

## Rab rescues abducted child, arrests 2

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Rapid Action Battalion members have rescued a seven-year old boy from Gazipur, four days after he was abducted from Cumilla's Muradnagar.

The elite force also arrested two abductors and produced them before a court. The court sent them to jail yesterday.

The rescued child, Mohammad Al Abdullah, is a son of Babul Miah.

The arrestees are Md Sayeed Sultan, 19, and Reaz Ahmed, 18.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab)-1 Company Commander Lt Commander Abdullah Al-Mamun in a press statement said the abductors kidnapped Abdullah from his house around 11:30am on December 19. A general dairy (GD) was filed with Muradnagar Police Station two days after the abduction.

The abductors demanded SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Dozens of small boats ferry people between Sadarghat and Dockyard in Keraniganj every day, directly across the route of launches. The big vessels, inset, sometimes get dangerously close and the boatmen have to row quickly to avoid danger. The photos were taken recently.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Form separate tribunal for journalist murders

Speakers demand at discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political commitment is needed to ensure the trial of journalist killings, said speakers at a programme yesterday.

They also demanded a separate tribunal for speeding up trial and ensure justice for journalists who were killed while on duty.

Marking the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, the programme, titled "Time to end impunity for crimes against journalists" was organised by the Institute of Communication and Studies (ICS) at a hotel in the capital.

Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul, former president of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ), said there are complexities in trial process in cases of journalist murder, and it is difficult to say why the process gets delayed.

He said on August 5 this year, some 22 journalists were attacked at Science Lab intersection in Dhaka. Journalists took a stand against the incident, while the information minister called attention of the home ministry on the matter. The home minister gave assurances of filing case against the attackers, but nothing happened at the end, said Bulbul.

He criticised Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu, saying, "Inu did nothing for the press community."

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## AL riven by division at Sitakunda, BNP no-show at Mirsarai

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN, Ctg

Some ruling party leaders and activists in Chattogram-4 (Sitakunda) constituency are allegedly not campaigning wholeheartedly due to internal feud between incumbent lawmaker Didarul Alam and upazila Chairman SM Al Mamun.

Though the two Awami League leaders claimed that they are united and working round the clock to ensure victory of the party-nominated candidate (Didarul Alam), locals and party insiders believe otherwise.

On the other hand, Chattogram-1 (Mirsarai) constituency is flooded with the AL candidate's campaign materials while it's hard to believe BNP has fielded a candidate there or is contesting the polls.

This correspondent visited several areas of Sitakunda and Mirsarai constituencies on Friday and spoke to locals and political leaders and activists. Many voters expressed concern over holding a free, fair election and

feared violence by Jamaat-Shibir men. Mentionable, Sitakunda and Mirsarai portion of the Dhaka-Chattogram highway were plagued by mindless violence during the 10th national election in 2014, including arson attacks, killing and vandalism by Jamaat-Shibir men.

While visiting Sitakunda's various areas including the central market, Baraiyadhala, Kumira, Banshbaria and Bhatiyari, this correspondent saw huge banners and posters of AL candidate Didarul Alam.

There were also some posters of BNP-led alliance's Md Ishaque Chowdhury and Jatiya Party's Md Didarul Kabir.

Many local AL leaders and activists, said there was a longstanding political rift between Mamun and Didarul. They said Mamun had sought nomination for the constituency but Didarul managed the party ticket for the second time.

As a result, "Some are unhappy

about the decision, which is also confusing the voters," said an upazila AL leader, seeking anonymity. He said the division might become costly on the election day.

Contacted, Abdullah Al Baker Bhuiyan, upazila unit AL secretary, said, "Root level party workers are disgruntled over the issue... it will depend on Didarul how he handles the situation before the polls."

Meanwhile, some party leaders said Mamun is joining Didarul's campaigns to drum up support.

But prospective voters are still not convinced.

Kamal Uddin, 55, a vegetable vendor at Sitakunda Bazar, said "I'm observing the situation... I will cast my vote if there's a peaceful atmosphere on the election day."

Abu Rahmat Ullah, 37, a tea-seller in Bhatiyari area, said, "I hope the election would be free and fair, not marred by some internal feud."

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The six candidates for Barishal-3 constituency at a "face to face with citizens" event in Babuganj upazila yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

## NATIONAL POLLS: BARISHAL-3 Candidates vow to fight corruption, militancy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Whatever the results may be, they would accept it as long as the election is held in a free and fair manner, said all six candidates for Barishal-3 constituency yesterday.

They promised to work together for the development of the constituency, consisting of Babuganj and Muladi upazillas. The candidates were speaking at a "face to face with citizens" event at Rahmatpur Secondary School in Babuganj upazila in the afternoon.

Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan), a civil society platform working for good governance, organised the views-exchange meeting, presided over by Shujan's upazila unit president Khaleida Wahab.

At the event, candidates pledged a drug-free constituency, vowed to fight militancy, corruption and said they would dedicate themselves for the welfare of people, if elected. The six aspirants from different parties also made written commitments to resist corruption.

The candidates are: BNP's Joynul Abedin, Awami League-led alliance's Tipu Sultan MP (Workers' Party), Jatiya Party's Golam Kibria

Tipu, Islami Andolan Bangladesh's Sirajul Islam, Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh's Enayet Kabir and independent candidate Atikur Rahman.

Joynul Abedin said, "If elected, I will dedicate myself for the development of the constituency. Even if I don't win, I will keep on working for people."

Tipu Sultan asked people to vote for "boat", the electoral symbol of AL, to ensure continuation of the country's development.

Golam Kibria said he will take initiatives to develop internal infrastructure like roads, canals and bridges.

Sirajul Islam promised a corruption-free administration.

Enayet Kabir said, "I will work for uprooting social crimes, especially drug abuse."

Atikur Rahman said candidates from major parties always pledge big but do not keep those afterwards. "I will keep my promises to develop infrastructure of the constituency."

Speaking on different issues, voters of the upazilas urged candidates to be honest and remain friendly to people, if they are elected.

## ACC warns officials not to use its logo on vehicles

UNB, Dhaka

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has once again warned its officials and employees not to use the commission's logo on their vehicles.

The commission, for the first time in 2016, ordered its officials and employees not to use the commission's logo on any of their official or private vehicles.

Sources at the anti-graft commission said that it had taken legal and administrative steps to curb the use of its logo on vehicles, as the authorities of the organisation had been informed that some individuals are still using the logo on the vehicles.

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## Khaleida to seek return of candidacy from SC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleida Zia is likely to file three separate petitions with the Supreme Court today, seeking stay on the High Court order that rejected her three writ petitions challenging the Election Commission's decision to uphold cancellation of her nomination papers by the returning officers.

In the petitions, Khaleida will seek the apex court's order on the EC to allow her to contest the December 30 election, and to allocate her "sheaf of paddy" as election symbol.

The petitions will be moved before the chamber judge of the Appellate Division today, Barrister AKM Ehsanur Rahman, a lawyer for Khaleida, told The Daily Star.

On December 18, the HC summarily rejected the three writ petitions by Khaleida Zia, saying the EC rightly upheld the RO's decision to cancel Khaleida's nomination

papers for Feni-1, Bogura-6 and Bogura-7, as she was convicted and sentenced to 17 years in jail in two corruption cases.

The HC bench of Justice JBM Hassan passed the order saying if a person is convicted and sentenced to more than two years in prison for moral turpitude, they are not eligible to participate in elections in five years after serving jail term.

On December 11, the HC bench of Justice Refaat and Justice Md Iqbal Kabir Pyton passed split orders on the three petitions. The next day, the chief justice assigned the bench of Justice Hassan to dispose of the petitions.

Khaleida landed in jail on February 8 after a special court in Dhaka sentenced her to five years' imprisonment in the Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case. The HC later extended her jail term to 10 years.

On October 29, she was sentenced to seven years' rigorous imprisonment by the same court in the Zia Charitable Trust graft

## All parties should have right to campaign: Miller

DU CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador to Bangladesh Robert Earl R Miller yesterday said all political parties of Bangladesh should feel free and safe to participate in the upcoming election process.

He came up with the remark while addressing a debate competition held at the Teacher-Student Center (TSC) auditorium of Dhaka University (DU).

The programme was jointly organised by Democracy International and Dhaka University Debating Society (DUDS), as part of a campaign "Win Through Peace" (Shantite Bijoy) on the topic "Country will win if it wins in peace".

A total of 12 universities of the country took part in the inter-university debate competition.

Miller said all parties should have the freedom to express their respective views and the right to campaign throughout the country, hold peaceful rallies and meetings.

Miller addressed the debate topic as an extraordinarily important and timely issue, as the success of democracies depend on youths.

He said he was fascinated by the percentage of voter turnout of the country. "That level of participation is truly extraordinary, and I was also impressed by the way you participate in the election," he added.

DU Vice Chancellor Professor M Akhtaruzzaman, DUDS moderator Professor Mahbuba Nasreen, its President SM Rakib Sirazy and General Secretary Abdullah Asad, among others, attended the programme.

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