

# One to die for killing college student in Netrakona

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Speedy Trial Tribunal-4, Dhaka Division, yesterday sentenced a man to death for killing a college student in Netrakona in May, 1990. Judge Mohammad Jahangir Alam pronounced the verdict at 12:15pm in presence of the convict Firoz Miah of village Bujuri in Netrakona district. The court acquitted seven other accused as charges brought against them were not proved. They are Tota Miah, Samraj, Rabeya Khatun, Harun-or-Rashid, Farid Uzzaman, Hadis Khan and Nuruzzaman. The convict can appeal to the High Court within seven days from the date of the verdict. According to the prosecution, Nazrul Islam, 22, was chopped to death by his cousin Firoz Miah and his (Firoz's) father and mother following a family feud at their house in the early hours of May 20, 1990.

# Constitution

FROM PAGE 1 (CPD), an independent think-tank, organised the discussion.

He said the problem of human security is critical now, as the country has become sharply divided. He called for working together to overcome the present situation. Dr Shahdeen Malik, advocate of the Supreme Court, presented the keynote paper based on the UNDP's publication on "Human Security in Bangladesh: In Search of Justice and Dignity". Malik in his paper said ensuring security means preventing crime. The view was echoed by all other participants and many of whom observed that corruption stands at the heart of the problems threatening human security. Eminent lawyer Dr Kamal Hossain said 80 per cent illiterate people of Bangladesh are not the problem. "We, the educated and white-collar people, are the protectors of godfathers,"

## BNP policymakers

Officials said the selection for promotion was based on the current marking policy that provides for a pass mark of 85 out of 100: 25 for educational qualification, 30 for annual confidential report (ACR) and 25 for ACR in the entire service period, 10 for spotless ACR and another 10 for no punitive measures in entire service life.

Sources at the Cabinet Division said a summary of the promotion was prepared Saturday night and it was decided that it would be sent to the prime minister for approval. But the cabinet division did not approve the summary due to the controversy.

A source at the PMO said two summaries were prepared – one with a suggestion for inclusion of the 1979 batch on the promotion list and the other excluding the batch.

The sources said a good number of officials had become eligible for promotion both to additional secretary and joint secretary, but they were not elevated from political considerations. Many officials without any political bias, pronounced per otherwise, have indiscriminately been crossed off from the promotion list having been labelled as 'pro-Awami League'.

Most officials said the current selection for promotion is based completely on political considerations and termed the process a 'political scrutiny'.

They said this political scrutiny will destroy the civil service because quite a good number of competent, eligible and neutral officials with good track record have been or are going to be dropped from the promotion list.

The sources at the PMO said it will take some more days to finalise the promotion as the differences have taken a serious turn.

## Foreign fishes

While lakes and ponds cover an area of 2.42 lakh hectares. The open water bodies are 17 times bigger than the stagnant water bodies. In 2001-2002, a total of 18.90 lakh metric tons of fish was produced. Out of which 6.88 lakh metric tons was procured from the open water bodies, 7.86 lakh metric tons from stagnant water bodies and 4.15 lakh metric tons from the deep sea.

Most of the fish produced from stagnant water are foreign species. Over the last 50 years, no fewer than 14 foreign species have become popular among the fish farmers.

In 1953, gold fish was introduced for farming as aquarium fish and then grass carp was introduced as food fish in 1966. The other notable alien species now being cultivated as food fish are scale carp, mirror carp, silver carp, big head carp, black carp, silver barb, putitor masheer, catfish (African), big cat fish, Mozambique cichlid (Telapia) etc.

"We encouraged people to cultivate the foreign fish as they grow fast. But now we are encouraging cultivation of some small endangered local fish in ponds," said one official of the Fisheries Development Corporation.

Nazrul's father Mohammad Shamsuddin filed a murder case with Netrakona Police Station accusing Firoz and four others the same day. The investigation officer of the case submitted a charge sheet to a court at Netrakona on October 30, 1990, accusing Firoz and seven others. In the charge sheet 23 people were shown as prosecution witnesses.

Later, the case was transferred to the District and Sessions Judge's Court, Netrakona, for trial but it lay there for the last 12 years.

The "Monitoring Cell" of the Ministry of Home took up the case for quick disposal and sent it to the Speedy Trial Tribunal on July 17, 2003. Thirteen out of 23 prosecution witnesses were cross-examined during the trial.

Special Public Prosecutor Harun-or-Rashid Khan conducted the case on behalf of the state.

## Pantha-Pragati link road Govt urged to drop land acquiring plan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Residents of Begunbari and Kunipara yesterday urged the government to scrap its bid to acquire 333 acres of private land.

Under the banner of the Committee to Prevent Land Acquisition (CPLA), they sought the prime minister's intervention to halt the move to acquire the lands along the proposed link road from Panthapath to Pragati Sarani.

Addressing a press conference at the National Press Club, representatives of the locals said nearly five lakh people belonging to the middle and low-income groups would be affected badly.

The CPLA leaders alleged that some government officials have been trying to hand over the 333 acres of land to private developers since 1995.

"Influenced by some private land developers, they are trying to give away these lands," said Alam Khan, a former BNP lawmaker.

The representatives also alleged that the government had earlier acquired 475 acres of land in the same area, compensating the landowners with a nominal amount.

"We bought low lying lands with the money. So if our land is acquired again this time, it would be difficult for us to survive," said Syed Mohammed Hossain, CPLA president.

"We do not have anything against the proposed link road. It's just that we will not hand over even an inch of land beyond the requirements of the road," said a statement signed by the CPLA leaders.

Ward Commissioner Fazilatunnesa and former lawmaker Shahina Khan also addressed the press conference.

## 3 traders killed in Natore road mishap

BSS, Natore

Three traders were killed in a road accident on Lalpur-Ishwardi road near Puraton Ishwardi village under Lalpur upazila of the district in the early hours of yesterday.

The dead were identified as Sirajul Islam, 35, Akshed Ali, 30, and Ruhul Amin, 40, of village Nurullapur under Lalpur upazila.

Police and witnesses said the three were crushed under a speeding truck while they were riding bicycles to Ishwardi.

Police seized the truck but the driver and the helper managed to flee.

A case was filed with Lalpur Police Station.

## New US envoy

FROM PAGE 12

Thomas served as Director for South Asia at the National Security Council, the White House, from 2001-02. He joined the Foreign Service in 1984 and has served in New Delhi; Harare, Zimbabwe; Kaduna, Nigeria and Lima, Peru.

He also served as Senior Watch Officer, Deputy Director and Director of the State Department Operations Centre, Special Assistant to the Under Secretary for Political Affairs and Staff Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for African Affairs.

Thomas is the recipient of various State Department awards, including the coveted Arnold Raphael Award for leadership, motivation and mentoring of colleagues.

Ambassador Thomas arrived in Dhaka with his daughter, Casey Merie Eunice Thomas, and will be joined shortly by his wife, Ericka O Smith-Thomas, a vocalist.

## Two children

FROM PAGE 1

Fatema, 25, was found dead when relatives broke open the door of her Badda residence in the early hours of yesterday.

Badda police recovered the body and suspect the housewife might have been strangled by her husband, Mosharraf Hossain Sumon.

When the victim's father Mohammad Zafar, a hotel employee, found Sumon at the end of their alley in the early hours of yesterday, Sumon said that he had just returned from the day's work.

However, when Zafar's wife informed him that Sumon had not been out the day before, he went to see his daughter and found her dead.

Sumon has been missing since then.

A case was filed with the Gulshan Police Station. In a similar incident, Noor Banu alias Falani, 24, wife of Nazrul Islam, was found strangled in her bed at their shanty in Tejaigon Sunday afternoon.

A garment employee who had gone to the slum for lunch saw Nazrul leaving the slum in an agitated condition. When she went to ask his wife about him, she found Banu unconscious.

Banu was taken to the Metropolitan Hospital where the on-duty doctor declared her dead.

Locals caught Nazrul from a nearby area and handed him over to Tejaigon police.

A case was filed with the Tejaigon Police Station in this regard.

# BNP and AL gear up for Netrokona showdown

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Both the ruling BNP and main opposition Awami League have launched their biggest ever polls campaign in the remote Netrokona-3 constituency in a desperate bid to win the August 21 parliamentary by-election.

The seat fell vacant following the death of BNP lawmaker Nurul Amin Talukder, who was also elected to the immediate past parliament.

Top leaders and MPs of both the parties are arriving in the constituency comprising Kendua and Alpara upazilas for mass contact and public rallies in favour of their respective candidates, sources in the two parties said.

The BNP-led four-party alliance has nominated Khadija Amin, widow of Nurul Amin Talukder, and the AL has fielded Zubed Ali, who was elected from the constituency several times till the 5th parliament.

Both the BNP and the AL have formed dozens of teams led by party stalwarts to visit the constituency and seek votes for their respective

# Magnetic train

FROM PAGE 1 Saifur said, "The PEC has no business in dealing with the IPRSP."

Talking to journalists, Hafizuddin said, "We have not officially submitted the reports to the finance minister officially. We exchanged views with him on the IPRSP."

Commission sources said it opposed the plan for magnetic train because nowhere in the world this system has been installed at such a high cost.

"If installed, this would be the most expensive and economically nonviable transport system in Bangladesh," said a source.

On June 19, Communications Minister Nazmul Huda accompanied by Arafat Rahman, younger son of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, announced at a press conference that the government was considering installation of magnetic train on the Dhaka-Chittagong route.

The minister's younger brother Badrul Huda, Director General of the Bangladesh Railway Rezaul Karim, Chairman of a German company, InterGlobe Euro-Arab Group, Prof. Alexander Wagner and other officials were present at the press conference.

Huda said the government selected a proposal of InterGlobe Euro-Arab Group to set up the rail system at an estimated cost of US \$500 million. It means the cost for every kilometre of the rail system would be \$2 million. The ministry last year sought requests for proposals on this issue and received five offers.

Yesterday when journalists reminded Saifur of the press conference, he said, "A press conference is not a government decision."

Earlier, the PEC in a report in December said, "This technology (magnetic levitation train) is not used commercially anywhere in the world, not even in Germany where it has been developed. So far, beyond laboratories, only in China a 30km overhead line has been constructed from Shanghai City Centre to Shanghai airport and the train is supposed to start next year."

"In such a context, using this

technology in Bangladesh is very pre-mature and technically nonviable. This will require huge investment leading to high train fare that cannot be afforded by the general public. If any foreign companies or private firms come up for investment, they will have to be given a lot of incentives in forms of land and tax relief. This will have an adverse effect on the other sectors of the communication sector."

## Biman lands

FROM PAGE 1

wheel and did not find any fault or damage. Captain of the flight Mustafiz said he landed the aircraft without any disruption and there was no damage in its nose wheel, except a scratch in the left tyre. "We did not say anything to the passengers or avert a panic," he added.

After the aircraft, BG 012, took off from Brussels at 6:00 pm Bangladesh time on Sunday, a signal was received from Brussels airport that the aircraft developed trouble in the right side tyre of its nose wheel.

Avia Partner, the handling agent at Brussels airport, gave the signal to the pilots on board as well as to the ZIA authorities so that emergency measures could be taken for safe landing of the aircraft.

Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin, Secretary of the civil aviation ministry Shafiqul Islam, Managing Director of Biman Air Commodore Luthfor Rahman and Chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority Air Commodore Jahed Qudus rushed to the ZIA. They alerted the engineers, technicians and others concerned for safe landing of the aircraft.

They also contacted the DC-10 crew. The captain of the flight however said that they would be able to land the aircraft smoothly and on time.

However, the ZIA was on high alert with fire fighters, ambulances, doctors and rescuers ready to face any eventuality.

# India's mega water project

FROM PAGE 12

millions of people in Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka states with more reliable drinking and irrigation water, The Guardian reported.

Officials at the water resources ministry told The Daily Star that Bangladesh, having 53 common rivers with India, depends on the flow of the Ganges and Brahmaputra for 85 per cent of its water during dry season. Again, Bangladesh depends most on the Brahmaputra as it is the source for 65 per cent of the country's dry season water.

Foreign Secretary Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury told reporters last week in Dhaka that after gathering all required information about the Indian river inter-linking plan, Bangladesh would determine its official reaction.

Dr Tawhidul Anwar Khan, a member of the Joint River Commission (JRC), told The Daily Star yesterday, "From the JRC we've already furnished the government with all available information regarding the scheme. Besides, our mission in India has also been asked to know, in detail, what India is up to."

Khan, however, thinks that as the ambitious Indian plan is still in the rudimentary stage, Bangladesh government will register its reaction after thoroughly following the whole development.

Dr Ainun Nishat, Bangladesh representative of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), told The Daily Star that the issue should not be left alone with the JRC and water resources ministry. "Rather, the Prime Minister's Office and the foreign ministry

should take up the issue immediately. This can't be resolved at technical level, the resolution has to come from political level."

As the plan envisaged by the National Water Development Agency (NWD) of India involves building hundreds of reservoirs and digging more than 600 miles of canals, the Indian government is preparing to seek international funds for its giant river-linking project, to be implemented in 10 years time.

Dr Nishat, also a former professor at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), said the World Bank and ADB should not provide financial assistance to any country for projects, which will eventually deprive its lower riparian neighbour of its rightful water share.

The NWDHA has said the project will divert enough water to irrigate 135,000 square miles of farmland and produce 34,000 megawatts of hydroelectricity, said the Guardian report.

"The project will have international implications. Under the India-Bangladesh treaty of December 1996 on the sharing of Ganga (Ganges) waters, India had undertaken to protect the flows arriving at the Farakka barrage. How will a diversion of waters from the Ganga to the southern rivers be consistent with this?" questions Asha Ramachandran, an Indian writer in one of her recent essays.

Officials in Dhaka said the Indian government has commissioned a special taskforce to lay out the river-linking project.

prepared by the Election Commission and not to use any government facilities during the polls campaign.

The AL has formed 22 teams and central leader Abdus Samad Azad formally started the campaign on Saturday addressing public meetings and rallies. The party high command has also asked AL MPs from greater Mymensingh and party candidates in the last general election to join the campaign.

The BNP's campaign was launched on Sunday with central leaders taking part. The party leadership as asked as many as 47 party MPs, including State Minister for Home Lutfuzzaman Babar, Rajshahi City Corporation Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu and Whip Rezaul Bari Dina, to rush to Kendua-Atpara and conduct door-to-door campaign.

Advisor to the prime minister Prof. Jahanara Begum is due to lead the campaign today. BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan will address public meetings on August 18.

The BNP lawmakers have been asked to follow the code of conduct

on the other hand, AL sources claimed their nominee Zubed Ali is so popular in the area that he was elected several times in the past. And this time also, he is sure to win, they said.

They also said the BNP nominee is not well-known in the area. Besides, grouping within the party has weakened its position.

## Srikanta murder AL senses plot behind its MP's inclusion in charge sheet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Awami League (AL) leaders yesterday protested the inclusion of party leader and lawmaker from Raozan ABM Fazle Karim Chowdhury in the charge sheet in the Srikanta Rakshit murder case.

"The evidence suggests that Fazle Karim Chowdhury has been implicated in the case as part of a plot," said the AL leaders of Chittagong city (north and south) in a joint statement.

The statement was issued by City AL President MA Mannan, General Secretary ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, North District President Mosharraf Hossain, General Secretary MA Salam, South District President Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury Babu and General Secretary Moslemuddin Ahmad.

The joint statement demanded immediate withdrawal of the lawmaker's name from the charge sheet. "If our demand is not met, we will compel the government to drop his name by launching a greater movement," the statement further said.

Sources said that even most local BNP leaders did not expect the inclusion of the opposition MP in the charge sheet as his name was not in the FIR (first information report).

Meantime, a close relative of the accused AL lawmaker told The Daily Star that Fazle Karim fell victim to conspiratorial politics. The Detective Branch (DB) of Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) pressed charges Sunday against 17 people including Fazle Karim for the murder of young computer engineer Srikanta Rakshit, son of senior lawyer Midrul Akshid, on April 19 this year.

According to the charge sheet, the name of the AL lawmaker surfaced following the statements of two other accused, Dipak Dutta Bhola and Mohammad Mubarak.

# 2 extortionists

FROM PAGE 1

Rainkholia Bazar raced towards the scene and met the fleeing gang at Section-1 in Mirpur.

Finding the police closing in on them, the gang made a U-turn and advanced about half a kilometre down a narrow lane where Bulbul and Kuddus pulled out their pistols and fired indiscriminate shots towards the law-enforcers.

The policemen returned fire and one of their bullets hit Kuddus in the hip who hit to death on the spot and another hit Bulbul in the abdomen who died from his wounds on the way to Suhrawardy hospital.

Shahid managed to escape unhurt.

Police recovered a 9mm pistol, a 7.65 bore pistol, a light gun, two magazines, five bullets, a spent bullet and a knife from the scene. They also seized the motorcycle and two mobile phone sets.

Three cases – one for attacking the police, one for possessing illegal arms and the other for extortion – were filed with the Mirpur Police Station.

Nannu told The Daily Star at the DMCH that Bubul called Alamgir a few days ago and demanded Tk 5 lakh.

As Alamgir refused to pay, he threatened him with death, he said.

"He (Bulbul) called Alamgir at 10:00pm yesterday (Sunday) and said his team would go to his house in the same night to collect the money," said Humayun Kabir Swapan, an employee.

Alamgir sent his wife and their child to a relative's house bracing for the gang. "We were guarding the house since then," he said.

Bulbul was accused of several counts of murder including that of Dulu in Mirpur on February 6, Mosiur

Rahman at Shukrabad on April 4, Alam at Savar on August 17 last year and Sobhan at Mirpur on October 8 and Manik in Savar at the beginning of 2001.

He was punished with four years of imprisonment for attempting to kill businessman Shamsheer Ali at his house on September 9 last year. But no dossier on Kuddus was available immediately.

The residents of Boxnagar heaved a sigh of relief at the death of the gang chief who they say often tormented them with threats for money.

"He turned our lives miserable taking tolls regularly," said Arifur Rahman, an iron rod trader.

In the Sutrapur incident, a band of five robbers raided the residence of Zaiuddin Ahmed at Baniaganar in the afternoon.

They robbed 12 tolas of gold and Tk 1.20 lakh in cash at gunpoint.

As the family cried for help soon after the robbers went out of the house, locals chased down the gang, caught Shaiful Islam, 24, Saiful Islam Sumon, 24, and Biplob and beat them up savagely.

The gangsters were rushed to the DMCH where Biplob died from his wounds at about 4:40pm. The rest were shifted to the Orthopedic Hospital.

## AL boycotts

FROM PAGE 12

Out of the 25 members of the committee, 16 attended the meeting including Deputy Speaker Akhter Hamid Siddiqui, Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan, LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and Khurshid Jahan Haque, minister for women and children affairs.

# JS body unhappy

FROM PAGE 12

of the gram sarkar, the lowest tier of the local government bodies which is now under implementation.

Others were made by Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, State Minister Ziaul Haq Zia and Deputy Minister Ruhul Qudus Talukder Dulu, who was given the land portfolio in the last reshuffle of the council of ministers.

Most assurances were given on the construction of roads, highways, culverts and bridges under the local government division.

Of the promises, 22 have been implemented fully, 11 partially and 62 are under implementation that means only paperwork has been initiated. Three others go unimplemented.

No assurances were given by the ministers on the rural development and co-operatives division.

In the seventh parliament from 1996-2001, 135 assurances were given on local government division. Of those, 96 were implemented fully and eight partially. Twenty are under implementation and 11 were never taken up for actualisation.

The then prime minister gave eight assurances on rural development and co-operatives division. Of them, five were implemented fully, two partially and one was not taken up for realisation.

Committee sources said 31 ministries sent their reports on assurances until yesterday. Other ministries were asked to come up with their reports by August 15.

The committee decided to critique health ministry pledges at its next meeting slated for August 25.

But the ministry did not send its report until yesterday, prompting the committee to send a letter to the ministry asking to submit the report by August 15.

Abdus Sobhan presided over the meeting at the Sangsad Bhaban. Committee members Alamgir Haider Khan, Mostafa Kamal Pasha, SA Sultan, Mia Golam Mohammad Parwan and officials concerned attended the meeting.

## Trucks loaded with Indian sugar seized in Chandpur: 8 held

UNB, Chandpur

Taskforce members arrested eight people along with two trucks loaded with Indian sugar at Bakila rail crossing in Hajiganj upazila early Sunday.

Acting on a tip off, the taskforce led by a magistrate seized the trucks bound for the district town from Comilla and nabbed eight people along with 300 bags of sugar valued at Tk 3.50 lakh.

The arrestees are Rezaul Haque and Nizam Uddin of Gazipur, Muhammad Sohrab Hossain of Sreerampur, Muhammad Masud and Muhammad Aksar of Comilla, Abdul Motaieb and Muhammad Shahiduzzaman of Hajiganj and Muhammad Harun Majhi of Faridganj.

# JCD men confine 9

FROM PAGE 1

and key. They also heckled the teachers. Keeping the teachers confined, the JCD activists brought out a procession in the hall demanding immediate removal of the provost.

Upon information, Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof Jasim Uddin Ahmad came to the SSB hall at around 11:45pm and after half an hour's persuasion the JCD leaders allowed him to enter. About 50 teachers also gathered at the hall gate at that time.

Later, the confined teachers were freed at around 1:30pm after the activists had an hour long meeting with the VC.

The JCD activists demanded withdrawal of expulsion order, replacement of the provost and reshuffle in the hall authority.

"They attempted to beat us after cutting the utility lines," said Prof. Shahnawaz.

"We expelled the JCD activists according to the rules of the hall. So, there is no reason to withdraw it," he added.

The hall authority issued the order without any warning, said Harunur Rashid, secretary of JU unit of the JCD.

Meanwhile, the hall officials started work abstention since 11:15pm Sunday night demanding punishment of those involved in the incident.

They vowed to continue the programme until their demand was met.

The Jahangirnagar University Teachers' Association (JUTA) condemned the incident and demanded exemplary punishment to those responsible.

JUTA called an emergency meeting on August 13 to decide on the plan of action to be followed.

Earlier, three JCD men were expelled for beating the manager and caterer of the SSB hall canteen who complained against them to the hall authority for non-payment of bills.

## Schoolboy dead after abduction allegedly by tutor

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh