

# Repeal 'black laws', ensure security of media men

## World Press Freedom Day observed in districts

**STAR NATIONAL DESK**

The World Press Freedom Day was observed in districts yesterday with a call for scrapping all black laws to ensure press freedom and security of media men in their professional work.

The day's programmes included discussion meetings and colourful processions highlighting the role of media.

Speakers at the discussion meetings said the media can play a vital role in consolidating democracy, ensuring transparency, which can lead the country towards development.

Lack of security is now a great obstacle to media men in performing their duty, they said.

In Satkhira, the day was observed with a slogan: We will know, we will live.

The district unit of Mass-line Media Centre (MMC), an NGO, organised a

discussion meeting at Zilla Parishad auditorium with journalist Prof. Abu Ahmed (The Daily Star) in the chair.

Zilla Parishad Chief Executive Officer Md. Gaus was chief guest, our correspondent reported.

The speakers said democracy and people's participation in development can not be ensured without a free media.

They urged the government to repeal all black laws and ensure trial of murders of journalists.

So many journalists were killed in Bangladesh for reports against corruption but the killers have not been punished.

Our Patuakhali Correspondent reports: World Press Freedom Day was observed here yesterday through various programmes, organised jointly by the local press club and Mass-line Media Centre (MMC).



Journalists brought out a procession in Patuakhali town yesterday as part of programmes to observe the World Press Freedom Day.

Cross-sections of people joined journalists in a colorful procession brought out from the press club premises.

It was followed by a discussion meeting, held at the auditorium of Family Planning Association with press club president Golam Mostafa Talukder in the chair.

Patuakhali Deputy Commissioner Rafiqul Islam was chief guest and Police Superintendent Shafiqul Islam was special guest at the meeting.

Our Gaibandha Correspondent reports: Speakers at a seminar marking World Press Freedom Day here yesterday urged the government to repeal all 'black laws' to ensure press freedom in the country.

The media in Bangladesh is now virtually controlled by 21 'black laws' like Special Powers Act, Penal Code, Press and Publication Act, Official Secrecy Act and Contempt of Court law.

Besides insecurity, media men are to work keeping the laws in mind, which shatters press freedom, they said. These laws should be either scrapped or suitably amended to allow press freedom as in developed countries, they said.

In last 15 years, at least 20 journalists were killed by terrorists, smuggling syndicates and extremists backed by political leaders.

The seminar, held at Gaibandha Press Club, was presided over by Abu Zafar Sabu, Secretary Gaibandha Press Club. Deputy Commissioner Mujibur Rahman was the chief guest.

Juvenile journalist Jafreen Akhter Sumi of Shisu Prokash presented a paper in the seminar.

Later a procession was brought out in the town.

The programmes were organised by Mass-line Media Centre (MMC) and Manusher Jonno, two NGOs.

## REB office besieged in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Several hundred villagers under the banner of Kamarkhanda Polli Biddyt Unnayan Sangram Parishad laid a siege to local Rural Electrification Board (REB) office at Kamarkhanda in Sirajganj yesterday to press their seven-point demand including uninterrupted power supply.

The demonstrators brought out a procession at Kamarkhanda upazila headquarters and held a rally at Jamtali railway station yard with Abdul Barek, president of the Sangram Parishad in the chair.

Later, they laid a siege to the REB office from 11.30 am to 1.30 pm. They also submitted a memorandum to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) demanding power smooth power supply and protesting alleged corruption by REB officials.



Awami League formed a human chain in front of the court complex in Sylhet city yesterday demanding arrest of the 'real' killers of party leader and former minister SAMS Kibria.

## Kushtia AL leader critically hurt in bomb attack

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

An Awami League (AL) leader was critically injured when criminals hurled two bombs on him near Bamandi Bridge in Gangni upazila in Meherpur Tuesday night.

Left leg and right hand of Abdur Rashid, 42, were blown away in the attack. He also bore splinters on his body, police said.

He was rushed to Meherpur General Hospital and later sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday as his condition deteriorated, his family sources and doctors said.

The AL leader came under the attack when he was returning home at Bamandi village from Arpara market at about 9.30pm, police said.

In a statement Meherpur district AL president advocate Miazan Ali and general secretary Abul Kalam Azad alleged that some ruling party men were behind the attack as Rashid was a popular leader in the area.

## Two 'robbers' lynched

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Two alleged robbers were lynched by villagers in Jhenidah and Sirajganj Tuesday night.

People from nearby villages rushed in, caught one of them after a chase and lunched him. The victim was later identified as Sarkar Ali, 32, son of Bhim Mondol of Sailkupa upazila in Jhenidah district, police said.

valuable and Tk 15000. The robbers exploded two bombs when the family members cried for help, injuring six persons.

In Kushtia, at least 15 people were injured in a clash with a gang of robbers in the early hours of yesterday.

Three persons were injured as the bandits exploded at least six bombs, police said. They were admitted to the local health complex.

Separate cases have been filed in connection with the incidents. In Sirajganj, an alleged member of a gang of dacoits was lynched in Char Chapari village in Sadar upazila Tuesday night.

In Jhenidah, a gang of about 20 armed bandits swooped on five houses at a time in Gopalpur village in Kaliganj upazila at about midnight. They exploded bombs and looted cash and valuables, reports our Kushtia Correspondent.

In Kushtia, a gang stormed into two houses at Fakirabad village in Bheramara upazila at about 3.30am yesterday.

The victim has been identified as Ranju Mian, 42, son of Shah Alam of Char Malshapara village in Sirajganj town. He died while being taken to hospital, police said.

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