



**BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in tears as she offers *fateha* at the grave of her youngest son Arafat Rahman Koko at the Banani Graveyard yesterday. It was Koko's first death anniversary.** PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

## Canada shooting suspect charged with murder

AFP, Montreal

A 17-year-old male student has been charged with four counts of first-degree murder following a shooting spree that left two brothers and two teachers dead in western Canada, authorities said Saturday.

The high school student was also charged with seven counts of attempted murder over those injured in Friday's rampage at a home and nearby school in remote La Loche, in Saskatchewan province, Royal Canadian Mounted Police Superintendent Grant St Germaine told reporters.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called the shooting "every parent's worst nightmare."

Unlike in the United States, mass shootings are rare in Canada, where firearms are more regulated than south of the border.

The teenager, who has not been named, is suspected of having killed two brothers -- Drayden and Dayne Fontaine, aged 13 and 17 -- at their home before going to a nearby school.

## DU expels

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Studies, was expelled for robbing a youth by threatening to rape his female friend.

Proctor Amzad said, "We suspended them after the allegations were raised. After separate investigations, the DU authorities expelled the guilty students."

The syndicate meeting also suspended a teacher of German language under the Institute of Modern Language for allegedly moonlighting at an embassy illegally.

A five-member probe committee was formed to investigate the matter.

The syndicate also suspended the salary increments of a teacher of the department of Persian language and literature for three years for having a relationship with a student, a syndicate member told The Daily Star.

## 1969 mass

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Bangladesh Mahila Parishad President Ayesha Khanam said the information of the 60s should be included in the school textbooks to teach new generation about the history of the country.

Noted author Selina Hossain presided over the programme.

Awami League presidium member Nooh-ul-Alam Lenin, Moni-Singh-Farhad Memorial Trust's Trustee Member Mahub Zaman, and Oikya Nap President Pankaj Bhattacharya, among others, spoke at the ceremony.

## Facebook

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On safe internet as well, Tarana added.

On November 30 last year, Tarana wrote to the Facebook authorities to sign a deal with the government and Facebook also replied to the letter immediately.

But yesterday she said the global leading social media site is helping the Bangladesh government as per its requirement, and that is why there is no need to ink a deal with the Facebook immediately.

"Facebook will also run a feasibility study in Bangladesh for their business purposes and that will also help us establish strong ties with them [the Facebook authorities]."

The Bangladesh government kept Facebook along with some other social media blocked from 18 November to 10 December last year on security ground.

Tarana yesterday said they have no intention to suppress people's voice, but blocking social media at that time saved people's lives.

## Portugal starts voting in key presidential ballot

AFP, Lisbon

Portuguese voters began yesterday to choose their president, in an election being closely watched in Brussels as the country recovers from a 78-billion-euro (\$85-billion) bailout.

Although the post is largely ceremonial, the president has make-or-break power over the nation's fragile ruling alliance and the power to dissolve parliament in the event of a crisis.

Since inconclusive elections in October, Portugal's minority Socialist government has been relying on a delicate coalition with the extreme-left to run the country of 10.4 million people.

The overwhelming favourite for the next head of state is a TV pundit, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa.

Known as "professor Marcelo" to his fans, he comes into the race with a popularity that has been built thanks to decades in the public eye.

"I voted for professor Marcelo. I have been seeing him on television for years and I know his political beliefs," said Mario Machado, a 72-year-old pensioner, speaking in a posh Lisbon quarter.

The 67-year-old law professor has been involved in Portuguese politics and media since his youth, co-founding a weekly newspaper in his 20s and helping to establish the centre-right Social Democratic Party.

Starting in the early 2000s he made his debut as a political analyst on TV, delivering clever commentary to a viewership that quickly grew.

"People love Marcelo because he is entertaining," said Rebelo de Sousa's biographer Vitor Matos.

His popularity is widely expected to help him break the 50-percent mark for an outright win in yesterday's voting. If none of the 10 candidates breaches this threshold, a run-off will be held on February 14.

The centre-right bloc of former conservative prime minister Pedro Passos Coelho won the most seats in the October ballot, but lost the absolute majority it had enjoyed since 2011.

The government of Socialist Prime Minister Antonio Costa has promised to implement a moderate programme that upholds European Union budget commitments.

But it is forced to count on the support in parliament of a bloc of communists and greens that has not renounced its critical stance towards European budgetary rules and Portugal's membership of Nato.

Rebelo de Sousa is a long-time conservative who has the backing of right wing parties but who claims total independence.

He insists he will not be partisan but seek to rule "above the fray".

He would succeed Anibal Cavaco Silva, a conservative who has served two consecutive five-year terms and who had been reluctant to hand power to a leftist coalition he viewed as "incoherent".

Rebelo de Sousa, who is projected in the latest opinion polls to grab between 52 and 55 percent of the vote, has said he will do "everything I can" to ensure the current government's stability.

"He is a consensus candidate and a moderate who takes votes both on the left and on the right. But the voters will have to mobilise for him to be elected in the first round," political analyst Jose Antonio Passos Palmeira told AFP.

Independent leftist Antonio Sampaio da Noiva, also a university professor, is his nearest rival with polls putting his support at between 17 and 22 percent.

Rather than choose De Noiva, the Socialist Party chose as its official candidate former health minister Maria de Belem Roseira, who is on course for between an 8 and 13 percent vote share.

Around 9.7 million people are registered to vote, but the turnout rate in presidential elections is traditionally poor. In 2011, just one voter in two bothered to cast their ballot.

Polling booths opened at 8:00 am (0800 GMT) and were to close at 1900 GMT, save for the mid-Atlantic Azores archipelago, where they opening and closing one hour later.

Some voters registered in the United States were facing having to vote next week owing to blizzard conditions which kept polls shut in Washington while others in some eastern areas were forced to close, Portuguese daily Publico quoted the national election commission as saying.

Whatever the result, the support of one international celebrity is not in doubt. Sacked Chelsea coach Jose Mourinho has called Rebelo de Sousa a "charismatic winner" in a video of support on YouTube.

## Mother, husband

FROM PAGE 16

unconscious and he then raped her for five days, Tuni said.

When locals learnt about it, they informed police of the matter.

Shahrasti police arrested Nazma, stepfather Suruj Mia, 45, and Ebaidul on Saturday.

The Senior Judicial Magistrate's Court of Chandpur sent the three to jail when they were produced before it that day.

After recording the girl's statement yesterday, the court handed the girl over to Tuni's custody.

## Bringing sedition charge

FROM PAGE 1

Khaleda, at a programme on December 21 last year, said, "There are controversies over how many were martyred in the Liberation War. There are also many books and documents on the controversies."

Her comments sparked protest among different quarters and on social media.

Two days after her comments, Momtaz, also a former secretary of Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA), sent a legal notice to Khaleda, asking her to apologise to the nation for her remarks.

In the notice, he also demanded that the BNP chief withdraw her statement within seven days. As Khaleda did not respond, he sought the home ministry's consent to file a sedition case against her.

Confirming the permission for filing the case, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal at a programme in the capital yesterday said they gave a guideline on filing of sedition charges.

Meanwhile, BNP leader and SCBA President Khandker Mahub Hossain yesterday claimed that there is no element of sedition in the statement of Khaleda.

Under the relevant law, sedition takes place if anybody attempts to depose the government or makes statement provoking the people against the government, but Khaleda has not done so by her statement, he told reporters at his SCBA office.

Mahub, an adviser to the BNP chief, said the government was driven by emotion when it gave the approval to file a sedition case against Khaleda.

He also said the "authentic number" of the martyrs whose blood has brought the independence of the country should be known to all.

## NBR unlikely to allow

FROM PAGE 1

is compulsory for 11 types of service providers and large and medium businesses to use electronic cash registers or point of sales to issue sales receipts.

But this is not properly followed in many cases, depriving the government of huge amounts of revenue, it says.

Rab said its mobile courts, headed by executive magistrates, have received appreciation from all quarters for drives against various offences, including food adulteration, as well as fake doctors and illegal blood banks.

As the VAT Act 1991 is not included in the schedule of the Mobile Court Law 2009, it is not possible for the mobile courts to carry out drives against VAT evaders.

"As a result, the tendency to evade VAT is rising day by day ...," it said.

Contacted, Commander Mufi Mahmud Khan, director of Rab's Legal and Media wing, said the reasons for giving Rab the responsibility were aptly mentioned in the letter.

"I have nothing more to say," he told this correspondent yesterday.

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to the NBR chairman towards the end of October last year, requesting the revenue authority to take "necessary steps" for inclusion of VAT Act 1991 in the schedule of the mobile court law, which empowers executive magistrates to give verdicts for offences under 108 laws.

The letter, signed by Rab Director General Benazir Ahmed, reads there are allegations that some businesses do not properly deposit value-added tax (VAT) collected from customers with the state coffers.

The Daily Star has obtained a copy of the letter.

Following the Rab move, businesses expressed fears that allowing the elite force to run mobile courts for collecting VAT would have a negative impact on the country's trade and investment.

At a meeting with Finance Minister AMA Muhith early this month, M Anis Ud Dowla, former president of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said it would be very unfortunate if Rab is engaged in collecting VAT from businesses.

In its letter to the NBR, Rab said it

## Altat Mahmud

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where he had been undergoing treatment for severe neurological complications since January 14.

Altat Mahmud was the president of a faction of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and a permanent member of the Jatiya Press Club.

He left behind his wife, a son, two daughters and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn his death.

President Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir expressed deep sorrow over his demise.

His first namaz-e-janaza was held on Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) premises at 11:30am and the second one at the Jatiya Press Club at 12:15pm.

Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu, Prime Minister's Media Adviser Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Food Minister Quamrul Islam, Railways Minister Mujibul Haque, Awami League Joint General Secretary Mahubul Alam Hanif, among others, took part in the funeral prayers.

The journalist leader will be buried at his village home in Golachipa upazila of Patuakhali at 10:00am today after another namaz-e-janaza there.

Among others who expressed sorrow at Altat's death were LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain, Cultural Affairs Minister Asaduzzaman Noor, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid, Inspector General of Police AKM Shahidul Hoque, Jatiya Press Club President Muhammad Shafiqur Rahman and Secretary Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, DRU President Jamal Uddin and General Secretary Razu Ahmed, and Diplomatic Correspondents Association, Bangladesh (DCAB) President Angur Nahar Monty and Secretary Pantho Rahman.

The BFUJ has announced three days of mourning.

## Water transport

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Currently, their minimum wage is Tk 4,150, instead of which they are demanding Tk 10,000.

The government bodies concerned and the vessel owners are hopeful that a solution will come at a tripartite meeting to be held within a day or two.

Talking to The Daily Star, Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan said he had directed the leaders and officials of all the stakeholders to resolve the issue through discussion.

"We have already held a meeting with the owners and workers today [Sunday]. We have requested the officials of the labour directorate, owners and workers' union to sit for discussion within a day or two to solve the problem," said Commodore Mohammad Mozammel Haque, chairman of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA).

Badiuzzaman Badal, senior vice-chairman of Bangladesh Inland Waterways (passenger carriers) Association, said, "We are trying to solve the problem. But it is very difficult for us to increase wages if the government does not increase fares."

There are around 2 lakh water transport workers in the country, according to an estimation of the workers' federation.

The workers' other demands include ensuring security of on-duty workers, preventing extortion, issuance of appointment letters, and maintaining navigability of waterways.

## Museum

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One suggestion was that it had been knocked off accidentally, another that it had been removed after becoming loose. Prosecutors said workers then "recklessly" tried to cover up the mistake, using large amounts of inappropriate glue in an effort to fix it.

In all, they made four attempts to reattach the beard, on the later three occasions also trying to remove evidence of their earlier failed efforts.

One report, in the Daily News Egypt, quoted prosecutors as saying: "Ignoring all scientific methods of restoration, the suspects tried to conceal their crime by using sharp metal tools to remove parts of the glue that became visible, thus damaging the 3,000-year-old piece without a moment of conscience."

Those due to face trial include a former director of the museum and a former director of restoration.

Last October, a team of conservators led by German experts began work to remove the damage and reattach the beard professionally. Following successful restoration, the mask was put back on public display in December.

# Missing bookseller met wife in China: HK police

AFP, Hong Kong

A Hong Kong publisher whose disappearance from the city raised fears he was abducted by Chinese officials has met his wife on the mainland and is reportedly "in good spirits", Hong Kong police said yesterday.

Lee Bo was the fifth employee of a Hong Kong publishing house known for producing salacious titles critical of Chinese leaders to have gone missing in recent months.

Lee, a British citizen, disappeared on December 30 in semi-autonomous Hong Kong, where mainland Chinese law enforcers are officially barred from operating.

Three others went missing in mainland China while Gui Minhai, who has Swedish nationality, disappeared in Thailand.

Hong Kong police said early yesterday that Lee, 65, had met his wife Sophie Choi at an unspecified location in China the previous day.

"Police have received notification from Lee Bo's wife that she met with Lee Bo at a guesthouse in mainland China in the afternoon of January 23," a statement said.

"Mrs Lee said Lee Bo is healthy and in good spirits. Now he is assisting an investigation as a witness," the statement said without elaborating.

There was no immigration record of Lee having left Hong Kong last month. Activists, local media and even pro-Beijing politicians in the city have expressed concern about the case.

They say any abduction would be a serious breach of the "One country, two systems" agreement, under which Hong Kong was returned to China in 1997 but was allowed to retain freedoms not available on the mainland.

Local media have published numerous letters purportedly written by Lee -- in which he said he entered the mainland voluntarily -- after his wife retracted her report to police listing her husband as missing.

But human rights activists said the developments smacked of "intimidation" tactics by China.

Hong Kong's Sing Tao newspaper yesterday published a photo of Lee and his wife, as well as a letter said to have been written by him, in which he said he is "free and safe".

A weeping Gui Minhai appeared on Chinese state television last week, saying he was in China to "take legal responsibilities" for killing a college student in a car accident there 11 years ago.

His confession was rejected by activists, who described it as a "smokescreen".

Hong Kong is supposed to retain its self-governing and semi-autonomous system until 2047. But many fear Beijing is quietly imposing its authoritarian stamp on the city.

## EC draws attention

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The elections to 234 municipalities were held on December 30 and the mayor candidate Shasha Dhar Sen, whom Sharif was reportedly backing, ultimately lost the election.

The EC filed the complaint after the returning officer of Phulpur municipality polls Subrata Paul alleged that he received threats from the lawmaker for "not working in favour of the lawmaker-supported mayor candidate".

Paul, also upazila nirbahi officer of Phulpur in Mymensingh, filed a complaint with the deputy commissioner on December 31.

The DC sent the complaint to the cabinet secretary, and subsequently the cabinet division forwarded it to the EC.

Paul alleged that the lawmaker had been mounting pressure on him to work in favour of the AL-nominated candidate since November 24. The MP on several occasions put pressure on him to ignore the violations of electoral codes of conducts by him and his men. Breaching the electoral rules, the lawmaker joined the campaign repeatedly, alleged the returning officer.

On polls day, followers of the MP mounted pressure on the election official to allow stuffing of ballot boxes, Paul said.

Homemade bombs were exploded inside the home of Paul and in front of his office on the evening on December 30 after voting was completed.

A day after the election day, Sharif called Paul and threatened him, the official said.

"In such a situation, my family members and I feel insecure," Paul said in the letter and requested the DC of Mymensingh to take necessary steps.

When The Daily Star called MP Sharif Ahmed over the phone to have his comments regarding the matter, he was dealing with the loss of a family member yesterday. This paper chose not to ask him questions about the allegations against him for the time being.

Talking to The Daily Star, EC Secretary Sirazul Islam said, "We have sent letters to the prime minister and the Speaker of parliament to bring the issue to their attention."

In response to a question, the secretary said the commission had nothing to do apart from filing the complaint.

## US blizzard winds down

FROM PAGE 16

Cuomo. In Baltimore, a travel ban was lifted, but some restrictions remain in place, reports AP.

"You never like to disrupt transportation and commerce. However, the storm was fast and furious," said Cuomo.

Strong winds raised concerns of flooding for much of the east coast, the National Weather Service warned, with streets in some New Jersey coastal towns filled with water and ice, reports AFP.

But Mother Nature -- after buffeting east coast residents with one of the worst storms in years -- appeared to be in a more charitable mood yesterday, with forecasts predicting sunshine, blue sky and above-freezing temperatures to aid the snow removal.

**CARS BURIED BY SNOW**

In New York, bus services were suspended and overland commuter and subway trains were shut as Broadway cancelled performances, museums closed, shops shuttered and the region's pro sports teams rescheduled matches.

Metro and bus networks were shut down in Washington for the entire weekend, and largely shut in Philadelphia and New Jersey. Thousands of motorists were stranded for hours on highways further south.

The vast majority of flights were cancelled across much of the region, but authorities said they were working around the clock to restore operations yesterday, with the first arrivals and departures expected at midday in New York.

Plows struggled to clear streets, where parked cars were buried under the snow and visibility worsened Saturday as night fell and howling winds created massive snowdrifts.

Reagan National and Dulles International airports in the US capital were expected to remain closed through yesterday.

Amid the hardship there was a moment of levity provided by Tian Tian, the baby panda at the National Zoo in Washington. Footage of the panda rolling in the snow quickly went viral.

**POWER OUTAGES**

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, a Republican presidential contender, left the campaign trail to oversee the emergency response in his snowbound state, where he said there were 90,000 power outages.

Nearly 120,000 power outages were reported in North Carolina, emergency officials said. In Washington the national monuments, Capitol building and Smithsonian museum were all closed.

Even a massive snowball fight in Washington's Dupont Circle, which 3,000 people said on Facebook they would attend, was postponed until yesterday due to the storm's ferocity.

Snow and sleet also hit the southern states of Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, North Carolina, West Virginia and Virginia -- unusual for the region.

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<b>SECOND QUARTER (Q2) FINANCIAL RESULTS FY 2015-16</b>			
In compliance with Regulation 17(2) of DSE (Listing) Regulation 2015, Dhaka Electric Supply Company Limited (DESCO) is pleased to publish the Financial Statements (Un-audited) for the Second Quarter (Q2) period ended on December 31, 2015. Comparative information of the Financial Statements is presented below:			
<b>Particulars</b>	<b>Oct15-Dec15</b>	<b>Oct14-Dec14</b>	
Net Turnover (Tk.)	7,636,758,729	6,378,364,725	
Net Profit After Tax (Tk.)	271,814,052	472,976,689	
Earnings Per Share (EPS)(Tk.)	0.68	1.19	
Net Operating Cash Flow Per Share (NOCFPS)(Tk.)	2.17	1.79	
	<b>At 31 Dec 2015</b>	<b>At 30 Sep 2015</b>	
Net Asset Value (Tk.)	13,922,135,597	12,933,033,213	
Net Asset Value Per Share (NAVPS) (Tk.)	36.76	34.15	
<b>Note: The details of the published Financial Statements are available at our website.</b>			
It may further be noted here that the said statements will be sent to the registered addresses of the honorable shareholders in due course.			
By Order of the Board			
Sd/- <b>Engr. Zulfikar Tahmid</b> Company Secretary			
January 24, 2016			