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Stay alert to drug abuse, terrorism

PM to Ansar-VDP members

UNB, Gazipur

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged members of Ansar and VDP to remain vigilant against drug abuse, militancy and terrorism.

"We must remain alert for resisting drug abuse, militancy and terrorism," she said while addressing the 39th National Rally of Bangladesh Ansar and Village Defence Party (VDP) at Ansar-VDP Academy in Gazipur's Shafipur.

The prime minister said members of Bangladesh Ansar and VDP have been working to maintain law and order and ensure public security during different national, social and religious festivals over the years.

She praised the sincere works of the paramilitary forces and thanked them for discharging their duties during the December 30 polls.

"Some five lakh Ansar and VDP members performed their duties risking their lives to ensure security for voters in 40,183 polling stations," she said.

The prime minister mentioned the five Ansar members who sacrificed their lives during the polls duties and prayed for the salvation of their departed souls. They were later



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A bulldozer demolishes an illegal structure on the Buriganga during an eviction drive by the BIWTA in the city's Lalbagh area yesterday. The authorities carried out the drive to save the river from encroachment. Story on page 2.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

QUESTION GOOF-UP One SSC test deferred, another cancelled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today's SSC exam on Career Education has been postponed and will now take place on March 2, as some MCQ questions of the subject were mistakenly printed in the question papers of ICT test held under Jashore Education Board yesterday, said officials.

The board cancelled the Information and Communications Technology exam and rescheduled a retake for February 28.

"The Career Education exam for irregular students of all eight general education boards has been deferred to March 2 due to the mistake," Tapan Kumar Sarkar, convener of sub-committee of exam controllers, told The Daily Star yesterday evening.

The test will begin at 2:00pm on March 2, said Tapan, also controller of examinations at Dhaka

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Tigers' Kiwi challenge starts today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will be hoping to seal their first ever victory against New Zealand in their own backyard when they take on Kane Williamson's side in the first of three ODIs at McLean Park in Napier today.

The match will begin at 7:00 am in Bangladesh time.

However, it remains to be seen how Bangladesh fare in the ODIs as the Tigers will be without their premier all-rounder -- Shakib Al Hasan -- after he sustained a left little finger injury that during the final of the recently concluded Bangladesh Premier League.

Bangladesh have never won in New

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SCAN THE QR CODE TO GET THE LATEST UPDATES OF THE MATCH ON OUR WEBSITE



ARMS, DRUG CASES

Complete probe within a month

High Court asks police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed police to complete investigation in arms and drug-related cases and submit reports to the courts concerned within a month after the cases are filed.

The court also ordered the Inspector General of Police to set up monitoring cells in all districts to make sure that the investigation officers (IOs) follow the directive.

It said the officers, who would fail to file the probe reports in a month, will have to explain to the courts that why they could not do so.

The court also said the investigation in such cases should not take more than 15 to 20 days, according to their observation.

But, the IOs take several months and even years to complete investigation into such cases which is not desirable, it added.

The HC bench of Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim and Justice Riaz Uddin Khan came up with the order and observation while hearing a bail petition filed by one Nurul Islam Sheikh, who was accused in a drug case lodged with Joydevpur Police Station in Gazipur.

Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Zahid Sarwar Kazal told The Daily Star that a team of police, led by Sub-Inspector Abdul Halim, arrested one Raju and recovered 10 yaba pills from his possession on November 29 last year.

Later, SI Halim filed a case with Joydevpur Police Station in this connection and implicated Nurul, a Bangladeshi expatriate in Norway, in the case following the statement of Raju.

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Protect identity of children involved in criminal cases

HC tells media

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday observed that the media cannot publish names, addresses and photos of children involved in criminal cases.

The name, address and photo of a person aged below 18 cannot be published before, during and after the trial of a criminal case as per the Children Act 2013, the HC said.

Delivering the judgement on a writ petition, the court cautioned the media saying that their reports cannot provide information which can disclose the children's identities.

The main spirit of the Children Act, 2013 is to protect the privacy and dignity of the children before, after and during the

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Poignant plea after bonsai burglary



AFP, Tokyo

A Japanese cultivator of bonsai trees yesterday appealed for the thieves who made off with his expensive potted plants to take good care of them.

Seiji Iimura, a fifth-generation bonsai cultivator who runs a garden in Kawaguchi, north of Tokyo, told AFP the seven tiny trees stolen from his garden were his "family treasure".

"It's something I would never sell even if I got 10 million yen (\$90,000)," he said.

"Of course I hate the thief who stole them, but I want to tell him or her: please pour water on them and please take care of them," Iimura said.

Iimura reported to police last month that seven bonsai trees, worth more than seven

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Girl 'raped' in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An 18-year-old girl, who came to Dhaka from Bhola a few days ago in search of work, was allegedly raped in the city's Rupnagar area on Sunday.

The incident came to light yesterday after a case was filed with Rupnagar Police Station accusing Mohammad Sohel, Tajul Islam and their collaborator Shathi in connection with the incident, said Shaikh Mohammad Shah Alam, officer-in-charge of the police station.

The OC also said the

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PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 13

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5-25 12-45 4-30 5-57 7-15
JAMAAT 6-00 1-15 4-45 6-01 7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

'Robber' killed in 'gunfight' in capital

Two cops hurt; bullet-hit body found in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An alleged robber was killed in a "gunfight" with police in the capital's Wari area early yesterday.

The victim, Shanto Chowdhury, 18, was a resident of Narayanjanj, said Nurul Amin, additional deputy commissioner of police (Wari Division), adding that he, along with at least 14 others, used to rob people in different areas of the city.

Two sub-inspectors Raqibul Islam and Shukanta Biswas were seriously injured during the incident, the ADC added.

Nurul said police conducted a drive on information that a gang of robbers was taking preparation to commit a robbery in Gopibagh Rail Gate area around 11:45pm on Monday.

As policemen tried to arrest them, one of them started stabbing the law

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A truck emits black fumes in the capital's Postagola Bridge area yesterday. Such unfit vehicles are a common source of air pollution in the city. According to studies, air pollution is causing numerous early deaths and making thousands more ill every year.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Delhi hotel fire kills at least 17

Poor safety standards blamed as victims suffocated to death in narrow corridors; 35 rescued

REUTERS, New Delhi

A fire swept through a hotel in New Delhi early yesterday, killing 17 people, authorities in the Indian capital said, raising fresh questions about safety standards in poorly regulated budget hotels.

Frequent raids by civic authorities to enforce building codes, fire safety measures and evacuation procedures have failed to curb violations in a rapidly expanding city of more than 18 million people.

"Seventeen people are no more, they died because of suffocation, not fire," said deputy fire chief Virendra Singh, adding that 35 people had been rescued.

Most of the victims were sleeping when the fire broke out, believed to have been caused by a short circuit, media said.

The dead included a woman and a child who had tried to escape by jumping from a fifth-floor window of the 65-room hotel in the shopping district of Karol Bagh, some of which had been booked by a wedding party.

Television showed pictures of flames leaping from the top floor. Those staying in the hotel included a group of tourists from Myanmar, broadcaster NDTV said, adding that authorities were trying to ascertain their whereabouts.

Authorities appeared to have been negligent in enforcing building laws in the surrounding area, Delhi's urban development minister Satyendar Jain said.

"There is a clear case of negligence here," he added.

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