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BDR MUTINY

Trial starts Nov 24

12 Rifle Battalion rebels in Rangamati face 3-member court first

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

The trial of BDR soldiers held in connection with the February 25-26 mutiny at the force's headquarters and other battalions across the country is starting Tuesday with the trial of alleged rebellions of Rangamati sector.

A three-member court led by BDR Director General Maj Gen M Mainul Islam will sit on Tuesday at 3:00pm at the Rangamati BDR sector headquarters to start the trial of accused soldiers of 12 Rifle Battalion under Rangamati sector, said a BDR official involved with the trial process.

After completion of the first day's proceedings the court will sit again on Wednesday morning and function for the first half of the day, he said. After adjournment on Wednesday, the court will resume trial proceedings after Eid-ul-Azhavacation.

"Everything is set to hold the trial proceedings on Tuesday and Wednesday at Rangamati BDR sector headquarters," the official said.

Around 4,000 BDR soldiers will be tried under the BDR Act on charge of mutiny that started at the BDR headquarters at Pikhana, Dhaka, and spread to different battalions of the paramilitary force across the country.

On November 15, the BDR headquarters constituted six special courts--two in Dhaka--as per the Bangladesh Rifles Order 1972 to initiate trials of the mutineers.

The BDR DG will head each of the three-member courts also comprising a lieutenant colonel and a major as members.

The attorney general's office already sent BDR authorities the names of 10 deputy attorney generals who will work as law officers of the BDR courts.

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Return to JS

Hasina urges Khaleda at Senakunja

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia yesterday exchanged pleasantries after over two months at a reception organised at Dhaka Cantonment on the occasion of Armed Forces Day.

"How are you?" Hasina smilingly asked her political archrival.

Smiling Khaleda replied that she was doing well amid the presence of Speaker Abdul Hamid and senior politicians and military officers.

Hasina also enquired about Khaleda's health condition. The two top leaders exchanged views for about a minute standing under the big canopy set up on the Senakunja premises.

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TWO LEADERS MEET AGAIN: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia exchange greetings at Senakunja in Dhaka Cantonment yesterday evening on the occasion of Armed Forces Day.

PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Default loans creep up again

Sluggish business, recession blamed

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Default loans in the first nine months of this year have increased by 4 percent or Tk 928 crore and stood at Tk 23,904 crore, thanks to sluggish business and global economic recession.

The amount of default loan showed a declining trend in the recent years but this year it started rising.

Though the default loans of private commercial banks (PCB), foreign commercial banks (FCB), specialised banks (SB) increased,

those decreased in state owned banks (SOBs).

A high official of a PCB said the amount of default loan appears lower mainly due to loan write-offs by SOBs.

An official of a SOB said they have written off loans but adopted various measures to lower default loan.

Several private bank officials said the sluggishness in business caused by global financial meltdown has added to loan defaults.

According to a Bangladesh Bank data

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War heroes honoured

Govt to declare award-winning, injured freedom fighters VIPs; Armed Forces Day observed

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said a process is underway to declare all the national award-winning and war-wounded freedom fighters as the Very Important Persons (VIPs).

"Besides, freedom fighters will be allowed to take free journey in buses, trains and launches," she said.

Sheikh Hasina, who is also in-charge of the defence ministry, was addressing a reception accorded to gallantry award-winning

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Govt to try all major killings

PM urges all to help undertake mutiny trial

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday pledged to ensure trial of all the major incidents of killing, including Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) mutiny.

"If I am alive, trial of the BDR mutiny will certainly be held," Hasina said at a reception at Senakunja in Dhaka Cantonment in the evening on the occasion of the Armed Forces Day. Terming the killings of army officers and dumping of their bodies together under the ground a

brutal incident, the PM sought cooperation of all in holding the trial. "Don't be misguided by any propaganda," she told members of the armed forces.

Hasina, also president of the ruling Awami League (AL), vowed to hold trial of the assassination of four national leaders inside Dhaka Central Jail, war criminals, August 21 grenade attack killings and murder of party leaders Shah AMS Kibria and Ahsanullah Master.

"If we do not hold trial of these killing, the

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PHOTO: SHAFIQU ALAM

Class V students are seen taking the Primary Education Terminal Examinations in the second session around 2:00pm at Segunbagicha High School centre yesterday.

Signal system now to control traffic

DMP gives up manual control today, to introduce lanes in major roads

MUKHLESUR RAHMAN

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police authorities are going to swing to traffic light signals phasing out the manual controlling system from today to ease traffic congestion in the capital.

From now on traffic police officials will not be allowed to halt vehicles to make passages for the VIPs except for the prime minister and the president.

DMP will also introduce lane system on major roads for movement of different modes of vehicles from December 1 to check overtaking, congestion and road accidents.

DMP Commissioner AKM Shahidul Haque told The Daily Star "DMP will

activate traffic signalling system tomorrow (today) and continue till November 28. In this trial period we will try to find out the troubles with the system."

He added "From December 1 to 7 we will make people aware of the system through print and electronic medias, cable TV operators, posters and leaflets."

On December 8, the DMP will start a drive against traffic rule violation. It will fine each vehicle Tk 1,000 and suspend the driver's licence for violating rules. During the drive, police will also seize fake driving licences.

Shyamol Kumar Mukherjee, assistant commissioner (AC) of DMP, said traffic police personnel deployed at 59 signal points across the city will not be with-

drawn as they will help vehicles to follow the systems.

The DMP commissioner said from December 1, the DCC will start marking the major roads to divide each of them into three lanes for certain modes of vehicles' movements.

AC Shyamol Kumar said first lane will be used for the VIP and VVIP vehicles and for private cars, microbus, jeep and such kind of automobiles, second lane for microbus, bus, covered vans and such vehicles and the third lane for CNG-run auto rickshaws, pickup vans, motorbikes and such other mode of vehicles.

AC Shyamol said 12 check posts of traffic police personnel will be set up at

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Bishwa Ijtema Jan 22

UNB, Gazipur

Bishwa Ijtema, the second largest congregation of the Muslim Ummah after hajj, will begin from January 22 on the bank of the Turag River in Tongi.

A five-day 'Jor' Ijtema, preparatory event of the three-day Bishwa Ijtema, began on Friday at the Ijtema venue. It will end on Tuesday.

Thousands of devotees, including about 200 foreign ones are attending the 'Jor' Ijtema, the organiser sources said.

Tight security measures have been taken in and around the Ijtema venue for holding the annual event of the Tablig Jamaat smoothly.

A good number of volunteers are working round the clock to make the congregation a grand success.

Biggest exams begin

20 lakh primary school children participate under new system

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 1.83 million class V students took part in the newly introduced public examinations across the country yesterday with great enthusiasm.

Of the total 1.98 million students, 92.27 percent appeared on the first day of the Primary Education Terminal Examination, according to the control room of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education at 9:00 last night.

A number of students and their guardians in

the capital and elsewhere passed an anxious day on the first day due to the new system beginning with two exams with an interval of two hours.

Otherwise, a festive look wore in the examination centres in the country as the students for the first time in their life attended the public examinations.

The largest public examination of the country started at 10:00am at 5,343 centres across

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