



TO COMMITTEE People's Right to Know

REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XIII No. 323

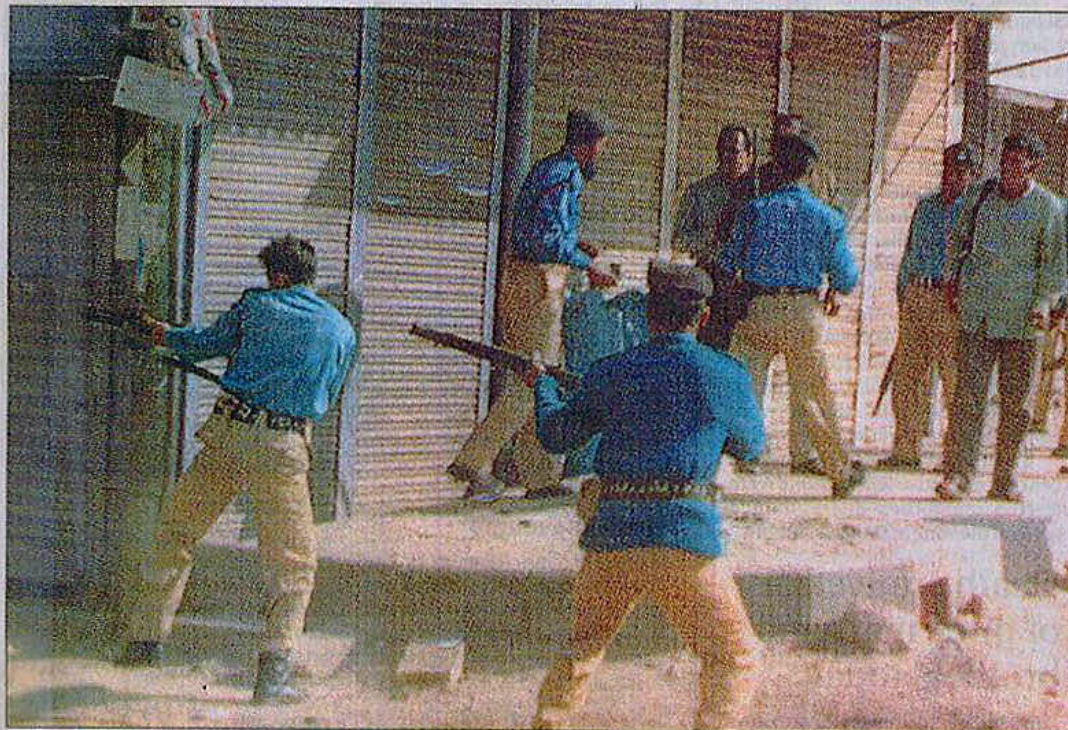
DHAKA SATURDAY DECEMBER 13, 2003

AGRAHAYAN 29, 1410 BS

SHAWAL 18, 1424 HIJRI

16 PAGES PRICE: Tk 7.00

www.thedailystar.net



Police, left, try to break a crowd of incensed protesters on Biswa Road in Dhaka's South Mugdapara yesterday after the death of Mahbul Alam Rony in jail custody allegedly from police torture and his family, right, grieves over the death.



PHOTO: STAR

Vajpayee sees win-win arrangement if Dhaka agrees to sell gas

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee yesterday suggested Bangladesh sell its promising gas reserves to India saying there is scope for win-win arrangement in this.

Addressing a two-day international symposium on peace in South Asia organised by leading Indian newspaper Hindustan Times here, Vajpayee said energy was one area with the greatest promise of mutually-enriching partnerships.

Making a strong plea for energy cooperation among SAARC countries, he said, Nepal and Bhutan

today have an estimated potential of 100,000 MW of environmentally clean hydro-power. Bangladesh has similarly promising reserves of natural gas.

They need to sell these energy sources. India is the only viable buyer and its energy demands are expanding exponentially. There is obvious scope for win-win arrangements, Vajpayee added.

The Indian prime minister said the hydroelectric projects in Bhutan illustrate this dramatically. Bhutan's per capita income of \$ 600 today is expected to double by the end of 2005 when the 1020 megawatt Tala power plant is completed.

Referring to sharing of water resources in South Asia, he said, the optimum management of such resources for irrigation, navigation and flood control can have a multiplier effect on infrastructure, development and growth in our entire region.

This, he said, requires not only financial investments but also maturity of policy. We should recognize that an enduring partnership can only be built on the basis of each country wisely exercising the rights of a lower riparian and responsibly fulfilling the obligations of an upper riparian.

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Army man beaten up by Tejgaon police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An army man was reportedly man-handled at Tejgaon Police Station yesterday evening.

Four policemen of the station, led by a sub-inspector, went to a tea stall near the office of the Director General of Defence Purchase (DGP) at Arjapara.

An unnamed lance corporal who is the driver of the DGP was sitting at the stall when the policemen went there and became locked in an altercation.

At one stage, the policemen picked him up, took him to the police station and roughed him up. On hearing the news, an army team went to the police station, rescued the seriously injured corporal and admitted him to the Combined Military Hospital, Dhaka.

Later, a senior police officer went to the Army authorities and apologised for the incident. He assured the authorities of punishment to the policemen responsible.

Early this year, an on-duty army man was beaten up by policemen of the same police station causing his death.

Death in custody triggers violence

Blank shots fired, vehicles damaged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police fired at least 36 shots in the air to disperse an incensed crowd that converged on Biswa Road at South Mugdapara in Dhaka yesterday to protest the morning death of a youth in the wake of alleged police torture.

Over 100 youths took to the streets after Friday prayers and began wrecking vehicles to protest the death of Mahbul Alam Rony, 18, who, his family alleged, was brutally beaten after arrest on December 4 and denied treatment in time in jail.

Police reinforcements were dispatched to the scene as the youths chased policemen and hurled stones at them, shouting slogans against the law enforcers pegging them as the killers of Rony.



Mahbul Alam Rony

Police answered with batons and the gunshots sparking a half-hour clash and picked up four people from the scene who were released in the evening.

Rony's family alleged that he was subjected to inhuman torture in police custody as they turned down a hefty bribe demand of a sub-inspector of Sabujbagh Police Station for his release.

Officer-in-charge of the police station, Mohammad Abdul Motaleb, dismissed the charge, saying Rony, whose name figures on slot No. 22 of their list of 48 criminals, was taken to court in good health, a claim also supported by a jail official.

"I saw police beat up Rony under his feet at the police station in the night of his arrest," Jasimuddin, the brother-in-law of the victim, quoted Rony's aunt as saying.

He claimed that Rony suffered serious injuries in torture.

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Another 'robber' lynched, eyes of 2 gouged out

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A mob lynched one more 'robber' in remote char areas of Noakhali in the early hours of yesterday, while eyes of two fellow 'robbers' were gouged out in the following morning.

Villagers caught one Abul Khair, allegedly a member of the jungle robbers, and beat him to death on the spot at Bangla Bazar. Khair was hiding at a relative's house.

According to sources, angry villagers still roaming the jungles of the char chased one Jamal Mia Sarder, 38, in the morning and gouged both of his eyes out at Rasulpur village near Janata Bazar.

In a similar incident, villagers in Char Bhata Bashkhali chased and caught Babul, 32, believed to be commander of Bashra Bahini, and gouged out his eyes.

Police later sent both the injured to Char Jabbar Upazila Health Complex.

Meanwhile, police and the coastal guard arrested three more robbers from the remote char areas yesterday. The superintendent of

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'Amar's body bears marks of torture'

Family waits for autopsy report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The death of Amar Das, accused of abduction of business magnate Jamaluddin Ahmed Chowdhury, in police custody on Wednesday night continues to raise questions over the circumstances of his death.

Samar Das, elder brother of the deceased, believes that Amar was tortured in various ways including with electric shock that led to his death.

"I have no reason to believe that my brother having a stout body had died of a heart attack," Samar, an employee of a foreign bank, said. "After receiving the body, we found marks of burn injuries caused by electric shocks and dark spots in legs and forehead," Samar said, adding his body was found swollen and seemed to have been tortured severely.

"On receipt of the autopsy report we will file a case against the police," he said.

"Besides, I am demanding immediate formation of a judicial committee to probe the death of my brother Amar Das and capital punishment to the killers," Samar demanded.

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Ctg cellphone users to get landline link next year

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

Cellphone users in the commercial capital of Chittagong are likely to have fixed phone connectivity by the first quarter of next year as the telecom regulator has initiated establishment of an interconnection exchange there.

The estimated cost of the project is between US \$600,000 and \$1.5 million.

The first ever hybrid point of interconnection (POI) is being financed by a consortium of six parties including Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (BTRC), fixed phone operator Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTB), cellphone operators GrameenPhone, Pacific Bangladesh Telecom Limited (PBT), Telecom Malaysia International Bangladesh (TMIB) and Sheba Telecom.

The exchange will have technical assistance from International Telecommunications Union (ITU), to be partly financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) among the parties will be signed next week, a senior official of the BTRC said.

"We are considering installation on Thursday midnight."

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Dispelling darkness

A few minutes into dusk, the stairs to the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka come alive with a glow of candlelight at a programme to pay homage to the 1971 Liberation War martyrs. Relatives, friends and other well-wishers of those who made supreme sacrifices for the independence of Bangladesh joined the event organised by the Naripakho, a rights group, yesterday ahead of Victory Day on December 16. Songs and poems featured in the programme.

PHOTO: STAR

11-party to enforce hartal today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The left leaning 11-party alliance enforces a dawn-to-dusk hartal across the country today to press home an 11-point demand including removal of anti-liberation elements from the cabinet and arresting the price hike of essentials.

The alliance is also scheduled to hold a hartal-hour rally at Muktangan in the city at 4:00pm today to announce future course of action.

Main opposition Awami League wished a success to the leftists-called nation-wide shutdown but fell short of rendering any formal support to the hartal call.

Issuing separate press releases, different components of the 11-party conglomerate urged people to make the hartal a success and denounce freewheeling closures of

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Depression over Bay

UNB, Dhaka

The low over the southeast Bay moved slightly north-west last night and concentrated into a deep depression.

It centred about 1720 kms south-southwest of Chittagong port, 1640 kms south-southwest of Cox's Bazar port and 1700 kms south of Mongla port at 6:00pm.

It is likely to intensify further and move in a west-northwesterly direction.

According to a special weather bulletin of Met Office, maximum sustained wind speed within 44 kms of the depression centre was about

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Internet summit calls to wire up world for development

MUSTAK HOSSAIN from Geneva, agencies

More than 170 countries on Friday approved an ambitious call to extend the Internet and the benefits of information communications technology (ICT) to the poorest corners of the world, but dodged some of the difficulties of doing so.

They put off a decision on whether to set up a special fund to finance the necessary infrastructure, for which African countries had lobbied hard.

The first World Summit on the Information Society wound up three days of lofty speech-making by endorsing a declaration of principles and 29-point action plan.

The declaration committed them

to using telecommunications technologies, such as the Worldwide Web and cellular telephones, to boost economic growth and meet United Nations development targets for eradicating extreme hunger and poverty by 2015.

"The declaration represents a sort of constitution for the Information Society which must contain a social dimension and foster development," said Swiss President Pascal Couchepin, whose country hosted the UN-sponsored gathering.

Around 90 percent of the world population is not connected to the Internet, depriving them of a 21st-century resource and digging a "digital divide" between the rich and the poor. But richer states,

notably Japan and the European Union, which generally did not send top government officials to Geneva, resisted calls for a "Solidarity Fund" to close the gap.

As a compromise, states agreed to study the issue further and report back before the follow-up summit in Tunis in 2005.

Senior UN officials also agreed it was better to explore improved use of existing resources from the World Bank and other sources before rushing into new finances.

Our correspondent earlier added: The working group on the summit earlier proposed to form an advisory committee for recommendations for the optimum use of ICT. Earlier, speakers at a roundtable

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13 KU women students punished for ragging

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna University has revoked the residence permit of 13 women students on charge of stripping and molesting 11 female freshers in an apparent midnight ragging in their dormitory on December 7-8.

More action is likely against the attackers who ragged junior students of architecture in the room No. 163 of the dormitory, university sources said yesterday.

They (senior students) called us into the room on promise to help us in study. As we entered the room, they locked the door and attacked us in the name of ragging," said one of the victims (name withdrawn for privacy).

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Boycott set to mar RU golden jubilee celebrations

ANWAR ALI and ABU KALAM, Rajshahi

A group of Rajshahi University (RU) teachers will keep out of its golden jubilee celebrations from December 21 in protest at what they said was gross politicisation of the institution.

Convener of the Progressive Teachers' Group Professor Dr Entajul Haque told The Daily Star they decided to boycott the function in October and alleged the RU invited Prime Minister Khaleda Zia as the chief guest for political dividends in a decision that sidelined the president, chancellor of the university.

The boycott over the allegation, brushed aside by Vice-Chancellor Faisal Islam Faruki, set off fears that the non-participation of the teachers may turn the celebrations into a non-event.

"The function will turn into a political festival denting the university's image," said Rajshahi University Teachers Association President Professor Sayen Uddin Ahmed, adding the RUTA sits today, formally protesting the event of the RU established on July 6, 1953.

The allegation came after the function organising committee and

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MBA for Executives (IIUC Dhaka Campus)



(Hon'ble Speaker of the Parliament was present as Chief Guest on the occasion of MBA 8th Batch Course Completion Ceremony at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel)

IIUC Dhaka Campus offers MBA Program for Executives (Evening shift) for the coming semester.

Graduates with two years of working experience or holding Master's degree are eligible for applying into the program. Total cost of the MBA Program is Tk. 90,000/- only.

BBA graduates can complete MBA program within 1 year (36 credit hours) and for them the cost is Tk. 60,000/- only. Last date for applying is 31 December 2003 and the viva voce will be held on 1 January 2004 at 10:00 am. Admission form may be collected up to 8:00 pm everyday.

IIUC Dhaka Campus maintains international standard of

education. Textbooks are provided to all the students. Separate and secure arrangements are also available for female students.

To improve the efficiency of English language of the MBA students "English for Professionals" course has been introduced.

IIUC has arrangements (MoU) for credit transfer to some foreign Universities.

Admission forms are also available for BBA and CSE programs as well.

For details, please contact the Dhaka Campus of IIUC, House-23, Road-3, Dhanmondi, Dhaka or call-9670220, 8629947, 9670193 Ext. 211, 228,