

FFs boycott Independence Day programme in Magura

Names of 'collaborators' still on victory memorial plaque

HOSSAIN SERAJ, *Magura*

This year's Independence Day was observed here in a lacklustre atmosphere as most of the freedom fighters abstained from taking part in programmes protesting inclusion of names of two alleged Razakars (collaborators of Pakistan occupation army) and some fake freedom fighters in the victory memorial plaque.

The Liberation War Affairs Ministry is yet to erase the names despite submission of a written application by the Magura Muktiyoddha Sangsad last year.

The memorial was built by the Zilla Parishad at Vaina Square in Magura town at a cost of Tk. 14.10 lakh and formally opened by BNP lawmaker Kazi Salimul Huq Kamal on the Victory Day in 2004.

Former commander of Magura Muktiyoddha Sangsad Khan Ali Reza, on behalf of Magura freedom fighters, submitted the petition to the secretary to the ministry on January 1, 2005 to erase the names of controversial persons from the plaque. 'As the ministry is yet to take any step, we boycotted the programmes', Ali Reza told this correspondent on Sunday.

"It is a matter of great regret that

names of Razakars Aminuddin and Khater Ali have been engraved on the victory memorial," several valiant freedom fighters including Md Shahidullah said.

"The two were however killed in a gun battle with freedom fighters at Kamanna village in Jhenidah district on November 26, 1971" he said.

"The supreme sacrifices of fellow freedom fighters have been belittled by putting the names of Razakars on the victory memorial. The ministry concerned should take action against those who are responsible for this," Shahidullah said.

Khan Ali Reza said, "Apart from names of two Razakars, there are names of people (engraved on the memorial) who had no contribution during the Liberation War."

"On behalf of local freedom fighters, I wrote to the Secretary to liberation war affairs ministry to take step to erase their names, but to no effect even after about 15 months," Reza said.

According to him, although the 'Mukti Barta' (a booklet published by the Central Command of Muktiyoddha Sangsad) records say, 40 freedoms fighters embraced martyrdom in Magura Sadar upazila, only 25 names have been engraved on the memorial.

In Sreepur upazila, 13 heroes laid down their lives but only four names are on the memorial. Name of a fake martyr-Abus Salek—has also been inscribed.

In Mohamnadpur upazila, 13 freedom fighters sacrificed their lives. But the memorial has names of nine freedom fighters only and three of fake martyrs.

The memorial contains five names of 'martyrs' from Shalikh upazila, but the Mukti Barta records say there was no martyr from the upazila.

When contacted, Kazi Saimul Huq Kamal MP said, "Many of us know that two names of Razakars have been engraved on the memorial, but we are undone as we are not entitled to drop the names given by the district administration and prepared by the ministry". The list was prepared by the district administration during Awami League rule, Kamal claimed.

Deputy commissioner Neamatullah Bhuiyan talking to The Daily Star said, "The names of two Razakars have already been excluded by the ministry from the gazette and those will be erased from the victory memorial very soon".

Star Readers Club arranges free blood grouping

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushtia*

The Daily Star Readers Club, Kushtia arranged a free blood-grouping programme at Kushtia municipality on Sunday.

Kushtia municipality chairman Anwar Ali inaugurated the programme held on the occasion of 36th Independence Day. It was also attended by Islamic University Prof Dr Rashid Askari of the Department of English, Dr Moniruzzaman of Chemistry, Jahangir Alam of Islamic History and Culture and Arefin Matin of Management and Sekandar Rana of English Department, Kushtia Government College. Besides, Aker Kagoj Kushtia correspondent Rajib Ansan Ranju and staff correspondent of ATN Bangla, Kushtia Al-Mamun Sagar were present.

Kushtia Diabetic Society extended help while the Readers Club convener Matiur Rahman Latu and The Daily Star Kushtia correspondent Amanur Aman supervised the entire programme. A.M.I Asief, Laboni Reza and other members of the club assisted them.

Around 200 people including labourers, school and college students and freedom fighters were tested for blood grouping.



The Daily Star Readers Club holding free blood grouping programme in Kushtia town on Sunday.

Two murdered in Kushtia, Rajbari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushtia*

Two persons were murdered by outlaws and criminals in Kushtia and Rajbari on Thursday.

In Kushtia, criminals allegedly belonging to outlawed party slaughtered one Abul Khair, 32, son of Ibadat Mondol of Sarishaduli in Daulatpur upazila.

Police said Khair was attacked when he went to his tobacco field at about 11 pm. The outlaws slaughtered him and left the body in the field.

Police suspect outlawed party cadres murdered him over rivalry as Khair was once involved with another outlawed party.

In Rajbari, unidentified criminals

chopped a phone-fax trader at village Charchiloka in Pangsha upazila as he refused to pay a toll of Tk20,000.

According to police, a gang swooped on Joygopal Nandi, son of Dhirendranath Nandi when he was returning home at Charchiloka from local bazaar after closing his shop at about 10 pm.

Later, local people rushed injured Joygopal to local health complex where he died at midnight.

Family sources said a local gang was threatening Joygopal for several days as he refused to pay toll.

ARRESTS, 'FALSE' CASES AFTER MYMENSINGH CINEMA BLASTS

AL leaders to file defamation suit

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Leaders of Awami League (AL) and its front organisations who were arrested and later falsely implicated in Mymensingh cinema blast cases are now preparing to file defamation cases against the government.

Thirty-one leaders of AL and its front organizations including the party's central leader Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Mymensingh district AL president Principal Alhaj Matiur Rahman, Jubo League district unit president Prof Golam Sarwar, it's vice-president Advocate Azaharul Islam, AL leaders Babul Roy, Momtaz Uddin and BCL leader Mohitur Rahman Shanta were arrested after a series of bomb blasts in packed Ajanta,

Chhayabani, Aloka and Purobi cinema halls on the day of Eid-ul-Fitr on December 7, 2002 that left 21 people dead and over 100 people injured. Twenty of the injured later became maimed and disabled for life.

Recently Abdur Rahman, Chief of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), confessed to the interrogators of Task Force for Interrogation (TFI) in Dhaka that his cadres carried out the bomb blasts in four cinemas at Mymensingh town.

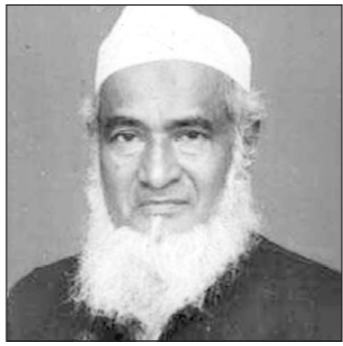
AL President Matiur Rahman said, he along with three other AL leaders were arrested on December 9 and detained in Mymensingh Central Jail. Soon after his arrest, an army officer told him that his younger brother Momtaz Uddin procured

bombs from neighbouring India or carried out the attacks on four cinema halls.

"I was asked about the matter but I straightly denied our involvement saying, neither my brother nor any AL leader and activist can do so, Rahman, also ex-chairman of Mymensingh municipality told The Daily Star.

Later the AL president was shifted to Kashimpur jail in Gazipur and was taken to Joint Interrogation Cell (JIC) in Dhaka.

"The interrogators tortured me and desperately tried to extract answers in favour of their claim but I repeatedly said that AL is not involved with the heinous acts of bombings in anyway", said Rahman. "I was released after languishing two months in jail", said



Matiur Rahman

the leader.

Motiur Rahman, a veteran freedom fighter, said, "My arrest in such false cases has severely tarnished my political and social image and affected my family life".

"Now I am preparing to file a defamation case of Tk 5 crore against the government. Other arrestees will file similar cases and we have been consulting with legal counsels", he added.

Following the cinema blasts in Mymensingh Prime Minister

Khaleda Zia blamed the opposition at a public meeting at Nandail upazila headquarters here recently. But at a public meeting she blamed JMB for the carnage.

"But which of the two statements is true", Rahman posed question and terming the Prime Minister's earlier claim as politically motivated and baseless.

The AL leader also blamed the four-party coalition government for patronising militancy to harrass AL leaders and activists throughout the country.

In the name of probe, the government tried to hold AL responsible for bomb blasts and to divert public attention from the government's failures in all sectors, he said.

He also regretted that proper rehabilitation was not made for cinema blasts victims even after three years of the incident.

10X3

9X2

4.5X3

8X#