

Bangladeshi shot dead by Indian forest guards

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A Bangladeshi national was shot dead by Indian forest guards in Gachhuapara forest area in India yesterday.

The victim was identified as Tajuddin, 18, son of Abdul Jalil of Purba Gubrakura village under Hailuaghat.

Police said the Indian forest guards shot Tajuddin after he entered into the Indian territory to collect firewood.

Locals rescued critically injured Tajuddin after he crossed the border and returned into Bangladesh territory. He succumbed to his injuries on way to the hospital.

Corruption has decreased in last five years, claims Tarique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman yesterday claimed that corruption has decreased gradually in the last five years.

He also said that only his party, party Chairperson Khaleda Zia and the four-party alliance can curb corruption.

Tarique was addressing an Iftar party discussion organised by Zaur Rahman Foundation at the LGED auditorium in the city. State Minister for Labour and Employment Amanullah Aman and State Minister for Education Ehsanul Haque Mion were also present.

Quoting a report of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), Tarique said the cost of corruption was Tk 17,192 crore in 2000, Tk 11,296 crore in 2001, Tk 4,391 crore in 2002, Tk 789 crore in 2003, Tk 413 crore in 2004 and Tk 426 crore in 2005.

He said the ruling party could not take adequate steps to curb corruption as it had to spend more time tackling non-political programmes of the opposition.

On power crisis, he said, "Maybe we could not take enough measures to develop the power sector."

Other BNP leaders and ministers also spoke at the programme and made indecent remarks on opposition leader Sheikh Hasina.

PHULBARI AGREEMENT Sit-in in front of energy ministry October 19

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Committee to Protect Oil-Gas-Mineral Resources and Port will stage a sit-in in front of the energy ministry in the city on October 19 demanding implementation of the Phulbari agreement and ouster of Asia Energy from the country.

A representative meeting of the National Committee will also be held at Phulbari in Dinajpur today to initiate movement against the conspiracy of multi-national companies. Representatives from 16 districts in north Bengal region will join the meeting.

The leaders yesterday announced the programmes at a rally at Mukhtangan in the city.

They said the people of Phulbari would not forgive the four-party alliance government if it does not implement the agreement.

"Now time has come to enact a law banning export of coal, gas and oil. People will not tolerate any conspiracy against these resources," said Engineer Sheikh Muhammad Shahidullah, convener of the committee.

CPB leader Mujahidul Islam Selim, Tipu Biswas, Ruhin Hossain Prince, Bazilur Rashid Firoz, Moshrefa Mishu, Advocate Abdus Salam and Zonayed Saki also spoke.

Govt dev programmes in urban areas only for rich

Speakers tell AL roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is carrying out all the development programmes in urban areas only for the rich people, not for the poor, speakers at a roundtable said yesterday.

They said the government is only focusing on the urban development without taking the environmental issues into consideration, thereby creating a lot of environment problems.

The Awami League organised the roundtable on 'Unplanned urbanisation and its impact on the environment', with Obaidul Quader, joint general secretary of the party, as the chief guest.

The population in urban areas has increased to 2.5 crore within the last 30 years and the number is

increasing at a rate of 6 percent, but no government has taken any initiatives to check the trend, said Prof Dr Nurul Islam Nazem.

As a result, the urban system has lost its equilibrium in all aspects, he said, adding that the demand for water in Dhaka city is 210 crore litres, but the Wasa can supply only 150 crore litres of water.

Forty percent of the people living in the city are poor, but the authorities do not have any plan for them to supply water and electricity, he said. And about 54 lakh people are living in 9,048 slums in the six cities, he added.

He also said the city has been experiencing sewer water and air pollution due to lack of proper planning. Prof AQM Mahub suggested

relocating industrial units and some government offices in order to reduce traffic congestion in the city.

Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, former vice-chancellor of the Dhaka University, said it is high time to take steps to prevent the migration of the rural people to the cities.

The price of lands has increased manifold due to unplanned urbanisation in the last five years, he said.

Dr Hossain Mansur also spoke at the roundtable moderated by Dr Hasan Mahmud, environment and forest secretary of the Awami League. MA Mannan, chairman of Environment and Forest sub-committee of the AL, chaired the session.

Auditor general briefs PM on audit reports

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Comptroller and Auditor General Asif Ali yesterday called on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office and briefed her about audit reports.

The auditor general explained to the prime minister one performance audit report, two special audit reports, two annual audit reports, two financial and 12 appropriation accounts.

He also said that he would formally submit the reports to the president.

Zakir was tortured to death

Alleges father

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Family members of Zakir Hossain alleged that the torture in Rab custody caused the death of the 'innocent' boy.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) said Zakir had pains in the chest and hands while running to evade arrest at an open field at 3:00am on Tuesday. He succumbed to his injuries at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital in the early of Wednesday.

But Zakir's father Zafar Hossain said some plainclothes law enforcers arrested him in presence of his mother Helena Begum in front of the Sony cinema hall at Mirpur immediately after Iftar on Monday.

The Rab men also arrested Zakir's friend Rubel from there at the same time, his father said.

Rab in the first information report, lodged with Shah Ali Police Station at Mirpur in the city by Captain Ahmed Yusuf Jamil, termed Zakir as a 'terrorist' although no case or general diary was found against him.

Zafar said the Rab men beat his son severely in his custody and then took him to hospital. "They even refused to say anything about his arrest when we inquired about my son in the Rab-4 office," he told The Daily Star.

"The plainclothes men even refused to say anything about his arrest when my wife wanted to know why they were taking her son," Zafar said quoting his wife.

"We then contacted the local police station and the Rab-4 office over phone both denied arrest of anyone by the name," said the weeping father.

Later, Zafar came to know that Rubel was handed over to Savar police on Wednesday.

Kafrul and Mirpur police said there is no case against Zakir in their police stations.

Lawyers protest inauguration of court bldg by Nizami today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Lawyers yesterday staged a demonstration on the Pabna Judge Court premises protesting the inauguration of the Pabna Judge Court building for the second time today by Industries Minister Maulana Matur Rahman Nizami.

The District and Sessions Judge Mafzul Islam inaugurated the court building through holding a milad mahfil on July 11.

Sammiilla Ainjibi Samannaya Parishad Pabna organised the protest. The lawyers brought out a procession and formed a human chain in front of the Pabna Judge's Court.

Later, the speakers at a rally said they will announce tougher agitation if Nizami inaugurates the court building. Advocate Shamsul Haque Tuku presented over the meeting.

Judge Md Mofizul Islam said July 11 milad was an unofficial programme and today's inauguration is an official one.

Pharmacy Council team visits EWU

A Bangladesh Pharmacy Council team led by Prof Dr Chowdhury Mahmud Hasan, chairman of BCSIR, visited the department of pharmacy at East West University (EWU) on Tuesday to inspect various facilities for its accreditation with the council, says a press release.

The other members of the team were Prof Dr A Ghani and Prof Sheikh Firozuddin Ahmed Chowdhury of Jahangirnagar University, Prof Dr Anwarul Islam of Rajshahi University and KK Shaha, secretary of the Council.

They examined the curriculum of the programme, teaching method, faculty strength, lab facilities as well as the infrastructure facilities of the university for the programme.

The team also met Jalaluddin Ahmed, president, Board of Directors of the University. Among others, Dr Mohammed Farahuddin, founder vice-chancellor, Dr Mohammad Musa, acting vice-chancellor, and Dr Khairul Azam, registrar of the University, were also present.

Prof Dr Bidyut Kanti Datta, chairperson, Department of Pharmacy, explained the academic and infrastructure facilities of the department.



Bangladesh Comptroller and Auditor General Asif Ali submits different audit reports to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office in the city yesterday.

LABORATORY SCHOOL TEACHER GOSWAMI MURDER Two to die, one gets life

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced two youths to death and another to life imprisonment for killing Swapan Kumar Goswami, an English teacher of the Government Laboratory High School in the city, in October 2002.

The court also acquitted a youth, as he had become an approver to prove the charges against other accused in the case.

The court could not proceed with the trial against the mastermind and four others following a stay order of the Supreme Court (SC).

The convicts with death are Jalal Zillu and Moksudur Rahman Biplob while Parosh was given life in jail for the killing. The court acquitted Rifat Akond for becoming an approver to prove the allegations against others involved in the killing.

Judge Shahed Noor Uddin of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 handed down the sentence in presence of the convicts at a packed courtroom.

Following the verdict, victim's wife Shimla Goswami broke down in tears and expressed her satisfaction over the judgement. She also expected quick disposal of the trial against five others, including the mastermind, and execution of their

conviction.

The judge could not conduct the trial against five other accused SM Sabbir Rahman alias Shantanu, Tanvir Sharif Apon, AKM Mosharrar Hossain Arman, Mahmudul Hassan Johny and Shahidul Islam alias Shuvoas the charges brought against them would be tried under the Juvenile Act.

Moreover, the Supreme Court had earlier stayed the proceedings of the case against the five following a writ petition filed by Apon's lawyers challenging the legality of the tribunal to conduct the case as a juvenile court.

In his verdict, the judge said approver Rifat Akond could not be released from jail and would be confined in jail as he (Rifat) would have to give statement against the five juveniles during their trial after the vacation of the SC stay order. So, Rifat has to be in jail till disposal of the trial against the five, even though he was acquitted, the judge added.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of 20, out of 28 prosecution witnesses.

According to the prosecution, a group of miscreants hired by Apon and Shantanu, students of class

seven of the School, who were expelled and not promoted, shot dead Swapan Kumar Goswami at about 9:15am on October 26, 2002 in front of Sikdar Store near his residence at Bhutergoli in Dhanmondi.

Later, victim's cousin Rumon Chakraborty filed a murder case with Dhanmondi Police Station in this connection the same day.

Following the incident, police arrested Apon, Shantanu and others for their alleged involvement with the killing.

Moreover, Shantanu's father Moshir Rahman, the then assistant secretary of the education ministry, was also arrested for his negligence in keeping his arms at his residence. Later his name was dropped from the charge sheet.

During the investigation, Zillu, Rifat, Apon and Shantanu gave confessional statements to magistrates on different dates disclosing the names of others involved in the killing.

Special Public Prosecutor Abdul Latif Talukder appeared for the state while Advocate Jasim Uddin defended the accused.

EC opens tender for printing voter list

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) secretariat yesterday opened the tender for printing the voter list for the next general election.

A total of 186 organisations submitted quotations to get the work order, EC sources said.

Work order will be issued on October 18 and the successful bidders will be given 45 days to complete the work considered by the EC as the most important one at the moment.

Some bidders, who were present during the opening of the tender, said it might not be possible to complete the whole task of printing of the voter list within 45 days.

EC officials will inspect the bidding organisations today and tomorrow, EC organisations to see the facilities for such a heavy task, EC sources said.

Earlier Election Commission secretary Abdur Rashid Sarker said it would cost maximum Tk 15 crore to print the voter list for the next general election.



Senior leaders of the Awami League see off party President Sheikh Hasina at Zia International Airport in the city prior to her departure for the USA yesterday.

BHASANTEK HOUSING AL, JP MPs walk out of JS body meet to protest decision

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The opposition Awami League and Jatiya Party lawmakers yesterday walked out of the last meeting of a parliamentary body protesting its 'motivated' decision withdrawing an earlier suggested restriction on Bhashantek housing project in the capital.

The parliamentary standing committee on land ministry had earlier recommended stoppage of work on the project following allegations of corruption in flat allocation process.

AL and JP members of the standing committee at its last meeting yesterday alleged that the ruling alliance wants to take a quick decision on the housing project to make money illegally.

But State Minister for Land Ukil

Abdus Sattar told the meeting that the government intends to amend the contract signed between it and the company concerned but it is not possible unless the House body withdraws its earlier suggestion to stop the project work.

Committee member Abdul Karim Abbasi chaired the meeting as its Chairman Mahbubur Rahman was not present. AL lawmaker Promod Mankin questioned the committee chairman's absence from the meeting and said, "I think it is a political disease, and nothing else."

The committee at its last meeting once again failed to disclose the names of land grabbers across the country.

Meeting sources mentioned that flat allocation at Bhashantek housing project was the fourth item out of six on the notified meeting agenda.

But the chair of the meeting raised this issue first ignoring the schedule. "It is an important matter, so we should discuss this first. And we do not have enough time to discuss other issues," he was quoted as saying.

Protesting the decision of the chair, AL and JP lawmakers said they want to discuss everything according to the meeting agenda, including the first three items on it.

But ignoring this, the chair continued the discussion on the housing project. The AL and JP lawmakers then walked out of the meeting.

Later, the committee decided to withdraw its earlier suggestion.

"This decision was necessary to amend the contract on Bhashantek project but the government will take action against anybody involved in corruption in the project," Abbasi told reporters after the meeting.

Echoing his views, the state minister told reporters that the new decision has nothing to do with land grabbers. But it is important to us as the law ministry could not vet amending the project deal due to the previous suggestion of the House body.

After the walkout, JP lawmaker Golam Habib Dulal said, "They (ruling coalition members) have discussed Bhashantek project as they took money from the project director. So, we have walked out of the meeting to protest this."

He alleged that the committee has totally failed to perform its duties properly. It could not take a single decision against the land grabbers.

AL lawmaker Enamul Haque told reporters, "Earlier the committee had suggested stopping the project due to corruption, and the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) is working on it. But the committee has now taken a new decision without getting any report from the PMO."

Promod Mankin alleged that the ruling alliance members and the land ministry took up Bhashantek issue first in their own interest.

WEATHER TODAY

Rain or thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls are also likely at places during the period, Met Office said, predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 35.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 22.6 degree Celsius at Rangpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 5.34pm today and rises at 5:56am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.0	26.2	77	75
Chittagong	32.8	25.2	79	74
Rajshahi	33.0	25.4	89	85
Khulna	34.1	26.5	77	83
Barisal	34.0	25.8	84	88
Sylhet	32.2	24.9	80	73
Cox's Bazar	32.3	24.2	77	80

DHAKA TODAY

Seminar

Pragatishil Prokashali O Shapoti Forum organises a seminar on 'Phulbari mass uprising and national coal policy'. Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity auditorium. Time: 2:30pm.

Open dialogue

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal will hold an open political dialogue on 'Amendment in constitution to empower people'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 2:00pm.

Discussion on hajj

A discussion on 'Learn about hajj' will be held. Venue: Spectra Convention Centre. Time: 10:00am.

Discussion

Shere Bangla Agriculture Debating Society will hold a discussion on 'Next general election and the role of the media'. Venue: Conference of the Agriculture University. Time: 3:00pm.

Rally

Save the Environment Movement will hold a rally protesting filling of the water bodies of the city. Venue: Gulshan-lake bridge near Brac Centre Inn. Time: 11:30am.

Kasheeda session

Dhakabashi organises a kasheeda session to mark the Eid-ul-Fitr. Venue: Shishu Academy. Time: 3:00pm.



A team of Bangladesh Pharmacy Council visited the department of pharmacy at East West University on Tuesday and met its President Jalaluddin Ahmed.