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Behind bars sans trial for years

155 Dhaka Central Jail inmates languish with no witnesses to pin them down

CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER and SHARIFUL ISLAM

Mohammad Jahangir has spent the last 11 years in custody at Dhaka Central Jail without trial. Son of Abdur Rahman of Dholairpar under the city's Demra Police Station, Jahangir was arrested on September 9,

1992 on charges of robbery and murder. Three days later, he was sent to jail.

Since then, he was produced before the Court of Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions' Judge, Dhaka on 78 occasions but trial was put off each time as prosecution failed to produce witnesses for deposition

before the court.

As many as 155 such inmates of Dhaka Central Jail has been incarcerated without trial for five or more years because prosecution witnesses did not show up for deposition.

The cases against them involving charges of rape, murder, SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

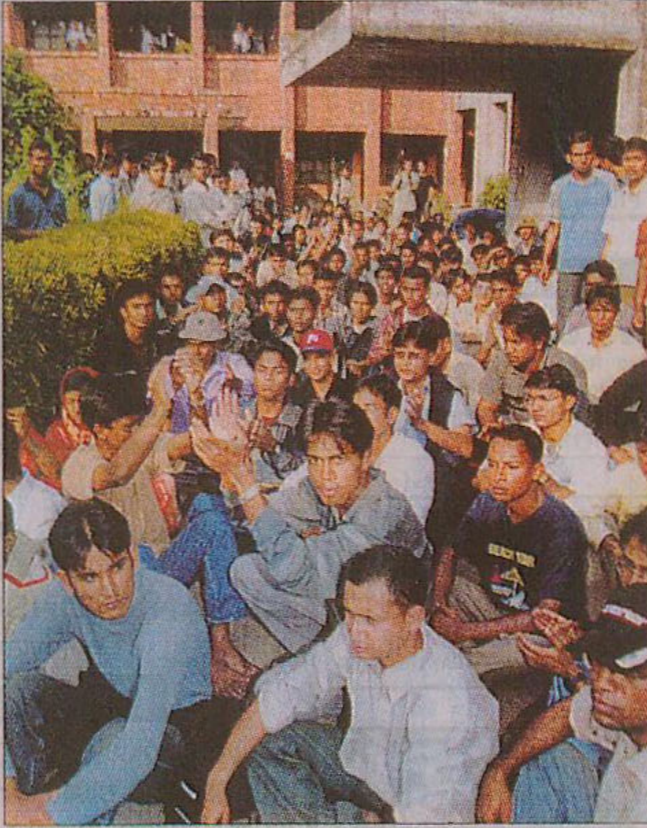


PHOTO: STAR

Students of Jahangirnagar University lay siege to the administrative building yesterday during a rampaging demonstration against an academic deadlock since October 15.

ACADEMIC DEADLOCK AT JU

Admin building besieged for 6 hrs

JU CORRESPONDENT

About 2,000 students of Jahangirnagar University (JU) confined their pro-vice-chancellor, treasurer and proctor to the administrative building for six hours yesterday during a tam-

ping demonstration against an academic deadlock that has continued since October 15.

The demonstrators smashed windowpanes of the administrative building with sticks and bricks in a burst of violence SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Lalmonirhat AL top leader killed

Hartal called for today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Assailants hacked to death Lalmonirhat District Awami League (AL) Organising Secretary Shamsul Islam Suruj, 50, near Chandibari Bazar in Aditmari upazila early yesterday, sending shock waves and prompting a hartal for today.

Witnesses said a gang of 20 to 22 assailants waylaid the motorcycle of Suruj, also a chairman of Kamla Bari Union Parishad on the fifth consecutive term, and hit him repeatedly in the head, chest and legs with sharp weapons at about 1:30am, killing him on the scene.

Co-rider on the pillion, Bakar

also suffered injuries and was admitted to Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital.

The death of Suruj, a freedom fighter and founder of a number of educational institutions including Aditmari Degree College and Udyoman Suruj Mahavidyalaya, shook the local communities to the core.

Schools and colleges in the upazila paused to mourn the death of the leader and closed early.

Relatives of Suruj said the chairman for unbroken 22 years was running a feud with some local quarters over elections, lease of local SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Bomb kills two US soldiers

Ex-Iraqi general nabbed

REUTERS, Baghdad

A roadside bomb killed two U.S. soldiers in Baghdad Monday, hours after troops captured a former general in Saddam Hussein's once-feared security services on charges of recruiting ex-soldiers to attack Americans.

The blast that ripped through a military convoy in the late morning also killed an Iraqi interpreter and wounded two other soldiers, the U.S. military said in a statement.

The military deaths, the first in five days, brought to 202 the number of U.S. soldiers killed by hostile fire since the United States declared major combat over in Iraq on May 1.

Working on what the top U.S. general said was information gleaned when Saddam was captured SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

Biman flights go haywire for pilots' 'limited strike'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

International and domestic flights of Biman Bangladesh Airlines yesterday faced severe disruptions, as pilots stopped operating extra flights on a 'limited' strike that sparked worries among thousands of Hajj pilgrims to Saudi Arabia.

One flight was cancelled and two were delayed on international routes and three cancelled and two delayed on domestic routes after Bangladesh Airline Pilots' Association (Bapa) began its indefi-

nite 'fly by book' movement to press a four-point charter of demands.

The movement, set to disrupt 81 special Biman flights scheduled to fly 25,000 Bangladeshis to Saudi Arabia from December 31, drew flak from State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin.

He warned that no activities against the interest of the national flag-carrier would be tolerated, UNB adds.

"Not through destructive activities... demands of the pilots can be

met through discussion -- the democratic way of solving problems," he said at a press briefing at his office.

The union's 120 pilots will 'fly by book only' and 'not take off with extra-contract' until Biman management met their demands, said Bapa President Captain SM Nasimul Haque, adding their movement would not disrupt Hajj flights.

The 'limited' strike halted Biman flights to Sylhet, Jessore, Chittagong and Rajshahi and the management flew two leased Boeing 737s -- SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Work on road to Myanmar starts this winter

UNB, Dhaka

Communications Minister Nazmul Huda yesterday said construction work of Bangladesh-Myanmar Friendship Road for direct road link between Dhaka and Yangon will begin in the current dry season.

A meeting at communications ministry yesterday reviewed development of the 34-km Ramu-Balukhali road at Bangladesh side and 25-km Tangobra-Balibazar road in Myanmar part, officials said.

The meeting also discussed SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

PM blames teachers' grouping for low university standards

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday asked for ensuring responsibility and accountability at higher institutes through necessary legal reforms for quality education.

She urged the authorities concerned to put forward thoughtful recommendation and opinion for reforms in the rules and regulations for administering the universities, if necessary, for the sake of the country and people.

"Standard of higher studies is still not at desired level despite increase in the number of students, teachers and institutions, and scope and facilities.

"Grouping, neglect of teaching and research, and long time absence from educational institutions of a section of teachers are to blame for this. Such a situation cannot continue," the prime minister categorically said.

She underscored the need for SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

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The HSBC Charity Golf Tournament

Bhatiary Golf & Country Club, Chittagong

12 December, 2003

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Our sincere thanks to the event donors and draw-prize sponsors whose generous support made the HSBC Charity Golf Tournament such a great success. BDT 12,50,000 was raised and will be distributed to local charities in Dhaka and Chittagong. We would also like to thank the Bhatiary Golf and Country Club, Chittagong, for hosting this event, the tournament players and the guests for their support.

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