

In TEARS they mourn

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There was pin-drop silence inside the conference room of the Police Headquarters. Everyone stood in silence for a minute from 12:25pm in memory of the two police inspectors killed during an anti-militancy drive in Sylhet last month. Struggling to keep their emotions in check for sometime, the family members of the slain officers broke down in tears, making the air heavy with grief. Mohammad Abu Kaiser, inspector of court police in Sylhet, and Monirul Islam, inspector (investigation) of Jalalabad Police Station, suffered fatal injuries in two blasts near a militant hideout at Atia Mahal on March 25. Hours later, they died at a hospital.

"My husband was the lone breadwinner of our



Fifteen-month-old Farabi stares at his weeping mother sitting on her lap at the police headquarters yesterday. His father Monirul Islam, inspector (investigation) of Jalalabad Police Station, died during last month's raid on a militant den in Sylhet. The IGP yesterday honoured the families of two deceased police officials.

Misappropriation of fertiliser by a syndicate involved in shipment and transport, and mismanagement by its custodian -- the Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation -- have scuttled government's commendable initiative for farm sector. This systematic graft has cost the state about Tk 100 crore each year since 2009. HASAN JAHID TUSHER follows up his recent four-part series on this institutional corruption with two more reports. Here is the first part.

Where crimes draw no flak

A culture of impunity has been reigning supreme in the state-run Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) for years. A look into the affairs of the corporation reveals that even a parliamentary standing committee could not get the corporation to take action against its officials for corruption, negligence and malpractice. For example, BCIC's own investigation found two of its officers and a fertiliser transporter misappropriated over 1,500 tonnes of urea worth Tk 3.94 crore in fiscal 2015-2016. Nabir Uddin Khan, former in-charge of Shantahar buffer warehouse, now on post-retirement leave, and contractor Bulk Trade International were directly involved in this. They prepared fake documents that showed the fertiliser reached the BCIC warehouse. Masudur Rahman, an accounts official of Shahjalal Fertiliser Company Ltd posted at the Shantahar warehouse at that time, was indirectly involved, according to the 2016 probe led by Alta Masul Islam, deputy manager (administration). Masudur helped Nabir and the Bulk Trade contractor realise the bill. The probe report was submitted to the BCIC marketing division on November 27 last year. The BCIC's then head of marketing

MG!

"Such a strong movement would be waged that it would remove the statue and the chief justice."

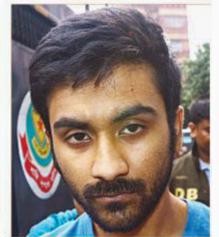
CHORMONAI PIR AND ISLAMI ANDOLAN BANGLADESH AMEER
MUFTI SYED MUHAMMAD REZAUL KARIM
AT A VIEWS-EXCHANGE MEETING AT THE IAB PALTAN OFFICE YESTERDAY

Cut kerosene, diesel prices

Proposes CPD for next budget; wants VAT 12pc from 15pc

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Centre for Policy Dialogue yesterday said the value-added tax rate should be 12 percent in the low- and middle-income countries in South and East Asia. Bangladesh's proposed uniform VAT rate of 15 percent is on the high side when compared to neighbouring low- and middle-income countries in South and East Asia, said CPD research fellow Towfiqul Islam Khan. He made the comments while presenting the think-tank's recommendations for fiscal 2017-18 budget in the capital's Brac Centre Inn. The global median rate for VAT is 15 percent, but in South and East Asia and among low- and middle-income countries in general, the median appears to be 12 percent. If a uniform VAT rate is to be implemented from July 1, it is recommended that the rate be reduced to 12 percent gradually over a medium term, the CPD said. It is hoped that after the uniform 15 percent VAT rate gets effective, the ensuing revenue expansion will enable the



Tahmid acquitted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tahmid Hasib Khan, who was arrested for "instigating" the Gulshan café attackers and also charged with hiding information from police, is now free. A Dhaka court yesterday acquitted Tahmid, on bail, of a charge filed for not giving information to police about the terrorist attack on Gulshan Holey Artisan Bakery on July 1 last year.

Erdogan 'winner' in Turkey referendum

Results leave country divided; opposition cry foul

AFP, Istanbul

The "Yes" camp in a referendum to give Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan greater powers claimed victory yesterday but the knife-edge result left the country bitterly divided with the opposition crying foul. Opponents fear the constitutional changes, which would grant Erdogan more power than any leader since modern Turkey's founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

Yaba trader out on forged bail papers

Lawyer, clerk arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A drug dealer arrested with 5,000 yaba tablets in Chittagong secured bail from the High Court by forging the charge sheet that stated he was caught with only 180 pills. A lawyer and his clerk forged the first information report (FIR), seizure list, and charge sheet for Fazlul

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