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Paresh Barua claims his son abducted in Bangladesh

BBC NEWS, Calcutta

The leader of an Indian separatist group has alleged that his son has been kidnapped in Bangladesh.

Paresh Barua, head of the military wing of the United Liberation Front of Assam (Ulfa), said his teenage son's kidnappers were "pressuring" him to negotiate with the Indian government.

Indian intelligence officials have dismissed Barua's claim.

They say the Ulfa is divided on the question of whether to join the peace process with India or not.

In an emailed statement, Barua said his son's

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INTENSE FIGHT FOR MUNICIPAL POSTS  
**AL still working on single candidates**

To sit with 14-party allies for sharing some seats

HASAN AHMED TUSHER

Ruling Awami League is yet to finalise party candidates for a number of municipalities and negotiate with allies over sharing seats in the next month's municipal polls.

In many municipalities, more than one party man submitted their candidacies, said Awami League insiders. The candidates include relatives of ministers, lawmakers and some other top leaders.

Awami League will submit today a list of prospective candidates to Prime Minister and its President Sheikh Hasina who has already asked other top leaders not to have their relatives nominated for the elections.

Sheikh Hasina would approve the list in consultation with the party's organising secretaries who had prepared it after talking to grassroots leaders.

Once the list is finalised, the party would convey its decision to the rejected candidates and ask them to work for those nominated by the high command.

"We will finally try to support a single candidate for each municipality and urge the rebel candidates to withdraw their candidacies," AL Presidium Member Kazi Zafarullah told The Daily Star.

AL Organising Secretary AFM Bahauddin Nasim, too, said they would be able to pick one

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Keep Sayedee in jail until completion of war trial

Investigators appeal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Investigators yesterday petitioned before the International Crimes Tribunal to keep Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee detained till completion of the investigation into war crimes allegations against him.

The petition also seeks more time to complete the investigation, and reports the progress they made so far.

The tribunal will hear the petition on December 29.

The investigators in the petition said they will be able

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BDR MUTINY AT JOYPUKHAT  
**20 accused convicted**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A BDR special court yesterday convicted of mutiny all 20 accused from Joypurhat-3 Rifle Battalion and sentenced them to different prison terms.

Special Court-13, headed by Dinajpur Sector Commander Col Saleh Ahmad, announced the verdict in presence of all the accused at the force's district headquarters.

Of those convicted, shipahi Ohidul Islam was handed five and a half years' jail sentence while nayek Obidul Islam and Biplob Hossain five and four years respectively.

Of the other, Mofizur Haque will serve in jail for three years and nine months; Rabiul Islam three years and three months; Firoz Uddin and Abdul Mannan three years each; Shiddiqur Rahman and Abdul Latif two years each; Abdul Karim and VM Abdur Razzak one and a half years each; Afzal Hossain one year; Monirul Islam nine months; Jamal Uddin, Asaduzzaman, Anisur Rahman and Hafizur Rahman six months each; and Zahirul

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State minister alleges BNP's 'terror links'

UNB, Dhaka

The opposition BNP has connection with domestic and international terrorist networks, alleged State Minister for Home Affairs Shamsul Haque Tuku.

"Hawa Bhaban had links with militants and international terrorist outfits. Even now, they have the connections too," Tuku told UNB in his ministry yesterday when his attention was drawn to BNP Secretary General Khondoker Delwar Hossain's recent remarks.

Delwar on Wednesday expressed concern over the prime minister's reported remarks about possible

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PHOTO: STAR

An indigenous hunter carries dead civets from Mondolerhat Jungle in Lalmonirhat recently. The killing spree of the harmless creature is pushing the already endangered species to the verge of extinction.

**Sherpur ammo left by Indian insurgents**

Investigators, locals suspect after recovery of more than 13,000 bullets from border village

MUKHLESUR RAHMAN, back from Jhenaidagi

The investigators suspect that the recently recovered huge quantity of bullets in Bakagora village of Sherpur belonged to the Indian insurgents active in the bordering hilly villages.

Lt Col Ziaul Ahsan, chief of Rab intelligence wing, told The Daily Star that they

suspected the ammunition belonged to Indian separatists and they left it behind while leaving their hideouts.

He said operatives of United Liberation Front of Asom (Ulfa) were active in the area amid intensive drives but their network here is almost destroyed. The Ulfa train its operatives in the hilly bordering areas.

Many law enforcers and locals told The Daily Star that operatives of Ulfa have hideouts in the bordering villages in Sherpur.

On the recovered bullets, the locals and investigators said it is difficult to identify the people who had left those as no one, except for an 80-year-old, had a

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Food ration starts in new year

OMS from Saturday

UNB, Dhaka

The government will start to distribute food grains among the ultra poor under Fair Price Card (FPC) and Ration System from the new year.

Official sources said the government will distribute a total of 11,20,000 FPC across the country from January next. A card holder will be able to buy 20 kilogram of rice at a cost Tk 24 per kg.

Moreover, the government will launch ration system to sell rice among some three lakh class IV government employees and village polices.

Besides, the Open Market Sale (OMS) programme will start from Saturday to ensure the sale of food grains at reasonable price, the sources said.

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Prayer Timing		
December 24		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-25	6-00
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-24	5-27
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

POVERTY REDUCTION  
**JS body hails microcredit programmes**

Says regulatory system 'weak'

RASHIDUL HASAN

A parliamentary body yesterday said microcredit programmes help eradicate the country's poverty in spite of an "inadequate and very weak" regulatory system.

The parliamentary standing committee on finance ministry asked the authorities concerned to bring all microcredit institutions under one regulatory framework in a bid to oversee and pacify the microcredit activities effectively.

"Microcredit programmes will definitely remain in the country. But the committee asked the finance ministry to strengthen the regulatory system which is very weak at present," AHM Mostafa Kamal, chief of the watchdog, told reporters after a meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

Giving a brief description of microcredit programmes, Mostafa Kamal, popularly known as Lotus Kamal, said microcredit has spread its wings in different countries and cities including New York where it is working to change the poor's economic condition.

On recent allegations published in a section of media against Nobel laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus and Grameen Bank, Lotus Kamal said they did not discuss anything against any individual or institution.

He however said high officials of the finance ministry have informed them that a high-powered committee would be formed soon to investigate the allegations.

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Primary, JSC exams results this month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The results of Primary Education Terminal Examination will be published on December 27, and the first-ever Junior School Certificate (JSC) and Junior Dakhil Certificate (JDC) exams on December 31.

Officials of education boards and primary education directorate said they have made preparations to publish

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Ulamas may call off hartal on condition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sammilito Ulama Mashayek Parishad, a religion-based political forum, will consider withdrawing the December 26 hartal if the government publishes a handout clearly stating its position regarding the parishad's demands about the National Education Policy.

Alamgir Majumder, joint secretary of the parishad, said

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Would you support if the government restricts private cars with less than four or five passengers to ply the streets in the capital to ease traffic congestion?

Yes (36.4%)  No (62.4%)  
 No Comments (1.2%)

**Total votes: 1335**

**TODAY'S POLL**

Do you think the advancement of Bangladesh in the Economist Intelligence Unit's Index of Democracy 2010 reflects the reality?

Please cast your vote at [www.thedailystar.net](http://www.thedailystar.net)

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