protect the rights of the 70,000 workers already working there.

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar A Chowdhury and visiting Labour Minister of Qatar Sultan Bin Hasan Al-Dhahbi Al-Dosari signed the protocol to supplement an existing labour agreement signed between the two countries in 1988.

The protocol sets up a joint committee that would work to resolve issues of 70,000 Bangladeshi workers employed in Qatar as well as discuss bilateral labour issues. Out of 33 complaints from Bangladeshi workers in

Qatar, 17 have been resolved through bilateral discussions, according to state figures.

"Bangladeshi workers have been working in Qatar for a long time. We want more workers from this country," said Al-Dosari at a joint press briefing after meeting Iftekhar at state guesthouse Padma.

Around 15,000 Bangladeshi workers went to Qatar last year, more than double the 7,000 who went there the year before.

The Qatari minister said Doha would welcome skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers. However, the gulf state is more interested in skilled professionals such as university professors, IT experts, engineers and technicians for its booming industries, he

added. This fits into Dhaka's policy of training more professionals to meet the expertise shortage in overseas job markets such as in Qatar, said Foreign Adviser Iftekhar adding that Bangladesh earned \$ 6.5 billion in remittance from citizens working overseas.

Iftekhar also told reporters that the two sides discussed energy cooperation and ways to build up trades.

The two countries would look for ways to share Qatar's expertise in the gas sector in developing Bangladesh's energy sector, the adviser said.

Bangladesh might consider importing fertiliser from the gulf state, Iftekhar said.

## Purchase body okays 7 rental power plants

270MW to be added to national grid

Staff Correspondent

The Advisers' Committee on Public Purchase yesterday approved installation of seven rental power plants that are expected to add around 270MW of electricity before next summer to the national grid for three years.

Finance Adviser AB Mirza Azizul Islam presided over the meeting of the purchase committee at finance ministry.

Adviser Aziz at a press briefing told journalists that among the seven power plants, a 30MW plant will be set up at Bhola, 50MW at Shahjibazar, 50MW at Fenchuganj, 20MW at Bheramara, 40MW at Khulna, 20MW at Bogra and 50MW at Kumargaon.

Selected bidders will install the power plants within 120 days of signing contracts, he added.

Other proposals the committee approved at the meeting are fixing the premium of fuel imported from Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, installing a transmitter of Bangladesh Betar at a cost of Tk 25.30 crore, land development of Uttara Ideal Housing Project for Tk 12.11 crore, a Tk 6.17-crore market infrastructure development project and a rural infrastructure development project for the cost of Tk 40.16 crore.

Two proposals rejected by the purchase committee are a 150MW combined cycle power plant in Sylhet and the purchase of auto disposable syringes and safety boxes for Department of Health.

## Atikullah Masud, ex-Rajuk officer indicted in cheating case

UNB, Dhaka

A special court trying corruption suspects yesterday indicted Atikullah Khan Masud of Globe Constructions Ltd and Kamruzzaman, ex-authorised officer of Rajuk, for cheating buyers of flats of the housing company.

Passing the orders, Judge AK Roy fixed January 10 for commencing the trial of the Tk 1.22-crore cheating case through recording depositions by the prosecution witnesses.

The business tycoon, Atikullah Khan Masud, also editor of the daily Janakantha, was in the dock during the indictment hearings. He pleaded 'not guilty'.

The other accused, the Rajuk official who used to authorise building plans in the capital, will be tried in absentia as he is on the run.



PHOTO: STAR

A crabber nets crabs from the tank of his boat on Keorashuti canal of Hiron Point in the Sundarbans. Crabbers go into the forest in the first week of November and stay there for three months catching crabs.

## Crabbers in Sundarbans

PINAKI ROY

It was already late afternoon in narrow Keorashuti canal lined with dense forests on both banks as Shushil was pulling the oars as fast as possible because he wanted to reach the Hiron Point office of the forest department to spend the night there before it gets dark.

"Hey, how was the catch today?" a tourist who was traveling on the boat with this correspondent asked Shushil as they approached Keorashuti watchtower. "Not bad," Shushil replied. "What do you catch, shrimps?" the curious tourist wants to know more. "No. Crabs," Shushil said, and soon he was trying to sell some of his day's catch to the tourists, bringing them out of the hull tank where he keeps them.

Among thousands of residents of the Sundarbans area Shushil is one of those whose livelihood depends largely on the forest. Following deadly Cyclone Sidr

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