

Martyred Intellectuals' Day in picture



(1) Dhaka University teachers led by the Vice Chancellor placing wreaths at the mazar of martyred intellectuals. (2) Five Party Alliance (3) Patriotic Democratic Front(PDF) (4) Jahangirnagar University teachers (5) BFLJ and DUJ discussion and (6) DUCSU leaders.

Dhaka Day by Day  
The Hidden Door to Darkness

by Aasha Mehreen Amin

It is the 15th of December '91 — a day before Victory Day. For Shyamoly Chowdhury and her two daughters Shampa and Nipa, a dark cloud seems to hover over this rainbow of victory. Exactly twenty years ago Dr Alim Chowdhury, an eye specialist, and the husband of Shyamoly Chowdhury became one of the victims of the Pak Army's 'black list' of intellectuals. The agonising question that still haunts Shyamoly Chowdhury and her two daughters, the only living offsprings of Dr Alim, is inevitably — Why? This 'why' springs up from the harsh reality that the very person who helped to engineer the deaths of Dr Alim and so many others is not only alive and well today; he is a man with enough political clout and influence to erase a record that can only be described as criminal if not diabolical. With painful detail, Shyamoly Chowdhury recounts the circumstances of her husband's abduction and the way he was lured into his death trap.

It was raining that night when our next door neighbour Deputy Speaker Martin came to our house at 11 O'clock at night with a man. He told my husband to help this stranger and his family whose house had been burnt to the ground and had no where to go. This was not surprising because for months my husband had been hiding 'muktijoddhas' and other Bengalis secretly, distributing medicine and helping many people to flee to India. We had a clinic downstairs in our Purana Paltan house and this was used as a camouflage, hiding people as patients. My mother and I spent most of our time knitting sweaters and sewing blankets for the 'Muktijoddhas'. Normally I would always welcome such people in distress but that night as I looked at that bearded face with the prayer cap on his head, my blood turned ice cold. I vehemently refused as my husband pleaded. Finally his appeals convinced me and I gave in. The stranger and his family moved in and settled down downstairs.

In the next few weeks we saw a change in our 'guest'. Truck loads of furniture, electronic goods etc kept coming in and soon this was replaced by continuous visits by army jeeps. We realized our mistake but there was nothing we could do except find a way to flee the house. On December 3rd the fighting broke out and we started hearing rumours about the 'pick ups', the 'lists'. Then one day we noticed two or three 'Al Badr' men stationed outside our house. Our guest explained it was for his protection. It was only much later I realized it was to make sure that we did not leave.

On December 15 I was ready, packed and determined to leave the house with my family. But my husband came back from Midford hospital where he was working, to inform me that the friend and colleague who had initially promised to provide a shelter for us had let him down.

After lunch on the same day my husband and I were sitting in our verandah watching the bombing. Soon a car stopped outside the gate and two 'Al Badr' men in their ash-coloured uniforms stepped inside our guest's flat. After 45 minutes the same men came up and started to bang on our front door. Our flat had an inner door that connected the two floors and since then had always remained open for easy access. But today the door had been bolted. The doctor banged on the door begging our guest to open it. After several minutes the man opened the door a little and in a whisper said "Doctor Sahib, you go ahead, I am here, don't worry." It was these few words that reassured my husband. He opened the door and in an instant the Al Badr men were taking him downstairs without even letting him change out of his 'lungi'. That was the last time I saw him alive.



Shaheed Dr. Alim Chowdhury

I ran to 'our guest' fell on my knees, begged him to stop them but he remained sitting, silent and stone faced as the car drove away. Finally, he broke the painful silence by saying coldly "Why are you so anxious?" They are just my students who are taking your husband to the cantonment to give treatment to patients. Even Dr Rabbi will be with him. The next day at 8 a.m. there were cries of "Joy Bangla" everywhere. Our country was free at last. While I was frantically trying to find out my husband's whereabouts 'our guest' came up through the inner door, a bundle in his hand, begging me to hide him somewhere. I was too preoccupied with my own fears and gave him shelter in my dining room.

There was still some sporadic shooting on the 16th and I was waiting to get news from my brother in law when a Muktijoddha rushed into the house screaming "where is the... who killed Alim Bhai?" Those words just made me numb with shock. I ran to the dining room but 'our guest', the man who helped to kill my husband had disappeared through the same inner door.

On the 18th of December after aimless, frantic searches, Shyamoly Chowdhury was asked to identify her husband's body lying in a heap of other corpses in a ditch in Rayer Bazar mutilated with bayonets and gun shots. The memory of that gruesome scene will no doubt haunt her all her life but not as much as the face of that man whose very existence represents nothing short of death — to justice.

Seminar on campus and politics  
Stern action a must to stop campus terrorism

CHITTAGONG, Dec 14 : Speakers at a seminar on educational institutions and politics expressed grave concern over terrorism on the campuses and said the government should take stern action against such activities in order to ensure a congenial academic atmosphere, reports BSS.

They said, the student bodies should be debarred from involving in such activities as hamper normal functioning of educational institutions. The seminar, held under the auspices of Ashkania Aulia College at Ataurar depot here yesterday, was presided over by college managing body President ATM Ziaul Huq. Prof Abu Tayyab Chowdhury, Prof Abul Kalam, Prof Yakub Ali, M Nasirul Huq and Maulana Haqqani took part in the discussions while journalist Nazir Ahmad read a paper on the subject.

They pointed out that some student groups had become more active than political parties with their intention to establish dominance on the campus.

Prof Huda sick

By Staff Correspondent Prof Mirza Nurul Huda, a former Vice-Chancellor, had fell ill critically after he had suffered a severe stroke Thursday.

Family sources said, Prof Huda's condition further deteriorated Saturday with fresh complications including brain haemorrhage that attacked him.

Prof Huda is now undergoing treatment of Prof A R Khan at the Ibrahim Memorial Diabetes Hospital in the city.

Members of aliling Huda's family requested the relatives, friends and wellwishers to pray for his early recovery.

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Agri Institute reopens Dec 21

Bangladesh Agricultural Institute at Sher-e-Banglanagar will reopen on December 21 after an unschedule vacation of 53 days, reports UNB.

The decision was taken at a meeting of its academic council held here on Thursday.

The residential halls of the institute will be reopened on December 19.

The institute was closed on October 27, in view of escalation of tension between two rival groups of students.

- TV Sunday
- 5.00 Opening announcement, Al Quran, Programme summary
  - 5.10 News in Bangla
  - 5.20 Reading from the Bible
  - 5.30 Chhary Chhary Lekhapara
  - 6.00 Educational programme
  - 6.30 Sports programme
  - 7.05 Rabindra Sangeet
  - 8.00 News in Bangla
  - 8.30 Probaha
  - 9.00 Drama series : Oshin
  - 10.00 News in English
  - 10.30 Chhayachanda
  - 11.30 Khabar/The News Summary
  - 11.40 Monday's programme Summary
  - 11.45 Closing

Commemorative stamps on martyred intellectuals

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia on Saturday formally released a set of 30 commemorative stamps of Taka 2 denomination issued by Bangladesh Post Office in observance of Shaheed Intellectual Day, reports BSS.

Begum Zia released the stamps at her office in a simple ceremony.

Two first day covers valued at Taka 5 each were issued and a special canceller was used on the occasion. A souvenir valued at Taka 5 on the Shaheed Intellectuals was also issued.

This is for the first time that commemorative stamps on Shaheed Intellectuals have been issued in 20 years of independence of the country at the initiative of the present democratic government.

Post and Telecommunication Minister M Keramat Ali, Director General of Bangladesh Post Office Muhiuddin Ahmed, and other high officials were present on the occasion of releasing the stamps.

The stamps and first day covers will be sold from all G P Os and head post offices in the country.

Weather  
Dry weather to prevail

By Staff Correspondent

Sky would remain partly cloudy at places over Dhaka and Chittagong divisions and over the regions of Barisal during the next 36 hours beginning 6 pm Saturday. Met office forecast.

Dry weather will prevail over the country.

Night temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged except the coastal region of the country where it may rise by one to two degrees Celsius.

Temperature and humidity recorded in important cities and towns on Saturday were:

Cities/towns	Temperature in degree Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	9 am	6
pm Dhaka	26.0	16.0	80	70
Chittagong	28.7	16.2	86	74
Rajshahi	27.2	14.4	85	85
Khulna	26.5	14.3	80	67
Barisal	27.0	14.2	90	92
Cox's Bazar	29.0	16.5	77	65
Srimangal	26.5	12.0	83	83
Mymensingh		14.7	73	
Dinajpur	26.0	11.4	79	70

The lowest temperature of the day was at Dinajpur.

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