

## AL dissidents

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complained that some 100 supporters of the ruling party nominee Kamrul Ahsan swooped on his men at a meeting at DKP Primary School playground on Monday evening.

Chanting slogans for "boat" symbol, the attackers beat up Shahadat's men with sticks and iron rods.

He also alleged that police didn't take action against the attackers although they were informed about the incident promptly.

Refuting the allegations, Kamrul said a clash ensued there when a procession of his supporters was passing by the meeting venue. He claimed Shahdat's supporters made provocative comments at the meeting.

Bijoy Bhasak, superintendent of police in Barguna, said he received a complaint from Shahdat yesterday morning about the attack.

In Ullahpara municipality of Sirajganj, family members of BNP's mayoral aspirant Belal Hossain on Monday at a press conference alleged that supporters of the AL mayoral nominee threatening him and his family members with death since the beginning of the electioneering.

Belal's wife Sabira Sultana alleged that law enforcers were also harassing their supporters.

Both Nazrul and Dewan Kowshik Ahmed, officer-in-charge of Ullahpara Police Station, denied the allegations.

"We only arrest those who have been accused in cases," the OC told this newspaper.

### BNP CAMPAIGN

Although the December 30 municipality polls are local government elections, the BNP was planning to publish a leaflet centrally that would contain all "misdeeds, corruptions, sorry state of the country's economy and regularities" of the incumbent government.

The decision was made at the first meeting of recently formed central coordination committee of the BNP at the party chairperson's Gulshan office. BNP acting secretary general and convener of the committee Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir was in the chair.

BNP mayoral nominees will also publish posters and other polls materials focusing on local problems, said meeting sources.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Fakhrul said the party will be in the polls race until the results were announced.

The party's divisional coordination committees will also talk within a few days with the dissident candidates to take them out of the polls race.

### EC DIRECTIVES

The Election Commission yesterday asked the returning officers of over 15 municipalities to look into the incidents of alleged violation of electoral code of conduct that were reported in different media. EC Secretary Sirazul Islam told The Daily Star.

Earlier, the commission directed all the returning officers of 234 municipalities to keep vigil so that ministers, lawmakers and candidates do not flout electoral rules in the name of joining social programmes on the Victory Day.

Three correspondents from Jessore, Barguna and Sirajganj contributed to this report.

## LA schools

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emailed threat came from overseas, purporting to be from jihadists, but was not considered credible.

He said he thought Los Angeles officials overreacted.

But LA Police Chief Charlie Beck responded by saying it was "irresponsible" to criticise when you didn't have the responsibility of safeguarding three-quarters of a million lives.

The Los Angeles Unified School District has more than 1,000 schools, which all still being searched.

"Earlier this morning we did receive an electronic threat that mentions the safety of our schools," said Steven Zipperman, chief of the Los Angeles school police department.

"We have chosen to close our schools today until we can be absolutely sure that our campuses are safe."

The email, which was sent to several school districts across the US late on Monday, is believed to have come from an IP address in Frankfurt, Germany.

The threat comes amid a heightened alert after 14 people were killed by a radicalised Muslim couple in San Bernardino, 60 miles east of Los Angeles.

## Worker killed

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Mozammel Hoque, who is in charge of Dhaka Medical College and Hospital police camp, told The Daily Star.

Police said the shed on the front side of the hotel collapsed around 12:45am while 30 to 35 workers were working there.

Ten workers were injured in the incident. Altaf along with the others were whisked off to the DMCH where doctors declared him dead.

## Pay scale gets some

FROM PAGE 1

In September, the cabinet approved a proposal for replacing time scale and selection grade with annual increment of 3.75 percent to 5 percent.

As per the existing system, if a public servant does not get promotion in due time he is entitled to get time scale and selection grade.

Cabinet Secretary Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan said in September that time scale is discriminatory. Some get it while the others are deprived of it.

He also said selection grade is more discriminatory.

The withdrawal of time scale and selection grade had triggered widespread protests from public employees, including teachers.

According to the new pay scale, if a public employee holds the same post for 10 years, he will automatically get salaries of the upper grade from the 11th year.

After serving for another six years in the same post, the employees will get salaries of the next grade.

This facility, however, will not be applicable to employees of the fourth grade and above.

A finance ministry official said the ministry would settle the issue of time scale and selection grade facility for university teachers upon discussions with the University Grants Commission.

National professors will get salaries equal to that of a senior secretary, the official said.

Government staffs will get this month's salaries in January as per the new pay scale. They will also be given arrears for five months from July this year in two instalments.

The employees will receive the arrears for July and August with the salaries for January and that for September, October and November with the salaries for February. Around Tk 3,500 crore will be needed for this, said the official.

According to the new pay scale, BCS cadres will join public service as eighth grade employees while non-cadre class-one officers will get the ninth grade when they join service.

As per the existing system, both cadres and non-cadres join service as ninth grade employees.

Besides, staffs of Bangladesh Bank and state-owned banks will get salaries in the same pay scale.

Another finance ministry official said if bankers are given separate pay scales, the others, including teachers, may demand the same. This was the reason why the government backtracked on the idea of giving them separate pay scales.

The official also said MPO-listed teachers will not get salaries under the new pay scale from January.

The education ministry will submit a report on MPO-listed educational institutions to the finance ministry. After reviewing it, the finance ministry will decide on which date the new pay scale will come into effect for those, added the official.

Of the 20 grades in the new pay scale, the highest one will see a rise in basic salary by 95 percent to Tk 78,000 (fixed) and the lowest one by 101 per-

## Pak diplomat linked

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on December 6.

According to a top Detective Branch (DB) official investigating the case, Idris in the statement said he got a ride from the diplomat in her car from Baitul Mukarram to Fakirerpool and received Tk 30,000 from her.

Idris had conversations with the diplomat several times over mobile phones between June and July this year.

Asked, the DB official said Idris did not disclose the details of his dealings with her and why she gave him the money.

At one point in their "dealings" the diplomat asked Idris to meet her at Uttara. But, on Idris' request she met him in Motijheel area where he had his business, the official said.

The official quoting Idris' statement said he got acquainted to Pakistani citizen Kamal, who identified himself as an ISI agent, through one Babul, who had settled in Pakistan. When Kamal left Bangladesh in 2012, he gave Idris a mobile phone number saying that the owner of the number would look after all his business dealings with Babul.

When Idris called, he learnt the number belonged to the diplomat.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday said when they would be sure [about the involvement of the diplomat], they would take action through the foreign ministry.

"The detectives are vigilant. Many names can be mentioned [during investigations], but we won't do anything until we are sure," Kamal said while talking to journalists at Hotel Sonargaon after an event.

He said Pakistan was still conspiring against Bangladesh.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam yesterday said, "Still we don't have any information and no one has informed us anything about the matter. We will take instant action after getting necessary information."

The government would take action in light of the Geneva Convention

cent to Tk 8,250.

The cabinet secretary or the principal secretary or those in equivalent posts will get Tk 86,000 (fixed) and a senior secretary Tk 82,000 (fixed).

### ALLOWANCES

Under the new pay scale, increments will be given in July every year irrespective of one's joining or promotion.

The government has also introduced a Bangla New Year bonus, equivalent to 20 percent of the basic salary, for public servants.

Every employee will get monthly medical allowance of Tk 1,500. Besides, he will get education allowance of Tk 500 for each of his two children. He, however, will not get any allowance for the third child.

The employees, who work in Dhaka city corporation area, will get 50 to 65 percent of their basic salaries as house allowance, while those in other city corporation areas will get 35 to 50 percent of their basic salaries.

As per the new pay scale, the employees, who live in government houses, will no longer be charged an additional 5 to 7.5 percent of their basic salaries.

The retirees aged above 65 will see their net pension rise by 50 percent. They will also get Tk 2,500 a month as medical allowance.

The net pension of other retirees will increase by 40 percent, and they will get a monthly medical allowance of Tk 1,500.

The government will require an additional Tk 19,107 crore to implement the new pay scale this fiscal year, and another Tk 27,418 crore in the next fiscal year for paying new bonuses and increments.

## Diners made

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Cities in the region have been enveloped in thick smog in recent weeks, with visibility of less than 100m in the worst-hit areas.

The restaurant's owners recently purchased an air filtration system to improve the dining experience, and covered the cost by passing it on to customers without prior warning, the reports says.

But after complaints from angry patrons, the local government intervened to stop the practice, telling the owners that it constituted an illegal charge.

A city official tells Xinhua that it wasn't the diners' choice to breathe filtered air, so it could not be sold as a commodity.

While those on the receiving end of the charge were unhappy, the idea has been welcomed by many Chinese social media users.

"I'd agree to the fee!" declares one person on the Sina Weibo microblogging site, while another says they would happily pay more for clean air.

One user suggests that the government should follow suit to deal with the country's severe smog problems.

But some criticise the way the owners collected the cash. "Paying is not the problem," writes one person. "The problem is being informed in advance and obtaining consent."

## Pak diplomat linked

against the Pakistani diplomat if she was found guilty and her direct involvement was proved, diplomatic sources said.

"We will not hesitate to expel her immediately or give Pakistan a few hours to withdraw her after getting specific information from the home ministry," said a senior official at the foreign ministry.

Despite repeated attempts, they Pakistan embassy could not be reached for comments.

In January this year, Mazhar Khan, a Pakistani official working at the Dhaka mission, was expelled after Bangladesh intelligence accused him of funding Islamist radicals and peddling fake currency.

**IDRIS**  
Monirul Islam, DB joint commissioner, earlier said that Idris had been spying in Bangladesh for a foreign intelligence agency for years.

Idris used to maintain communication with an official of the agency with a "spy mobile phone", Monir told a press briefing following the arrest of four JMB operatives, including Idris.

Idris and arrestees Mogbul Sharif, Md Salam and Mostafa Zaman -- all Bangladeshis -- had been visiting and staying in Pakistan for years.

Detectives claimed that they recovered the so-called spy mobile phone and four other mobile phones, three Bangladeshi passports, copies of visas and currencies of some countries.

Of the four, Idris and Sharif got Pakistani citizenship during their stay in Pakistan in 1990 and 1989 respectively.

The DB official claimed that Idris went to Pakistan from Bangladesh in 1985 through India and got the citizenship marrying a Pakistani woman.

He participated in the 2002 Pakistan general election as a candidate under Pak Muslim Alliance party but was defeated. He then returned to Bangladesh in 2007 and joined JMB.

"In only the last two years, he [Idris] made 48 trips to Pakistan," Monirul said.

## Bangladesh

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Daily Star yesterday.

He said the issue was at a very early stage. "We need to discuss any initiative widely before joining it [the centre]. It can be discussed even in parliament."

Earlier on the day, Saudi Arabia announced that it would form a 34-nation Islamic military coalition to combat terrorism, according to reports by the AP, Reuters, BBC, quoting Saudi Press Agency.

Saudi Arabia is part of the US-led coalition against global terror outfit IS. It is also leading a military intervention in Yemen against Shia Houthi rebels.

The Saudi announcement cited "a duty to protect the Islamic nation from the evils of all terrorist groups and organisations that wreak death and corruption on earth and aim to terrorise the innocent."

Bangladesh foreign ministry in a press statement said the role of the centre would be to coordinate efforts, exchange experiences, and provide support where needed. It will also provide assistance such as material support, information, data, etc to combat terrorism and extremist ideology.

Elaborating the Saudi move, Shahriar Alam said Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz has taken an initiative to establish a centre in Riyadh to coordinate efforts against terrorism and extremism.

In this regard, he said Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir recently phoned Bangladesh Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali and made a request to join the centre as a founding member.

The state minister said Bangladesh decided to join the centre along with other Muslim countries in line with the "zero tolerance" policy of the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina against terrorism and violent extremism.

Asked about the objective of the centre, he said almost all countries have mechanism on countering terrorism "bilaterally" but it sometimes lacks coordination. "This centre is formed to do the job in a better coordinated and effective way."

Replying to a query whether the alliance is formed to fight IS, Shahriar Alam said it has been formed to counter terrorism generally as terrorists might emerge using various names and under various banners.

According to BBC, the members of the centre are Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Morocco, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Palestinians, Qatar, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

## 28 accused

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gone to Bangladesh and stayed in Jatrabari and Mirpur of Dhaka for nearly one and a half months and was trained in bomb-making by one Bashir alias Talha and Anish alias Kausar, said the NIA statement.

It also added that Bashir is the son of senior Jama'at ul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) leader Saidur Rahman in Bangladesh.

The NIA mentioned that Naem was arrested in June from Howrah Railway Station near Kolkata.

"Their [JMB men's] intention and conduct was evident from the preparation they made in the form of full-fledged bomb-making factory at Khagragarh in Burdwan to radicalise vulnerable sections, recruit new members and train them at selected madrasas viz Simulia and Mukimnagar and certain other places/hideouts.

"They [JMB men] also intended to collect funds for the banned outfit for its members on the pretext of helping poor Muslim students -- a fact which was established during further investigation," the statement said quoting the charge sheet.

The probe into the matter established that all the 28 accused were associated with each other, the Indian security agency said.

Interrogating Naem, the NIA learnt that JMB was trying to build its networks in Howrah, North and South 24 Parganas and Hooghly districts of West Bengal too.

Materials recovered from Naem revealed that he was following the incidents of atrocities against Muslims all over the world and videos of Osama Bin Laden, Mullah Omar, Bangla Bhai and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).

"It also divulged the way he was trained in handling weapons, fidayeen [suicide] attacks and IED [improvised explosive device] blasts," the NIA said.

During the investigation into the blast case, it was also established that Bangladeshi national Sadik Sumon was one of the trainers of the JMB and used to teach violent jihad by delivering motivational speeches.

"He [Sumon] was actively involved in motivating the vulnerable youths from Sahebganj area as well as from Murshidabad for undergoing terrorist training camps organised by the JMB in which handling of arms, explosives besides manufacturing bombs and physical training were imparted to them," according to the NIA statement.

## Why so shy

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statements on Victory Day in 1994, 1995, 1996, 2013, 2014 and 2015 and on Independence Day in 2014 and 2015.

It is a historical truth that the Pakistan army and their collaborators -- Razakar, Al-Badr and Al-Shams -- carried out one of the world's most murderous attacks on the eve of Bangladesh's victory. Sensing an imminent defeat, they started abducting and killing teachers, writers, doctors, lawyers, journalists and other professionals to cripple the nation intellectually.

Al-Badr was formed by the leaders and activists of Islami Chhatra Sangha, the then student wing of Jamaat.

Jamaat leader Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed, who was a top leader of Al-Badr, was hanged last month for war crimes, including killing of intellectuals.

During the war, Jamaat and its associate bodies opposed Bangladesh's independence and fought tooth and nail to thwart it.

"Assuming that the country's intellectuals would lead the nation in industry, literature, culture and towards prosperity, the occupation force planned to kill intellectuals sensing their certain defeat," Khaleida said in her statement in 1999.

In 1995, when she was prime minister, Khaleida said, "Some of the country's intellectuals were killed brutally at the hands of collaborators of Hanadar Bahini on the eve of our ultimate victory in the 1971 great Liberation War."

Her 1996 statement on Martyred Intellectuals Day mentioned: "The Pakistani ruler assaulted and oppressed our intellectual society in different ways. Even many of them had to go to jail."

"But the heinous killing of a good number of noted journalists, educationalists, artists and physicians by the local collaborators of the occupation force two days before the ultimate victory is a crime against humanity, a heinous and cowardice

## It's Pak carnage

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to Jordan for a number of warplanes in the wake of the US congress amending the Foreign Assistance Act at the end of July to prevent the administration from giving Pakistan military assistance.

The US did not want to provide Pakistan with military assistance even under the "one-time exception" policy it had made in October 1970.

At that time the Jordanian military had a fleet of US-made Lockheed F-104 fighters.

Nonetheless, Nixon and Kissinger continued to exert their influence to get military and economic assistance for Pakistan.

Nixon did it for an obvious reason as US Senator Case put it in a question, "Did the US make any commitment to Pakistan on military assistance in connection with the arrangement for your [Nixon's] visit to Peking?"

The senator was quoted by National Security Council staff Harold H Saunders on his memo on "Military Assistance to Pakistan and the Trip to Peking" for Kissinger on July 19, 1971. The diplomatic relations of the US with China had been cut off for 25 years then.

Nixon successfully turned the Bangladesh war into an opportunity for the US to resume diplomatic relations with China.

Supporting Pakistan in the war provided Kissinger and Chinese Ambassador in Paris Huang Chan with a solid ground to initiate their discussion at their meeting on August 16. The meeting was arranged to schedule separate visits for Nixon and Kissinger to China.

"We are prevented by congress from giving military assistance but we understand it if other friends of Pakistan will give them the equipment they need," Kissinger told Chan.

"Indian skilful propaganda" made "it next to impossible to continue military supply to Pakistan", Kissinger continued.

"I told Huang that we would understand the furnishing of military equipment by the PRC [People's Republic of China] to Pakistan [they are doing it anyway]," Kissinger reported to Nixon about the meeting.

Kissinger also shared with Nixon Chan's view of India as "obviously interfering in the internal affairs of Pakistan and is carrying out subversive actions."

The Paris meeting occurred over a month after Kissinger visited New Delhi on July 7, 1971.

"With [Indian] Foreign Minister Singh [Swaran Singh], I began the conversation by saying I felt I owed him as a point of honour an explanation of developments in regard to arms shipments for Pakistan since his visit to Washington," reported Kissinger about his visit to Daniel J Murphy, military assistant to the secretary of defence.

Kissinger did meet Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. "I took the

act."

Asked, Prof Emeritus Anisuzzaman said after taking power in 1979, late president Ziaur Rahman first gave official instructions not to use the term Pakistani occupation force while describing or writing about their atrocities.

"Instead, he started using Hanadar Bahini. And Begum Zia is still following the same policy," he said.

"Begum Zia uses the words Hanadar Bahini, but does not say which force it was. The word Hanadar Bahini does not automatically mean Pakistani occupation force. Likewise, she speaks of local collaborators but does not mention the names of Rajakar, Al-Badr and Al-Shams," he added.

The noted academician also said the atrocities of Rajakar, Al-Badr and Al-Shams in the killing of intellectuals have been proven in court.

"So it is very much disrespectful for the martyred when someone uses only the words Hanadar Bahini and their local collaborators," he added.

BNP spokesperson Asaduzzaman Ripon said although the BNP chief uses the words Hanadar Bahini and their collaborators, they undoubtedly mean the Pakistan occupation force and their local agents -- Rajakar, Al-Badr and Al-Shams -- against whom the nation fought the war.

He also said using the words Hanadar Bahini was not a party policy.

Brig Gen (ret'd) Hannan Shah, a BNP standing committee member, said, "Everyone, except for the critics, understands what she [Khaleida] wants to mean by Hanadar Bahini and their collaborators."

He added he might request the BNP chief to use the words Pakistani occupation force in future.

Goyeshwar Chandra Roy, another BNP standing committee member, said the BNP chief's statements were drafted from the party office and that she did not have a scope to go through them before they were published.

same general line on India's importance without going into as much detail on the arms shipments," he reported.

It is, perhaps, because of his awareness of the letter Gandhi had written to Nixon on August 9.

"Our government is greatly embarrassed that soon after our foreign minister's return from his Washington visit and despite the statements made by ambassador Keating in Bombay on April 16th and by the state departments spokesman on April 15th came the news of fresh supplies of US arms to Pakistan," wrote Indira Gandhi.

Since the 1965 India-Pakistan war, the US refused to "supply or to license the export of lethal end-items for Pakistan" until "the so-called one-time exception" policy was made just ahead of 1971 war, in October 1970.

Under the exception, the US agreed to supply Pakistan with "300 armoured personnel carriers and approximately 20 aircraft".

This arms dealing was dubbed "State Department's deception" by some US congress members.

Kissinger's memo on "Policy Options Toward Pakistan" for Nixon, prepared on April 28, 1971, was a proof. His first option was "Supporting whatever political and military program President Yahya chooses to pursue in the East".

The second option was "On military assistance, we would have to defer all deliveries of ammunition, death-dealing equipment and spare parts...".

Still, Kissinger asserted, "Our military supply, while relatively small and unlikely to affect the outcome of the fighting, is an important symbolic element in our posture."

The symbolic element did have a "selective genocidal" impact on the people of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), according to a March 29, 1971, telegram sent by Archer Kent Blood, then US consul general in Dhaka.

"Appalled At Possibility These Atrocities Are Being Committed With American Equipment," the telegram's first few sentences included.

Two days later, on March 31, in another cable titled "Army Terror Campaign Continues in Dacca...", Blood reported seeing "Two F-86s" taking off in the direction of Pabna following an Army Radio broadcast of Pakistani military facing some resistance there."

The F-86, known as North American Sabre, is best known as the United States' first swept wing fighter.

However, the quantity of war weapons the US had supplied to the Pakistan military could not be known.

Still, on July 7, over lunch with "high level" dignitaries in New Delhi, Kissinger expressed his belief, "...\$20 million of arms shipments..." "...would be forgotten in a couple of years."