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PROBE INTO BLOGGERS, PUBLISHER KILLING

No significant progress so far

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although the first ever verdict in a blogger killing case came yesterday, probes into the murders of most other bloggers and a publisher saw no significant progress last year.

Investigators are yet to submit the charge sheets in cases over the murders of bloggers Avijit Roy, Niladri Chattopadhyay Niloy and Ananta Bijoy Das. They only managed to arrest several suspects.

In September, detectives pressed charges against five suspected Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT) members in the Oyasiquir Rahman killing case, but two of them are still on the run.

Yesterday, a Dhaka court handed down death penalty to two members of the banned outfit -- Faisal bin Nayem alias Dweep and absconding Redwanul Azad Rana -- for the murder of blogger Ahmed Rajib Haider.

ABT chief Mufti Jasimuddin Rahmani, a key accused in the case, was sentenced to five years' imprisonment as well.

Rajib, also a Gonojagoron Mancha activist, was hacked to death near his home in Mirpur in February 2013.

Four other bloggers -- Avijit, Oyasiquir, Ananta and Niladri -- were killed in a similar fashion by suspected militants in seven months since February last year. The incidents took place in Dhaka and Sylhet.

Moreover on October 30 last year, assailants stabbed to death publisher Faisal Arefin Dipan, owner of Jagriti Prokashoni, in the capital's Shabbagh.

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina spends some time with students after opening the Text Book Festival at the Gono Bhaban yesterday. This year, around 35 crore free books will be given out to about four crore students of classes I to X.

Include war history in English textbooks

Suggests PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday stressed the importance of including the Liberation War history in English medium textbooks.

"It's [Liberation War history] there in Bangla medium textbooks, but it's still to get its place with due importance in English medium or English textbooks...this should be done," she said.

The PM made the comments after receiving the results of this year's PSC, Ebtedayee, JSC and JDC, and inaugurating the Book Festival at her official residence, the Gono Bhaban.

She said the great Liberation War is a matter of SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

Councillor aspirants keep BNP alive

Perform a bit better than mayoral hopefuls; AL gets 728 posts against BNP's 369 in 102 municipalities

PANKAG KARMAKAR and PRABIR BARUA CHOWDHURY

The pro-BNP councillor candidates did well in the municipal elections though their party-nominated mayor aspirants suffered a debacle, which has largely been blamed on rampant electoral irregularities.

The Daily Star randomly picked 102 municipalities and found that 369 of the councillors were associated with the BNP



while 728 were from the rival Awami League.

BNP mayoral candidates won in only 12 of these municipalities. The AL candidates on the other hand bagged 77 mayor posts.

An analysis of the results in the municipalities shows that the BNP men did well in councillor races in its well-known strongholds like Chapainawabganj, Rajshahi,

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92pc pass JDC exams

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The results of last year's Ebteday terminal and Junior Dakhil Certificate (JDC) exams under the madrasa education board turned out to be worse than that of 2014, both in terms of the pass rate and GPA-5 achievers.

In Ebteday exams, the pass rate was 95.13 percent, 0.85 percentage points less than that of 2014. The pass rate in JDC exams dropped by 1.04 percentage points, from

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2 more killed in election violence

STAR REPORT

Two more people who were injured in clashes during Wednesday's municipal election in Barguna and Kishoreganj died from their wounds yesterday.

Nurul Islam, 65, of Dhupti village in Barguna Sadar upazila, died at Barguna General Hospital around 11:45am, while Abul Kashem, 55, of Holihor village in Kishoreganj's Hossainpur upazila, at Dhaka Medical College Hospital around 10:30am.

With yesterday's two, three people have been killed in the polls violence.

On Wednesday morning, Nurul Amin, of Boaliapara in Chittagong's Satkania upazila, was shot dead near Satkania Govt Primary School centre when supporters of two councillor aspirants traded bullets.

Meanwhile, Mohammad Ishak, elder son of Nurul Islam in Barguna, claimed that his father was caught in chaos of a clash and somehow got

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Rat on plane



BBC ONLINE

A plane travelling from Mumbai to London was forced to turn back mid-flight after a rat was spotted on board, local media report.

Flight AI 131 travelling to London on Wednesday was flying over Iran when someone on board said they spotted the rodent, reports said.

Passengers continued their journey on a replacement aircraft some

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51 migrants found in Costa Rica truck

Bangladeshi among the rescued

AFP, San José

Officials in Costa Rica discovered 51 migrants from Bangladesh, Nepal, Somalia, Eritrea, Iraq and Pakistan in a cattle truck driven by suspected people-smugglers Wednesday, authorities said.

The vehicle was pulled over in the Pacific coast town of Herradura and the migrants, who were without visas, were found inside, the public security ministry said.

The Costa Rican driver of the truck and three other people with him were detained on suspicion of people trafficking, a crime which can result in sentences of two to six years in prison.

A ministry spokesman, Carlos Hidalgo, said of the migrants: "They were crammed in like cattle, it was a terrible situation."

The foreigners had been brought over the border from Panama and said they had each paid smugglers \$4,000 to \$15,000, Hidalgo said, adding: "But it is not yet clear to where they were headed."

Twenty-six of the migrants were from Nepal, nine from Bangladesh, nine from Somalia, four from Eritrea, two from Iraq and one from Pakistan.

They were handed over to immigration officials.

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PHOTO: ENAM UL HAQUE



Three Black Kites rest on the ground at Sari-Ghat in Keraniganj, Dhaka. They spend a lot of time soaring and gliding in search of food.

Close to nature, on the city outskirts

ENAM UL HAQUE

On this chilly Friday morning, you may enjoy a stroll through warm sand dunes without going far from the city centre. This little known white expanse of flat sand is on the other side of the Buriganga and incredibly close to city dwellers. From Dhaka Zero Point you may cycle to this lustrous area in less than 30 minutes on holidays. You take the Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge to cross the river and turn

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Bangladeshi killed in BSF shooting

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Members of Indian Border Security Force shot dead a Bangladeshi national near the Borogram border in Dinajpur early yesterday.

The dead, Mohammad Nuruzzaman, 30, was the son of Sahidur Rahman of Borogram village under Sadar upazila.

Lt Col Korban Ali,

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PRAYER TIMING

JANUARY 1

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5-15 12-30 3-45 5-19 7-00
JAMAAT 5-50 1-15 4-00 5-22 7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

অভিনন্দন

অতি সম্প্রতি জাতিসংঘের খাদ্য ও কৃষি সংস্থা কর্তৃক বিশ্ব ঐতিহ্যের স্বীকৃতিপ্রাপ্ত বাংলাদেশের লোক প্রযুক্তি (Indigenous Technology) ভাসমান পদ্ধতিতে সবজি চাষ আধুনিকায়ন, সম্প্রসারণ ও বিশ্বব্যাপি পরিচিতিকরণে অনুসরণীয় অবদান রাখার জন্য গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী জননেত্রী শেখ হাসিনা এবং মাননীয় কৃষিমন্ত্রী মতিয়া চৌধুরী এমপি-কে প্রাণঢালা অভিনন্দন।



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শুভ ২০১৬।

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