

## CONTROVERSIAL RAZAKARS' LIST

## Nirmul committee calls for judicial enquiry

SC lawyer serves notice on Liberation War affairs minister, secretary for unconditional apology before the nation within 24 hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee yesterday demanded formation of a judicial enquiry commission to identify those involved in publishing the flawed list of Razakars. "It is very unfortunate that freedom fighters' names were in the list," Shahrar Kabir, president of the committee, told a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity.

Freedom fighters' names in the list of Razakars is humiliating to the entire nation, he said.

"We want a judicial enquiry commission comprising of a judge of the Appellate Division of Supreme Court to investigate who were responsible for such a crime," he said.

He added that those responsible should be brought to book through a fair investigation.

Names of notorious opponents of the Liberation War might have been dropped due to ignorance, but the inclusion of freedom fighters in the list is a serious crime.

"They [anti-liberation individuals and their aides] hadn't been removed from different tiers of the administration yet. That's why we urged the government not to give the responsibility of important tasks like preparing the list of Razakars and martyred intellectuals to bureaucrats. Different research organisations and liberation war researchers should have been engaged."

Dana Nazlee, daughter of the Chief Prosecutor of the International Crimes Tribunal and freedom fighter Ghulam Arief Tipoo; Selina Mirza, daughter of freedom fighter Mirza Abdul Latif; and Julfia Begum Bulu, daughter of freedom fighter Abdus Salam, attended in the briefing.

Names of their fathers appeared in the Razakar list.

Shaheed Jaya Shayamoli Nasrin Chowdhury also spoke at the event.

Prof Muntassir Mamoon said several lists of Razakars were already available.

The ministry could have referred to those lists.

"Instead, the government relied on the bureaucrats," he added.

Ghulam Arief Tipoo at another press briefing at his office at the ICT demanded that the government bring those responsible to book.

**LEGAL NOTICE TO MINISTER, SECY**  
An SC lawyer yesterday sent a legal notice to Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque and the ministry secretary, requesting them to offer an unconditional apology to the nation within 24 hours.

SM Zulfiqur Ali served the legal notice saying that appropriate legal action will be taken against the duo for violating the constitution through assassinating the character of freedom fighters if they did not apologise.

There are allegations that the names of freedom fighters, who had directly participated in the Liberation War and fought against Pakistani occupation force, have been included in the list of Razakars, Ali said.

Even the names of some members of martyrs' families have been included in the Razakar list while the names of identified Razakars have allegedly not been included in it.

Therefore, the freedom fighters have been hurt and dishonoured, which is a shame for the country and the nation.

The liberation war affairs minister has committed a heinous offence which is contradictory to the constitution, mentioned the legal notice.

Amid nationwide outrage and angry protests, the liberation war affairs ministry on Wednesday suspended the controversial and flawed Razakars' list three days after its publication.

**NO MONEY FOR RAZAKAR LIST**  
Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque said that no money was allocated for making the list of Razakars.

"Therefore, there is no question of spending a dime [for it]," a press release issued by ministry yesterday quoted the minister as saying.



A part of this 80-metre bridge in Vuiagaati area of Sirajganj's Raiganj upazila subsided on Wednesday night, disrupting traffic movement on the Hatikumrul-Bogura highway. Construction of an alternative bridge, just beside the dilapidated one, has not ended in a year.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## Mild cold wave grips the country

FROM PAGE 1

between eight to six degrees and a severe one when the temperature is between six to four.

In its regular weather update, the Met office said a mild cold wave is sweeping across Rajshahi (9.4 degrees Celsius), Pabna (8.8 degrees), Naogaon (9.5 degrees), Kurigram (9.8 degrees), Nilphamari (10 degrees), Jashore (9.2 degrees) and Chuadanga (7.9 degrees). The wave may spread further, it said.

Meanwhile, Highway Police Headquarter in a press statement yesterday advised drivers of vehicles on highways to drive carefully using fog lights and limited speed.

"The temperature may fall further over the next three days. It will start rising again from December 23," said Omar Faruq, a meteorologist at the Dhaka Met office.

The temperature dropped from one to four degrees Celsius yesterday, compared to the previous day.

Faruq said the cold wave may return in January.

In its forecast for the next 24 hours (till 9am Friday), the Met Office said the weather may remain mainly dry with temporary partly-cloudy skies over the country.

Moderate to thick fog may occur in

places from midnight till morning, it said.

The temperature may fall slightly at night and remain nearly unchanged during the day.

"I can't go to work and have been staying home for the last two days," said Askar Ali of Chuadanga town.

The severity of the cold is higher than previous years as the cold wave from the Himalayan side is sweeping through the northern region, according to the Tetulia Met office.

During a visit to different makeshift markets in Thakurgaon and Panchagarh on Wednesday and Thursday, our correspondent saw people crowding the shops to buy sweaters, jackets, cardigans, woollen caps and mufflers to keep warm.

Taking advantage of the cold, traders have increased prices of warm clothes, people alleged.

Meanwhile in Thakurgaon, an elderly woman and a man received burn injuries while warming themselves by burning straws. They were admitted to a Thakurgaon hospital.

The victims are Fajiran Begum, 72, wife of Tasir Uddin of Shibganj village and Sabbir Ahmed, 42, son of Nur Aziz of Laskara village in Thakurgaon sadar upazila.

Hospitals are seeing a sudden rise in the number of patients, especially children and the elderly, who are affected with cold-related diseases, hospital sources said.

Children and elderly people are crowding the Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital and upazila hospitals with complaints of cold-related diseases, like pneumonia and diarrhoea, said Kashem Ali, Civil Surgeon in Lalmonirhat. Fog along with the cold wave disrupted normal life at five upazilas in Lalmonirhat, a northern district closest to the Himalayas, forcing people to stay indoors.

Lalmonirhat DC Abu Jafar said 28,700 blankets were distributed among the distressed people.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) last night temporarily suspended ferry services on the Paturia-Daulatdia route due to dense fog on the Padma river, reports our Manikganj correspondent.

The decision was made around 10:45pm to avert accidents as ferries' "marking lights" were hardly visible in the fog, said BIWTC's Paturia sector Assistant Manager Mohiuddin Russell.

Ferry services will resume once the fog is lifted, he said.

## CANCELLATION OF VISITS

## Won't affect Delhi-Dhaka relations

Says Indian external affairs ministry

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India yesterday sought to play down the recent cancellation of visits by Bangladesh foreign and home ministers and of the Joint River Commission delegation saying the "close bilateral relationship" should not be "defined" in terms of the postponement of visits.

On the cancellation of the visit by Bangladesh Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen and Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, Raveesh Kumar, spokesman of the external affairs ministry, told reporters in India that over 75 dialogue mechanisms with Bangladesh "are taking place. These are decided through mutual consultations."

Momen was supposed to attend the sixth Indian Ocean Dialogue in New Delhi, while Khan was supposed to visit Meghalaya last week.

Kumar added, "Our understanding is that the relationship as close as between our two countries should not [be] defined in terms of a

postponement of a visit here or there... In any case, Bangladesh has explained why the visits have been postponed.

"In fact, the Bangladesh foreign minister has issued a statement [on] why the Joint Water Commission was postponed and he essentially says that it was postponed because they did not have the data from the six common rivers..."

The six rivers are Muhuri, Monu, Dharla, Khowai, Gumti and Dudhkumar.

Regarding the Citizenship Amendment Act and National Register of Citizens, Kumar said that Bangladesh understands that what is happening is India's internal matter.

"We are enjoying excellent relations with Bangladesh."

He further said the two countries are keen to work together to further deepen our partnership in the future.

"We have been very successful in our efforts to strengthen the relationship," he remarked.

## Chinese national arrested for trespass at Trump resort

AFP, Miami

A Chinese national was arrested for trespassing on US President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida Wednesday, local media reported, just months after another Chinese citizen illegally entered the club.

Jing Lu, 56, was stopped by security officers at the private club and asked

to leave, but later returned to take photos, Palm Beach police spokesman Michael Ogradnick said in a statement to NBC 6 South Florida.

Lu -- whose visa was also found to have expired -- was charged with loitering and prowling and was being held at the Palm Beach County jail, the statement added.

## Trump impeached

FROM PAGE 1

Trump, 73, is accused of abusing his power by pressuring Ukraine to investigate political rival Joe Biden, a leading contender for the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination, as well as a discredited theory that Democrats conspired with Ukraine to meddle in the 2016 election.

Democrats said Trump held back \$391 million in security aid intended to combat Russia-backed separatists and a coveted White House meeting for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy as leverage to coerce Kiev into interfering in the 2020 election by smearing Biden.

The second article accused Trump of obstruction of Congress by directing administration officials and agencies not to comply with lawful House subpoenas for testimony and documents related to impeachment.

Trump, who is seeking another four-year term in the November 2020 presidential election, has denied wrongdoing and called the impeachment inquiry launched by Pelosi in September a "witch hunt."

At a raucous rally for his re-election in Battle Creek, Michigan, as the House voted, Trump said the impeachment would be a "mark of shame" for Democrats and Pelosi, and cost them in the 2020 election.

"This lawless, partisan impeachment is a political suicide march for the Democrat Party," Trump said. "They're the ones who should be impeached, every one of them."

During a daylong debate before the vote, Pelosi read the US Pledge of Allegiance and said: "We are here to defend democracy for the people."

"If we do not act now, we would be derelict in our duty. It is tragic that the president's reckless actions make impeachment necessary," Pelosi said.

As the debate unfolded, Republicans accused Democrats of seeking to use an unfair, rigged process to nullify the 2016 election and influence the 2020 vote.

"The matter before the House today is based solely on a fundamental hatred of our president. It's a sham, a witch hunt - and it's tantamount to a coup against the duly elected president of the United States," Republican Representative Mike Rogers said.

Republican Representative Mike Kelly compared the impeachment to the Japanese attack on Hawaii's Pearl Harbor in 1941, calling the House proceedings another "date that will live in infamy" - similar to the words Democratic President Franklin Roosevelt used to describe the raid that killed about 2,400 people and led to America's entry into World War Two.

The abuse of power article was passed on a 230-197 vote and the obstruction article was passed 229-198. All of the House Republicans opposed the articles, and two Democrats, Collin Peterson and Jeff Van Drew, voted no on both. Democrat Jared Golden voted against the obstruction charge but for abuse of power.

US Representative Tulsi Gabbard, a Democratic presidential candidate, voted present on both articles, declaring in a statement: "I could not in good conscience vote either yes or no."

Trump's election has polarized the United States, dividing families and friends and making it more difficult for politicians in Washington to find middle ground as they try to confront pressing challenges like the rise of China and climate change.

The impeachment vote comes ahead of Trump's re-election campaign, which will pit him against the winner among a field of Democratic contenders, including Biden, who have repeatedly criticised Trump's conduct in office and promised to make it a key issue.

Reuters/Ipsos polls show that while most Democrats want to see him impeached, most Republicans do not. Televised hearings last month that were meant to build public support for impeachment appear to have pushed the two sides further apart.

The House vote on Wednesday was just the latest, but also unquestionably the biggest, in a string of controversies that have buffeted the turbulent presidency of the New York real estate mogul and former reality TV personality.

Central to the impeachment inquiry was a July 25 telephone call in which Trump asked Zelenskyy to investigate Biden and his son Hunter Biden, who had joined the board of Ukrainian energy company Burisma while his father was US vice president.

Trump has accused the Bidens of corruption without offering evidence. They have denied wrongdoing.

A rough transcript of the call released by the White House showed Trump asking Zelenskyy, elected only three months earlier and eager for American support, to "do us a favor" and conduct the investigations in coordination with his personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani.

Giuliani in the prior months had engaged in a concerted effort to persuade Ukraine to carry out the investigations. Testimony before House committees showed that Giuliani helped engineer Trump's removal last May of the US ambassador to Ukraine, who was perceived as a roadblock to those investigations.

Impeachment is a remedy devised by the United States' founders, wary of a monarch on American soil after breaking away from Britain and King George III in the 18th century, to enable Congress to remove a president who has committed "high crimes and misdemeanors."

Only two previous presidents have been impeached. The House in 1998 impeached President Bill Clinton on charges of perjury and obstruction of justice arising from a sexual relationship he had with a White House intern, but the Senate acquitted him. The House impeached President Andrew Johnson in 1868, focused on his removal of the secretary of war, but he was acquitted by one vote in the Senate.

## 10th grader gang-raped in Dinajpur

Woman raped by 2 cousins in Savar

STAR REPORT

Three youths have been sued on charge of gang-raping a tenth-grader in Dinajpur Sadar upazila on the night of Victory Day.

The victim's mother filed a case with Dinajpur Sadar Police Station on Wednesday accusing one Moksedul Islam, a resident of Julkpara village in the upazila, and two unnamed people, said Bazlur Rashid, inspector (investigation) of Dinajpur Sadar Police Station.

According to the case statement, the victim was returning home alone around 9:30pm after attending a cultural programme at Sundara Adarsha School.

On her way, the three youths intercepted her and took her to the bank of a nearby pond where they raped her.

They then left the scene leaving the girl unconscious, the statement said, adding that she gained consciousness after an hour and went home.

She was admitted to M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital in Dinajpur the next morning.

Contacted, Fazlur Rahman, assistant director of the hospital, said they had found primary evidence of rape in the primary test.

**HOUSEWIFE RAPED IN SAVAR**  
Meanwhile, in Savar, two youths were arrested yesterday over allegedly gang-raping a woman on Wednesday.

Quoting family members, police said the two are cousins of the victim.

They stopped the woman while she was returning home from one of her relative's house around 11:00am.

The two then took her to a nearby house and allegedly raped her, police said, adding that they also threatened the woman not to disclose the matter.

Victim's husband filed a case with Savar Model Police Station in this connection on Wednesday night, said Saiful Islam, inspector (investigation) of Savar Model Police Station.

The victim was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for medical tests.

In Habiganj, a 20-year-old girl was allegedly raped by her neighbour in Madhabpur upazila on Wednesday night.

The accused Sujon Miah, 25, had a love affair with the girl, the victim's mother told The Daily Star.

Sujan sneaked into their house around 7:00pm and tried to rape the girl as she was home alone, said the mother.

As the girl started screaming, locals rushed to the spot and rescued her, the mother said, adding that the accused managed to flee.

The girl was admitted to Habiganj Sadar Hospital, said OC of Madhabpur Police Station.

Filing of a case in this regard is under process, said Iqbal Hossain.

Our Dinajpur, Savar and Moulvibazar correspondents contributed to this report.

## 'GUNFIGHT' WITH RAB

## Rohingya 'robber' killed in Teknaf

OUR CORRESPONDENTS, Cox's Bazar

A Rohingya man suspected of being a robber was killed in a "gunfight" with members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in Teknaf upazila of Cox's Bazar early yesterday.

The dead -- Abdul Karim, 38, an inhabitant of Leda Rohingya camp in Teknaf's Hinla union -- was enlisted as a "robber" in the home ministry's list, said Rab.

Lt Mirza Shahed Mahtab, camp commander of Rab-15 in Teknaf, said a team of the elite force conducted an anti-drug drive in Baraitali area around 2:30am on information that some "robbers" were about to smuggle yaba there.

As soon as the Rab team reached the area, a group of criminals opened fire, forcing the law enforcers to retaliate, he claimed.

At one point of the "gunfight", Abdul Karim sustained bullet injuries. Rab members rushed him to Teknaf Upazila Health Complex. He was then taken to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital where doctors declared him dead, he added.

Rab also claimed to have recovered a locally-made gun, three bullets and 10,000 yaba pills from the spot.

The Daily Star, however, could not independently verify the Rab claims.

## BBPL to resume

FROM PAGE 1

their three matches so far.

The Chattogram leg of the BBPL has so far lived up to its billing as being the most run-filled phase of the tournament and the teams will be looking to continue that trend today. The home side had notched the biggest total of this edition on Wednesday, scoring 221 for five and winning the match against Dhaka Platoon by 16 runs.

The Challengers currently have eight by virtue of their four wins from five games.

The day match will start from 2:00pm and the evening clash will begin from 7:00pm

## Hints over future leadership likely

FROM PAGE 1

The previous AL council in 2016 had elected Hasina as the party president for the eighth straight term and Quader the GS.

Names of party presidium member Abdur Razzak, joint general secretaries Mahbul Alam Hanif, Dipu Moni, Jahangir Kabir Nanak and Abdur Rahman, and Organising Secretary Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury and Publicity and Publication Secretary Hasan Mahmud were also being discussed as the GS.

Party sources said there were discussions whether anyone would be dropped from the party's highest decision-making body, AL presidium, in the face of the recent anti-corruption

drive.

Many influential leaders from the AL's front and associate bodies were removed after the drive brought to the fore their alleged involvement in alleged corruption and irregularities.

AL insiders said those removals may impact the formation of the central working committee at the council. Many leaders might lose their position.

They also said the number of members of the party's think-tank, advisory council, may increase to 51 from 41.

The posts of assistant secretary of the sub-committees could be abolished. Instead of having assistant secretaries, the party would form committees under every secretarial department.

Talking to reporters at the Suhrawardy Udyan yesterday, Quader

said the council would be an important one and that some amendments could be brought to the party's constitution. He went there to see the event's preparations.

About formation of the new committee, he said it would be more dynamic with inclusion of both young and senior leaders.

According to party insiders, this time some members of the AL presidium, the highest policy-making body of the party, would find spots in the advisory council while one or two joint general secretaries might be promoted as presidium members.

Former Gazipur City AL President Azmat Ullah Khan, currently an AL central committee member, and Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal

might get key positions in the party, they said.

They also said 7,337 councillors and same number of delegates from the party's 79 organisational districts are expected to take part in the council.

They party invited around 15,000 special guests, including renowned poets, cultural activists, journalists, teachers, doctors, engineers and other professionals, to the event. It also invited key leaders from major political parties and platforms, including the BNP and the Jatiya Oikyafront.

For the first time, the AL has not invited delegations from foreign political parties to its council. But it invited foreign envoys stationed in Dhaka.

**THE STAGE**  
Shaped like a boat -- the party's

electoral symbol, the stage of the programme was being prepared with a seating capacity of 77. The stage is 120 feet long and 40 feet wide.

The digital stage was decorated in such a way that it looks like a big boat floating in the mighty Padma river. A separate stage was set up in front of the main stage for cultural programme.

Shoal on both sides of the bridge, toll plazas, open sky and grasses were being projected centring the whole stage.

Apart from these, banners and festoons, highlighting the government's various development projects, including the mega ones, would be put up around the venue. The programme would be screened through 28 LED screens at the venue.