

## Khamaru held again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A man who is believed to have masterminded operations of Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) in Rajshahi in 2004 and been freed on being arrested three times since then was apprehended by police in Rajshahi's Bagmara upazila yesterday.

Arrested on a tip-off at the Hamirkutsa polythene market area around 11:00am, Mahtab Khamaru is wanted in a case filed with Bagmara Police Station in June under the anti-terrorism act, said Officer-in-Charge Selim Hossain.

Son of Mohammad Ali Khamaru of Talgharia village, he is also accused in two torture and extortion cases of 2004, the trials over which are now ongoing, he added.

The around 50-year-old identifies himself as a member of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal.

However, police say he was a regional commander of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and the second-in-command of executed JMB leader Siddiqui Islam Bangla Bhai.

As per information revealed over the years by sources including JMB, locals, law enforcers and intelligence agencies, Mahtab was arrested on November 27, 2005; March 9, 2007 and July 23, 2012.

According to a US embassy cable released by Wikileaks, he was released in 2005 as per the then prime minister Khaleda Zia's elder son Tarique Rahman's request to the state minister for home.

The sources said prior to announcing their presence, top JMB leaders operated under the JMJB banner on an experimental basis in Naldanga of Natore, Bagmara of Rajshahi and Atrai and Raninagar upazilas of Naogaon.

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People rush across the road in Karwan Bazar of the capital on Sunday, defying the fast moving oncoming vehicles. Just two days ago, on Friday, a nine-year-old madrasa boy was killed nearby after being run over by a bus while he was doing the same -- getting across the road in haste.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## 'Robber' killed in 'gunfight' with Barisal cops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A wanted criminal in 16 cases, including murder and robbery, was killed in a gunfight in Bakerganj upazila of Barisal early yesterday, said police.

According to Bakerganj police, they arrested Farid alias Khokon, 36, leader of a robbery gang "Khokon Bahani", of Niamati union on Sunday morning and later they went to Pourasava Government Primary School along with Khokon to recover fire arms.

Khokon tried to flee and was injured when his cohorts opened fire on the police team and the team fired back. One shutter gun, one pipe gun, two sharp weapons and nine bullets were recovered from the spot, they added.

He was declared dead at Bakerganj Health Complex.

## Militants' bodies to be buried unclaimed

Says Home Minister Asaduzzaman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The bodies of all militants killed in law enforcers' raids will be given to social welfare organisation Anjuman-e-Mafidul Islam for burial as unclaimed bodies, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal said yesterday.

On September 22, five dead Gulshan café attackers and a chef were buried at the Jurain graveyard in the capital as nobody claimed their bodies, the minister said.

Two of the six families, however, earlier said they had wanted the bodies. "We will hand over the rest of the bodies to Anjuman-e-Mafidul Islam as their families are not willing to receive them," Kamal told reports at his ministry office.

The bodies of 14 other militants killed in separate police raids at

Kalyanpur, Narayanganj, Mirpur and Azimpur have been kept at the Dhaka Medical College (DMC) morgue following autopsies.

Recently, DMC urged Dhaka Metropolitan Police to take necessary steps to take back the militants' bodies from its mortuary because it was overflowing.

Of the 14 bodies, nine are of militants who were killed in the Kalyanpur operation on July 26.

**OVERNIGHT STAY AT SECRETARIAT** About the home ministry's bar on staying in the Secretariat at night after the office hours, Kamal said, "We have taken the decision based on an intelligence report."

However, the bar will not apply to ministers, secretaries and officials concerned, he said.

Other officials will have to take permission, he added.

## Woman jumps off Ctg hospital building

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A 25-year-old woman reportedly attempted to commit suicide by jumping off a four-storey hospital building at Anderkillah in Chittagong city yesterday.

Shamima Talukder, daughter of Abul Bashar, did a midwifery course at the adjacent nursing institute of the Jameson Red Crescent Maternity Hospital in 2014, said in-charge of the hospital Mostafizur Rahman.

When Shamima was found on the ground, she said no one was responsible for the incident and did not disclose the reason behind the attempt, he said, adding that she was in touch with the institute and the hospital and might have gone there to visit a friend.

Shamima is undergoing treatment at Chittagong Medical College Hospital. Kotwali police are investigating the matter.

## Family of stolen baby refuses to leave DMCH

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

The poor family of a three-month-old baby girl, who was stolen from Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) on Thursday, has been waiting anxiously at the hospital for the last four days for her rescue.

Her destitute parents, who are from Shibchar upazila of Madaripur, yesterday said they would not leave the hospital until they got the girl back.

"I want my daughter back. I will stay if it takes time," said Nasima Begum, mother of the child.

The woman and her three daughters had been staying in the hospital for the last two and a half months with her husband Bahadur Dhali who was admitted to the hospital for a brain tumour.

On Thursday, a woman introducing herself as an attendant of an expecting mother stole the baby girl.

Bahadur said he could not go here and there to search for his daughter due to his weak physical condition. It will be difficult

for them to go back to their village and return again to Dhaka, he added.

After Bahadur underwent a surgery about two weeks earlier, he was about to get released from the hospital on Saturday, but the family refused to leave after the baby was stolen.

An unidentified woman stole the girl by tricking her elder sister into bringing the baby out of the hospital building on Thursday afternoon.

The woman identified her as Khadiza, said Nasima.

Nasima, 28, a mother of three daughters, said the woman, clad in burqa and aged about 35 to 40, went to the family at the corridor of the neurosurgery ward and exchanged pleasantries.

She told Nasima that she was attending her sister who was expecting a baby. She inquired Nasima about her daughters and also said she was a mother of four sons.

Later she tricked Nasima's eldest daughter Shorna, 10, when Nasima was sleeping,

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## Relations with govt not always cordial for media's critical role

Indian press council chairman tells Dhaka discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Relations between the mass media and a government cannot always be cordial because of the critical watchdog role the media has to play, said Justice Chandramauli Kumar Prasad, chairman of Press Council of India (PCI), in the capital yesterday.

It is possible only if an ideal government is in place, he told a bilateral discussion on "Media development and Indo-Bangla relationship" organised by Jatiya Press Club on its premises.

A journalist's capability to question with confidence makes journalism a great job, he observed.

Justice Prasad is leading an 11-member PCI delegation comprising renowned editors and journalists, who arrived in the city on a five-day visit.

The PCI, established in 1966 by the Parliament, with the objectives of protecting press freedom and improving the standards of journalistic practice, is an independent body, in the formation of which the government has no direct intervention, he said.

Justice Prasad added that his council would like to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU)

with the Press Council of Bangladesh (PCB).

Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, media advisor to the prime minister, said that the media community has been demanding for more empowerment of the press council to defend press freedom and rights of journalists.

Chowdhury told the Indian delegation that Bangladeshi television channels are not shown in India although all the Indian channels are shown uninterrupted in Bangladesh.

Prasad said it is not due to any prohibition but due to regulatory reasons.

The Indian delegation explained that regulatory rules require a high amount of fees to downlink foreign channels in India, adding that they would raise Bangladesh's concern at relevant fora.

Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul, president of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists and senior vice-president of the National Press Club, said that the issue was raised at all levels including with the former premier of India but to no avail.

PCB Chairman Justice Md Mamtaz Uddin Ahmed and Jatiya Press Club President Muhammad Shafiqur Rahman were also present.

## Khoka's Gazipur land confiscated

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur



The government took control of former Dhaka mayor and BNP senior leader Sadeque Hossain Khoka's 66.56 acres of land in Gazipur.

The Gazipur administration on Saturday confiscated the pieces of land in line with the court directives as these were allegedly acquired illegally by Khoka.

The authorities concerned also put up signboards saying that these were freed from occupation.

Deputy Commissioner of Gazipur SM Alam said there are some pieces of land in the name of BNP leader Sadeque Hossain Khoka at different moujas of Kaliakai.

Of the land, 83 acres are in joint ownership at Janerchala, Banshtoli, Kaliadah, Taltoli, Bagambar and Kacharos moujas, while 66.56 acres, which were acquired illegally, are in the ownership of Khoka, he said.

The illegally amassed properties were identified several days back and a notice was sent to Khoka in accordance with law, informing him about it, the DC mentioned,

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Bahadur Dhali, a brain tumour patient, with his wife Nasima Begum, and two daughters at the neurosurgery ward of Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday. The couple had another three month old baby girl, inset, who was stolen on Thursday by a woman.

PHOTO: SHAHEEN MOLLAH



Representatives of Bangladesh Press Council and the Press Council of India take part in a bilateral discussion at the Press Institute of Bangladesh in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Trains to reach every district

Says planning minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal yesterday told parliament that all districts in the country would be brought under railway connectivity.

He made the remark while replying to a supplementary question from a ruling party lawmaker in the House.

The minister said the rail connectivity would be set up in phases as it is now a demand of the people. Besides, existing district level rail lines will also be renovated, he added.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, replying to a lawmaker's query, said a total of 52,333 police personnel and 23,523 members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) were recruited in the last six years.

Replying to another lawmaker's query, he said the government has taken a project to construct 18 "residence towers" across the country for police personnel. In the first phase, the towers will be built in Dhaka, Chittagong, Gazipur, Narayanganj, Sylhet and Comilla, he said. Barracks are also being constructed in all districts to mitigate the accommodation crisis of the police force, added the home boss.

## 10 gold bars recovered at Dhaka airport's toilet dustbin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs intelligence yesterday recovered 10 gold bars, weighing three kilogrammes, from a dustbin inside a toilet at the immigration department of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in the capital.

Smuggler might have abandoned the gold bars sending presence of security men, customs intelligence officials suspected.

Market price of the gold bars is believed to be Tk 1.5 crore.

They are trying to identify the passenger(s) through scrutinising the CCTV footages, an official told The Daily Star.

## 3 Mymensingh men sued over war crimes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A case was filed against three men with a Mymensingh court yesterday for their alleged involvement in crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War.

Abdul Latif, a resident of Salimpur village in the district's Trishal upazila, filed the case with the Cognizance Court-3.

The accused are: Makkes Ali, 72, and his two brothers Nurul Islam, 68, and Noor Mohammad, 65.

In the case, plaintiff Abdul Latif, 69, stated that the accused allegedly torched and looted their houses in September.

The accused killed his elder brother Abdul Mannan and raped his elder sister Jomila Khatun after abducting them, he alleged.

The court accepted the case and no order was passed, said its inspector Nowjesh Ali Miah.