Drive at Rohingya Camp

# 2 Rab men shot by criminals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Two Rab members got shot when criminals opened fire on them during an anti-narcotics drive at a Rohingya camp in Teknaf yesterday.

"A team of Rab went to a Rohingya camp in Nayapara to recover yaba pills. When the team was returning after arresting suspects, criminals opened fire on Rab members from behind," said Rab Director (Legal and Media) Lt Col Sarwar-Bin-Quasem.

Following a tip-off, the team from Rab-15 raided the camp around

4:00pm to recover a large consignment of yaba.

hip.

"They are now out of danger. They will be taken to Dhaka for better treatment," Lt Col Sarwar told The Daily

Seeking anonymity, a community leader of Nayapara réfugee camp said a group of criminals opened fire on the Rab team in broad daylight leaving two

# All loans at 9pc

"Banks are in agreement with the government's instruction," said Md Nazrul Islam Mazumder, chairman of

losses because of the latest decision, Kamal said the government would provide support to banks for a while to tide them over.

For instance, 50 percent of the government funds will be kept in private banks from now on. Previously, they were deposited with state banks. This would provide the banks a

steady supply of funds. When his attention was drawn to a previous identical government measure, he said: "This time we will make sure

this instruction is executed properly.' The fund will be kept at 5.5 percent interest rate in state-run banks and at 6 percent in private banks, Kamal said, adding that the private banks would get funds in line with their paid-up capital.

"No bank will be allowed to take deposit beyond six percent."

But there would be some losses for banks as they will have to cash out a portion of their fixed deposit receipts (FDR) before their due date, Kamal

the interest rate to less than 10 percent implementation of the decision.'

Rab released the man later in the

at different stations and onboard the

Hundreds of passengers suffered

Maron Chandra Das, manager of

airport station, told The Daily Star that

gateman Al Amin lowered the barrier at

Kasaibari level crossing as Karnaphuli

Several Rab men, in a vehicle, asked

The Rab men then picked him up, he

As the news spread among gatemen of

Operation of trains remained

suspended from 2:50pm-4:40pm,

Express approached around 11:00am.

him to lift the barrier, Maron said,

adding that Al Amin told the Rab men

that the gate had already been locked.

nearby crossings, they suspended work.

Rail services halted

Solider Imran and Corporal Shahab Uddin were shot. One of them was shot in the leg while the other in the

Star last night.

Rab members injured.

did not keep their word despite bagging

a number of facilities to bring down

which is the rate at which the central

# by August last year, but in the end they

in 2008, didn't the US print dollars?"

The government provided various benefits to banks, including a reduction Asked whether banks would face of cash reserve ratio -- which is the percentage of total deposits banks must maintain in the form of cash reserve with the central bank -- and repo rate

> bank lends money to banks. Asked why banks had not kept their previous promise of bringing down the interest rate on lending to single digit, Mazumder, who is also the chairman of Exim Bank, said there has been a difference between the two

commitments "We earlier tried to lower the rates as per our own decision despite the fact that we did not enjoy full government support to do this," he said, adding that the government agencies did not keep their deposits in private banks as agreed

The latest decision will be implemented soon because of the finance minister's strong role here, he

strongly believe that the new decision will not fail under any circumstance and no additional Banks earlier pledged to bring down support will be required for banks for

stranded at Tongi, Rajshahi-bound Silk

City Express at cantonment, Tangail

Express at Tejgaon stations.

around 6:00pm.

extortion against him.

Commuter at airport, and Upakul

Railway Police Outpost, said the gateman was picked up following an

altercation with Rab men. The work

abstention began about two hours later.

talked with Rab officials, Maron said, adding that Al Amin was released

Top officials of Bangladesh Railway

Contacted, Rab Director (legal and

"After primary interrogation, we

media) Lt Col Sarwar-Bin-Quasem

said Al Amin was detained because of allegations of drug peddling and

released him on a bond," he said. He

refuted the allegation of detaining Al

Akbar Hossain, in-charge of Airport

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina comforting Tuhfa Zaman Ali, wife of veteran diplomat Syed Muazzem Ali, after he passed away at the Combined Military Hospital in the capital yesterday.

## 31 injured as police, left activists clash

FROM PAGE 16

Coordinator of Ganosamhati Andolon Zonayed Saki, and General Secretary of Bangladesher Biplobi Workers' Party Saiful Haq. Nine policemen were also among the injured.

Two photojournalists Habibur Rahman and Sohel Ahmed Sumit of Sarabangla news portal were wounded while covering the incident. During the clash, vehicular movement at the intersection came to a halt.

Of the injured, 22 DLA activists and nine policemen took treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Inspector Bacchu Miah, in-charge of DMCH police outpost, told The Daily

"Police attacked a peaceful procession that left around 50 leaders and activists injured. Most of them are females," said Abdullah Al Kafee Ratan, coordinator of the DLA.

Abul Hasan, officer-in-charge of Shahbagh Police Station, said they asked the demonstrators not to break the barricade when they reached near the Matsya Bhaban area, but they did not listen.

They [demonstrators] attacked us with the sticks attached to the placards, injuring at least nine policemen," he said, adding that they detained four people from the procession on charges of attacking police.

Asked about the "attack" on the procession, Sazzadur Rahman, deputy commissioner (Ramna division) of the DMP, said the protesters attacked police first with sticks. They also threw brick chunks, leaving the nine policemen

"Police just dispersed the procession to bring the situation under control with a mild baton charge.

Besides the capital, the DLA also brought out processions to observe the "black day for democracy" in Dinajpur, Rangpur, and Gaibandha, report our correspondents there.

The alliance is comprised of Communist Party of Bangladesh, Bangladesher Śamajtantrik Bangladesher Biplobi Workers' Party, Bangladesher Samajtantrik (Marxist), Ganasanghati Andolan, United Communist League of Bangladesh, Ganatantrik Biplobi Party, and Bangladesher Samajtantrik

BNP TO STAGE DEMO TODAY The BNP yesterday announced that

it would stage demonstrations in the capital today as it failed to hold its scheduled rally in the city due to obstruction" by the police, reports

Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi made the announcement at a press conference at the party's central office.

As part of its countrywide programme, the party was scheduled to hold a rally in front of its Nayapaltan central office at 2:00pm to observe December 30 as the democracy killing day".

"The BNP had earlier announced that it would hold a rally in the city today [Monday] to mark democracy killing day. But the government has become so scared that it is not allowing us to stage our peaceful rally," Rizvi

He alleged that the law enforcers took position in front of their party

alleys since morning to obstruct their

the party".

Meanwhile, the party leaders and activists wore black badges, and a black flag was hoisted atop its central office in observance of the "democracy killing

BNP standing committee members at a meeting last week decided to observe December 30 as the "democracy killing

Press Club.

The BNP, the Gonoforum and

election results, bringing allegations of various irregularities, including massive vote robbery and nighttime ballot stuffing".

election, cancelling the December 30 polls since the announcement of the

BNP activists in Tangail brought out procession to observe the "democracy killing day", reports our district correspondent.

### office and its adjacent areas, roads and

Rizvi said the Awami League could hold rallies and meetings anytime, anywhere but the opposition parties had no right to do so as the entire country had turned into "an empire of

In a protest against the "obstruction" to yesterday's rally, he said the BNP would stage demonstrations in all thanas of the capital today.

On Sunday, Jatiya Oikyafront staged

a demonstration in front of the Jatiya

some other parties joined the national election under the banner of Jatiya Oikyafront. The BNP bagged six seats in the polls and the Gonoforum two. The Oikyafront turned down the

They have also been demanding re-

## from Kolkata remained wait until the train crossed the area. 43 Bangladeshis killed

officials said. Dhaka-bound Maitree Amin because he asked the Rab men to

FROM PAGE 1

trains due to the delay.

Earlier in June at another DG-level talks in Dhaka, the then BSF director general Rajni Kant Mishra had termed border killings as "unfortunate deaths" and said the number of such incidents increased.

Border killings have continued for years despite a commitment from top BSF officials that the number of such deaths would be brought to zero. Apart from killings, torture frequently

takes place on the borderline.

During the last week of April, BSF members tortured a Bangladeshi man by pulling out all 10 of his fingernails with pliers after he was caught for "illegal entry".

Such incidents of torture have caught media attention and the BSF has been heavily criticised by human rights

Talking to this newspaper, Mizanur Rahman, former chairman of National Human Rights Commission, termed such incidents "high-handedness of

"...Unfortunately our government is not that vocal about this issue. Our ministers or secretaries always say that they bring up the issue for discussion with their Indian counterpart. But we

don't see any improvement. "Our government will keep on saying that the bilateral relationship with India is better than any time in the past. On the other hand, such border killings

will go on ... It's very unfortunate," he said, adding that now the government should step up its efforts to address the

Talking to The Daily Star earlier, Brad Adams, executive director of Human Rights Watch's Asia Division, had said despite promises by successive Indian governments to end abuses and hold its forces accountable, there appeared to be complete impunity for BSF soldiers.

He mentioned that there has been a renewed push by the Indian government to stop illegal cattle trade at the border since 2014. "However, a duty to prevent cattle smuggling or other illegal activities at the border does not give the BSF a licence to kill," he said.

Since 2000, more than 1,000 Bangladeshi nationals have been killed in border areas, according to rights defenders who described the areas as

"killing fields". Of the killings, the Felani murder caught everyone's attention. The 15-year-old was gunned down by some BSF members on January 7, 2011, when she, along with her father, was returning home from India through Anantapur border along Phulbari upazila of

Kurigram. The photo of Felani's body hanging upside down from barbwire fence sparked outcry and condemnation throughout the country. Nearly nine years on, her family's wait for justice seems far from over.

In chase of a commendable 174 career-best T20 figures of five for eight for five, Rajshahi started decently. However Wahab, who came in to Earlier, unbeaten fifties from bowl in the fourth over, bowled an

Wahab fifer downs Rajshahi

Tamim and Asif helped Dhaka Platoon extraordinary over featuring a maiden post a competitive total. While Tamim and three wickets to heap pressure on played the anchor-role, carrying his bat through the innings with a 52-ball Wahab, who was able to extract 68, it was Asif whose late 55-run 28pace and bounce from the pitch, ball surge saw Dhaka end on a high.

An initially watchful Tamim was running out of partners before his 37run third-wicket stand with Mahedi Hasan brought back some stability

meagre 100-run total. Wahab ended following the loss of two early wickets. However, after Mahedi's departure, Rajshahi all-rounder Forhad Reza scalped two back-to-back wickets in the 13th over to put the pressure back on the home side. However, Tamim and Asif strung together a magnificent unbeaten 90-run sixth-wicket stand to regain Dhaka's foothold.

Meanwhile, in the day game, an explosive fifty from Cameron Delport helped Rangpur Rangers romp to a seven-wicket victory against Sylhet Thunder at the same venue.

# BSCIC estates in a shambles

Rajshahi.

and ash is piled up here and there. Industry owners said the roads were so bad that truckers do not want to come inside the estate.

scalped the wickets of Liton Das,

Alok Kapali and Shoaib Malik, all of

whom were caught behind. After that,

Rajshahi was unable to shrug off the

pressure and were bundled out for a

Visiting the area, this correspondent found that the drainage system was poor and did not cover the entire BSCIC area. Where there was drainage system, the drains were clogged.

They alleged that the government did not take sufficient care of the infrastructure there.

"There is no good road inside the BSCIC estate, no drainage system. So, when there is a small amount of rain, the whole area is submerged. The estate should also have its own water supply system but it doesn't," Mohan Patwari, owner of Patwari Business Ltd, told The Daily Star.

Patwari added that in the rainy season the situation gets worse as factories get flooded and their operations suspended. Dinajpur BSCIC officials also

acknowledged the problem and said the situation was similar in other BSCIC A report by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), released earlier this year, sheds light on

the challenges the BSCIC estates have been facing over the years. The BIDS study, conducted between September 2017 and March 2018, is the first such study to identify problems

since BSCIC started its journey in 1957. The report said that except for few BSCIC estates, all face severe waterlogging due to poor maintenance of the existing drainage system.

It also stated that none of the BSCIC estates has boundary walls, a major concern for industry owners and employees who need to protect their equipment and goods. Street lights too are not available in most of the estates, deteriorating security.

a dedicated gas and electricity supply connection and red tape hamper proper functioning of the industrial units.

"Almost all of the estates have an electricity connection while only 57 percent of the estates have a gas supply connection. About 80 percent of the estates have water supply facilities and one estate has CETP [Savar tannery]. In about 37 estates, ETPs [effluent treatment plants] have been established by individual enterprises," the report stated.

BSCIC industrial plots have remained unutilised years after years. Weaknesses in rules and regulations, problems in the selection process, infrastructure electricity connections) were the key reasons behind the plots not being

The study also found that around 34 percent stakeholders argued that plots in the estates were allocated based on

Other factors included a weak selection process of entrepreneurs for the plots and corruption of BSCIC officials. Some entrepreneurs applied for plots only to resell for profit.

fellow and study director of BIDS, said if the site selection process was better, the BSCIC estates could have been more effective. "The low utilisation of BSCIC plots

is alarming. The government's decision to set up BSCIC in all the districts is not logical and this type of initiative was not successful even in India and China," he

encourage them to utilise those BSCIC plots, he added.

BSCIC Chairman Mostaque Hassan said there were 496 vacant plots but those would be filled as soon as advertisements had been published to allot the plots.

division (50 percent) and the highest in

Rajshahi division (95 percent).

Jhalakathi, Panchagarh, Sunamganj, Kurigram, Srimangal and some other places there is a crisis of potential entrepreneurs. For example, in Srimangal, there are 80 plots but we got only 10 applications. On the other

hand, in Mirsarai, we have got more application than the number of plots,' said Mostaque Hassan. Regarding the poor facilities, the BSCIC chairman said: "Yes, it is true that in some cases the infrastructure of BSCICs is not good but we are trying to improve the situation.

He also said most of the times plots were allotted fairly.

"But in reality, we found that some industries suffered as they started with bank loans [which they could not repay]. When we take the initiative to cancel the plot allotment, the bank concerned files a case. In that case, we can't do anything until the issue is settled," said Hassan about ailing entrepreneurs whose units are "sick" or have shut down completely.

The BSCIC estates were established in six phases since 1960, the latest phase being completed in 2010.

A total of 1,969 acres were used for establishing 74 estates -- of which 3.6 percent was for administrative and other purposes (mosques/banks/green spaces etc.) and 19 percent was used for roads and drainage system, the study report said. A total of 10,389 plots were

developed and 96.8 percent of them were allotted to entrepreneurs. Our correspondents in Barishal, Kushtia,

and Jhenidah contributed to this report.

New Year's Eve

#### No outdoor celebrations this time too

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Like the previous year, Dhaka Metropolitan Police has banned holding of any programmes in open spaces, including roofs of buildings, in the capital on the New Year's Eve today.

DMP also wants city dwellers to inform it about any sort of indoor celebration beforehand so that law enforcers can provide safety to people and that any sort of untoward incident can be avoided. "All forms of public gathering on

roads, flyovers, rooftops or in any open spaces will be prohibited from the dusk of December 31," DMP Commissioner Md Shafiqul Islam

A large number of law enforcers, both in uniforms and plainclothes, will be deployed in different parts of the capital, the DMP boss said.

The DMP chief also instructed people not to use fireworks or crackers for celebration, adding that the violators would have to face consequences.

He also requested city dwellers not to stay at Hatirjheel and Dhanmondi Rabindra Sarobar after 8:00pm today.

No outsiders will be allowed on Dhaka University campus after 6:00pm. Resident teachers, students, and staffers have been requested to show valid identity cards to the security personnel at the university entrances.

Checkpoints will be set up at the entry points of Gulshan and Baridhara

Residents of these areas have been asked to return home by 8:00pm.

The two areas will be only ccessible through the Kamal Ataturk Avenue from Kakoli intersection and Bir Uttam AK Khandakar Road from Mohakhali's Amtoli intersection.

Residents wishing to enter these areas after 8:00pm will only be allowed to do so after a body check, said the commissioner.

Bars have been instructed to shut lown before 6:00pm and people with gun licence will not be allowed to carry their firearms for nine hours from 8:00pm today.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal yesterday said law enforcement agencies had taken all necessary security measures to ensure a peaceful celebration of the 31st night.

"Hopefully, people will celebrate he New Year without any trouble," he said after inaugurating the annual general meeting of Crime Reporters Association of Bangladesh (Crab) at Dhaka Reporters Unity.

#### 'Robber' killed in 'gunfight'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

suspected robber was killed in a "gunfight" with police in Noakhali's Companiganj upazila early yesterday.

Shahadat Hossain Swapan, 39, was the member of a robber gang and was accused in 23 cases filed with different police stations, said Arifur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Companiganj Police Station.

A team of police arrested Shahadat from Chowmuhani area in the district's Begumganj upazila on Sunday afternoon.

During primary interrogation, Shahadat told the law enforcers that his gang members were going to commit a robbery in Chhotodholi village in Companiganj upazila few hours later.

Shahadat, reached the spot to arrest the robbers around midnight, the criminals opened fire on them, forcing them to fire back that eventually triggered a "gunfight", OC Arifur said. Shahadat suffered bullet injuries during the incident, the OC said, adding

When a police team, along with

Upazila Health Complex where doctors declared him dead. Police recovered a firearm, nine bullets and sharp weapons from the

that he was taken to Companiganj

#### Dozens of migrants intercepted in **English Channel**

spot, the OC added.

AFP, Lille

French authorities said yesterday that 19 migrants were intercepted overnight trying to cross the English Channel to Britain, after 31 were rescued and brought back to France early Sunday.

The operations cap a year of growing attempts to brave the frigid and choppy waters off France's northern coast by migrants from Africa, the Middle East and South Asia.

Rights groups have linked the crossings to a police crackdown to prevent the establishment of migrant camps in Calais and other areas along the French coast. Naval authorities said the 19

rescued on a small boat Sunday night included a woman and two children, and some of the migrants were suffering from hypothermia when they were returned to France shortly after midnight.

#### BERC to get Under the existing law, the BERC

down in the international market and

can change energy prices only once He said prices of energy go up and

the government needs to adjust the prices in the local market accordingly. And that was why the amendment was Ŷesterday, the cabinet also gave the goahead to the drafts of two university Acts -- Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman University Act, 2019, and Sunamganj

in Kishoreganj and Sunamganj. With the establishment of the two

Science and Technology University Act,

2019. The two institutions will be set up

universities in the country will reach 50 Of them, 46 are in operation now.

The cabinet also gave nod to the draft

term of up to five years and a fine of up to Tk 5 crore. Under the existing law, a foreigner

months and fined up to Tk 1 lakh for committing the offence. The cabinet secretary said the draft law has a provision enabling the authorities to operate mobile courts in the country's

can be handed a jail term of up to three

new universities, the number of public

of Marine Fisheries Act, 2019. According to the proposed law, fishing within the maritime boundary of Bangladesh by a foreigner will carry a jail

The report also said the absence of utilisation rate is the lowest in Barishal

It also said around 22 percent of bottlenecks (such as poor gas/

political and other influence.

Monsur Hossain, senior research

For example, Khagrachari BSCIC is almost empty, so special incentives could be given to the entrepreneurs to

The BIDS report said the plot