



Three African nationals detained by Rab in the capital's Moghbazar for illegally staying in Bangladesh. One of them is originally from Chad and the others are from Liberia. PHOTO: STAR

# SSC, equivalent exams begin Feb 2

UNB, Dhaka The Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and its equivalent examinations of 2015 will begin on February 2. The exams will begin simultaneously under the country's 10 education boards, including the madrasa and technical education boards. The education ministry has published the examination schedule on its website, said Subodh Chandra Dhali, deputy chief information officer. The exams of Bengali 1st paper, Easy Bengali 1st paper and Bengali Language and Bangladeshi Culture 1st paper will be held on the first day. The exams will end on March 10, 2015, he added.

# Suicide blast kills two guards at foreign compound in Kabul

AFP, Kabul A Taliban suicide truck bomb struck at the entrance of a foreign-run compound in Kabul yesterday, killing two Afghan guards and highlighting the security challenges facing the country as NATO forces depart. Taliban insurgents claimed responsibility for the early-morning blast, which shook windows across the Afghan capital and sent a plume of smoke into the sky over the east of the city. After the initial explosion, two other militants were shot dead as they tried to storm the compound, which is run by the Dubai-based Hart security company. "It was a bomb in a small truck at the gate of a foreign base. Initial reports show two guards killed, several wounded," Najib Danish, deputy spokesman for the interior ministry, told AFP. "The guards were Afghan. Two other attackers tried to enter the base and were killed by guards." Kabul police chief Zahir Zahir said the attackers drove a truck carrying sand and stone up to the compound gate, claiming they were delivering construction material. He said one foreign national was wounded but gave no further details. A spokeswoman for Hart International confirmed its compound had been hit and that two of its Afghan guards were killed. "No internationals were killed, and none were seriously injured but we are checking for further details," she said. Hart, which is headed by British former soldier Richard Westbury, is one of scores of security contractors working in Afghanistan, providing services such as protecting embassy staff and overseeing infrastructure projects. Afghan vice-president Abdul Rashid Dostum arrived at the scene shortly after the blast. "This is not a face-to-face war, it is an intelligence war," he told reporters. "We all know they (the Taliban) have influence over some traitors... but we will find them and they will be brought to justice." A spokesman for the Taliban said via a recognised Twitter account that the attack targeted a foreign forces' intelligence base. On Sunday lawmaker Shukria Barakzai escaped a suicide blast in Kabul as she drove in a convoy near parliament. Three civilians died in that attack. Kabul has been hit by regular suicide attacks over recent years, often against the US-led military force which has been fighting Taliban insurgents since 2001. The NATO force is ending its war next month and pulling out, though about 12,500 troops will remain to support the Afghan army and police now responsible for security nationwide.

# Japan cuts Antarctic whale quota after UN court ruling

AFP, Tokyo Japan was abusing a scientific exemption set out in the 1986 moratorium on whaling. The court said the controversial programme, which sees taxpayer-subsidised Japanese boats harpooning the huge mammals and then selling their meat, supposedly as a by-product, was a commercial hunt masquerading as research. Judges said any nation that wanted to avail itself of the scientific exemption must show why it was necessary to kill whales as part of its study. Japan cancelled its 2014-15 Antarctic hunt after the ruling, but said it intends to resume "research whaling" in 2015-16. "We will explain the new plan sincerely so as to gain understanding from each country," Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Koya Nishikawa told reporters.

# Dhaka hands over list

FROM PAGE 1 Dhaka's list includes JMB chief Sohel Mahfuz, Anwarul Islam Faruque alias Jamai Faruque, Bomaru Mizan, Salehin, Tariqul Islam, Maulana Taj and Maulana Yahiya, said a source in Rab. On the other hand, NIA's list includes Kawser, Mawlana Yousuf Sheikh, Talha Sheikh, Rezaul Karim, Amjad Ali Sheikh, Abul Kalam, Shah Noor, Borhan Sheikh, Habibur Rahman Sheikh, Jahirul Islam Sheikh and Nasirullah. The persons arrested in connection with the Burdwan blast gave the names to Indian investigators, the Rab source said quoting the NIA officials. "We exchanged some information about the JMB network, and also handed over a list of some JMB operatives who are hiding there [India] to evade arrest," Dhaka Metropolitan Police Joint Commissioner Monirul Islam told reporters after a meeting with the NIA team at the DMP headquarters. "Both sides have agreed to work in a coordinated manner to arrest the operatives hiding in both the countries," he added. At the meeting, the two sides shared their suspicion that the JMB operatives, snatched by a group of armed men in an ambush on a police van in Mymensingh's Trishal last year, were behind the Burdwan blast. The NIA sought Bangladesh's help in arresting JMB leaders Faruque alias Jamai Faruque alias Shawkat, Bomaru Mizan and Salehin. Faruque was among the members of the armed group that snatched the two convicted JMB militants -- Mizan and Salehin -- on February 23 last year. The NIA officials have information that the trio might have been involved in the Burdwan blast. "They requested us to help arrest the trio," said Monirul. "We informed NIA officials that the three JMB men had fled Bangladesh following the Trishal incident. And we also sought their help to nab the trio." When the news that some Bangladeshis were involved in the Burdwan blast surfaced in the media, we conducted drives and arrested several operatives of the JMB, Monirul said adding, "We have got some information regarding the blast [Burdwan] which we exchanged with the NIA team." An intelligence team from Bangladesh will soon visit India to expedite the process of identifying and arresting the absconding militants, he said. Asked when the visit will take place, he said certain procedures need to be completed first before the visit. On the issue of a plot to kill Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia by militants, Monirul said such news surfaced in Indian media but the NIA was yet to ascertain the matter. Regarding the nationality of Rezaul Karim Sajid, an alleged Bangladeshi national who masterminded the Burdwan blast and was arrested in India, Monirul said Sajid might be the pseudonym of JMB operative Masum of Narayanganj. He added that Sajid alias Masum was arrested twice -- first in 2005 for robbery at a BRAC Bank in Gopalganj and then in 2012 from the capital. He however said, "Nationality of Sajid is yet to be ascertained." Headed by Director General Sharad Kumar, the four-member NIA team is now in Dhaka to share information with Bangladeshi intelligence agencies of the Burdwan blast and activities of the JMB.

# Three more

FROM PAGE 16 detained Partha Kumar Saha, 46, for renting out his flat to the foreigners without verifying documents for their stay in Bangladesh. Khamis entered the country in 2009 and Martin in January 2013 with on-arrival visas that were valid for a month. Kon came here in January last year as a tourist with a three-month stay permit. They did not renew their documents but continued to stay in Bangladesh, Mohiuddin said. "We are investigating whether they have been involved in any criminal activities." The detainees told Rab officials that they had been trading in garments -- buying them here and then sending those to their home countries for sale at higher prices, the Rab official said. He at the briefing urged house owners to verify documents of foreigners before renting out apartments or rooms to them to avoid any hassle. On November 14, the Detective Branch of police detained 31 foreigners, from 10 African nations, for their illegal stay in the country. Six of them were released later after they showed legal documents. Many foreigners involved in killing drug peddling, smuggling and other fraudulent activities have recently come to the notice of law enforcers, said law-enforcement agencies. As many as one lakh foreigners, mostly from Africa and Southeast Asian nations, have been living in the country illegally for years, said officials at the Special Branch of police. Around 8,000 African nationals are living in the country and many of them are involved in killing, mugging, smuggling, fake note manufacturing and operating illegal VoIP (voice over internet protocol) business in the capital. The African nationals entered Bangladesh as football players or students while others came with tourist visas but did not leave the country before the expiry of their visas or stay permits. In many cases, they destroyed their passports and other documents so that law enforcers could not verify their nationalities and repatriate them upon arrest for criminal offences, intelligence officials say.

# 2 peacekeepers

FROM PAGE 16 Forces Medical Institute's auditorium to brief the media on measures taken to keep Bangladeshi UN peacekeepers safe from Ebola. "There is nothing to be worried since the two Bangladeshi peacekeepers were at a different block at the hospital," said the director. They have been quarantined along with other patients as a precaution against Ebola outbreak. According to Reuters, about 20 UN peacekeepers, who were admitted to the clinic after sustaining injuries while serving in the turbulent north of Mali, have been put in quarantine for 21 days, the incubation period for the virus. Now 1,400 Bangladeshi troops are deployed across the West African country, Mali, where according to World Health Organisation there have been three confirmed deaths from Ebola and another suspected death from the infection. Mali shares its border with Guinea that has been the worst affected along with Liberia and Sierra Leone by the Ebola outbreak that claimed 5,177 lives as of November 14. Maj Gen Md Rabiul Hossain, consultant physician general of the directorate general of medical services of the army, who led a five-member high-powered medical team to Liberia to assess and observe Ebola situation spoke at the press conference. "Despite severe Ebola outbreak in Liberia, our troops are not infected. This happened due to extreme precautions by our commanders there," he said. The visit of the medical team boosted the troops' moral strength, Maj Gen Rabiul said, adding that they have been monitoring the situation every day and getting updated information about the troops. "After assessing the precautionary and protective measures we've told our troops that they will not be infected. What they need to do is to continue following the measures." Rabiul said the medical team had visited Liberia only as the country was severely affected by Ebola and that 525 Bangladeshi troops were serving there. Troops from 12 countries have been deployed in Liberia, but only Bangladesh Army sent a medical team there. Replying to another query, Brig Gen Saleem said Ebola did not affect the deployment of UN peacekeepers from Bangladesh.

# Non-formal

FROM PAGE 2 addition to improving its quality. The law has a provision for setting up Non-Formal Education Bureau headed by a director general, who will be appointed by the government. Under the law, several non-formal education boards will also be formed with the bureau DG as chairman of the boards to regulate the academic activities of non-formal education. Anyone violating the law or impeding its implementation will be sentenced to a maximum six months' imprisonment or fined Tk 50,000.

# A student

FROM PAGE 16 She went to the house in Choddopai area on Friday. The next morning, the professor went out, locking her inside. "Learning about the professor's killing from TV scrolls in the afternoon, she phoned her parents." The parents along with one of her maternal uncles and two sisters rushed to Rajshahi as they already came to know about the murder from TV news. They contacted police. Shafiul died at the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital around 4:45pm after being hacked by a gang around 3:00pm while returning home by his motorbike, according to police. "We took her [the student] to a safe house for her security and kept there along with her family members... We interrogated her so that we can get some clue to the murder. We got some information from her about the lifestyle of the professor. We will release her within a day or two," the deputy commissioner said. "She is not a suspect. Rather, she is helping us." Shafiul, who had left his campus residence about a year ago, started living alone at a rented house in Choddopai which is near the RU campus. He married thrice. His first wife had died long ago and his second wife divorced him while the third left him allegedly for his devotion to baul philosophy and alternative way of living. The female student used to visit Shafiul's house often, especially during gatherings of Bauls. Some of her family members several times stayed at the house, investigators said. It could not know why she was locked inside the house. Officials said more investigation would make everything clear. The Daily Star could not talk to her. Contacted over the mobile phone, her mother said, "I can't talk with you now. I am sick and I am at a hospital. She declined to give name of the hospital." Meanwhile, police said they are

# Organic molecules

FROM PAGE 16 instrument designed to "sniff" the comet's thin atmosphere. Other analyses suggest the comet's surface is largely water-ice covered with a thin dust layer. The European Space Agency (Esa) craft touched down on the Comet 67P on 12 November after a 10-year journey. Dr Fred Goessmann, principal investigator on the Cosac instrument, which made the organics detection, confirmed the find to BBC News. But he added that the team was still trying to interpret the results. It has not been disclosed which molecules have been found, or how complex they are. But the results are likely to provide insights into the possible role of comets in contributing some of the chemical building blocks to the primordial mix from which life evolved on the early Earth. Preliminary results from the Mupus instrument, which deployed a hammer to the comet after Philae's landing, suggest there is a layer of dust 10-20cm thick on the surface with very hard water-ice underneath. The ice would be frozen solid at temperatures encountered in the outer Solar System - Mupus data suggest this layer has a tensile strength similar to sandstone. "It's within a very broad spectrum of ice models. It was harder than expected at that location, but it's still within bounds," said Prof Mark McCaughrean, senior science adviser to Esa, told BBC News. "People will be playing with [mathematical] models of pure water-ice mixed with certain amount of dust." He explained: "You can't rule out rock, but if you look at the global story, we know the overall density of the comet is 0.4g/cubic cm. There's no way the thing's made of rock. "It's more likely there's sintered ice at the surface with more porous mate-

# Nine doped

FROM PAGE 16 On Monday night she was asked to heat dinner and the nine people in the house, including two caretakers and another maid, had their meal by 10:00pm. The family members were identified as Anwara Begum, 50, her daughter-in-law Reshma Begum, 37, and two grandchildren Yasin, 10, and Hamim, 9; relatives Faisal, 42, and his wife Shahinara Begum, 38; caretakers as Abdul Halim, 50, and Abdul Mannan, 45; and a domestic help Salma, 15. Reshma's husband Sumon and her other son Taskin, 12, returned home late the same night after having their dinner outside. In the morning, Sumon woke up to find all other family members unconscious and the new maid missing. With the help of neighbours he rushed everyone to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. All of them are undergoing treatment at DMCH where they were unconscious till yesterday afternoon. After visiting the spot, police found a gold necklace and a gold bangle as well as two cell phones missing. Police also found the padlock at the main gate at the house broken. Sub-inspector Rezaul Karim Khan of Chawkbazar Police Station said. He said they suspect some others might have joined Swapna later in the night in taking away the valuables. Police has picked up Momtaz from Keraniganj yesterday afternoon and are questioning her. The victim family were residents at a three-storey building on Jainagh Road in the area. Doctors at DMCH said the victims might have been fed high-powered sedatives. No case has been filed in this connection as of yesterday evening.

looking for a "blacksmith named Shadhon". The bloodstained machete found at the scene of the murder was inscribed with the word, Shadhon, in Bangla, said a detective. "It may be the name of the blacksmith who manufactured it." A pro-Jamaat teacher, who was given a lift by Shafiul moments before the killing, also came under police scanner, according to a senior official of RMP. Prof Zulfikar Ali Islam got on Shafiul's motorbike near Momtazuddin Arts Building of the university that afternoon. Contacted, Zulfikar said Shafiul first tried to avoid it on a plea of some work at the administration building. "Moments later, he called me, took me on his motorcycle and dropped me in front of Mirzapur Primary School". Replying to a question, he said this was the first time he rode with Shafiul. Rajshahi police also identified some more leaders and activists of Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir of Rajshahi and other districts as suspects. Talking to The Daily Star, Deputy Commissioner Nahidul Islam said those suspects used mobile phones on the spot at the time of the murder. The investigation, however, slowed down a bit yesterday as all senior police officials remained busy ensuring security of the city as President Abdul Hamid attended the convocation of Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology yesterday. RU teachers and students continued their protests, boycotting classes and staging demonstrations at campus for the third day yesterday demanding justice for the brutal killing of Shafiul. Over a thousand teachers and students under the banner of sociology department formed a human chain at Paris Road of the university at 11:30am.