

Mugging, hijacking in city

Four shot, one stabbed

By DMCH Correspondent

Five people were injured in separate incidents of attack by political rivals, crossfire, mugging and hijacking bid in city Saturday.

Shamim Ahmed, 18, a first year student of Tejgaon College, and his companion Amir Hossain Amin, a motor mechanic, were injured when a group of armed youths attacked the two at a Mahakhali residence in the city yesterday.

The attackers reportedly supporters of Harun, a candidate for AGS in Titumir College Students Union polls, stabbed Shamim on his right shoulder and shot Amin on the right thigh at about 1 pm.

Shamim and Amin campaigned for Inam, a contender of Harun at the students union polls a few days ago, the victims, admitted to the DMCH, said.

Khorshed Alam, 30, sustained bullet injuries at room number-310 of the Dhaka College North Hostel Friday mid-night in a crossfire between two groups of students.

Alam came from Feni and was staying at the room, allotted for his friend, Rahmatullah. He was rushed to the DMCH. Until 10 pm yesterday, he was kept in the Intensive Care Unit of the hospital.

Muggers shot and injured Shahjahan, a businessman, and snatched gold ornaments from his wife, Jasmin Haque near their Gopibagh residence yesterday evening. Shahjahan along with his wife, two children and a brother were attacked by the muggers when they got down from a taxi after shopping at the New Market.

In another incident two unidentified armed youths shot and critically wounded Humayun Kabir Tinku, an accused of a hijacking case, in an abortive bid to kidnap him from the chamber of his lawyer at the Dhaka Court building yesterday morning.

According to witnesses, the armed youths entered the chamber of Advocate Ayet Ali Patwari at 10.45 am and asked Tinku to go with them. On being refused the armedmen fired six rounds of pistol shots of which three hit Tinku.

The attackers managed to flee instantly. Tinku was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital and later shifted to the Chest Diseases Hospital.

Accused of a hijacking case in Badda area of the city and on bail, Tinku went to the court to appear before the Judge.

Students and members of the public rushed to the spot immediately after the incident and brought out sporadic processions to vent their anger.

A cross section of people also went on a three hour spontaneous hunger strike from 8:30 pm to protest the incident.

Nearby food vendors said that a small group of police posted near the Central Shaheed Minar failed to respond to the acts of vandalism.

Later, a heavy contingent of police was rushed to the area and all roads leading to the Shaheed Minar were sealed.

Such an attack by vandals on the Shaheed Minar has been the first to be witnessed since the independence of the country.

UNB says: A member of the Shaheed Day Coordinating Committee said, "the extent of damage is such that the area cannot be brought back into its shape within a few hours."

Meanwhile UNB adds: Awami League President Sheikh Hasina has condemned the terrorist acts at the Central Shaheed Minar and alleged that communal forces desecrated the altar and marred the sanctity of the Shaheed Day.

In a statement last night, Sheikh Hasina said communal forces had demolished Shaheed Minars in different parts of the country on various occasions.

"This evil force under cover of the government" went on rampage, set afire the symbol of "rising sun" behind the altar of the Central Shaheed Minar and erased "alpha" and wall writings this afternoon, she said.

The opposition leader alleged that police on duty stood silent during the rampage by anti-liberation communal forces.

Hasina called for mounting resistance to the communal and anti-liberation forces and upholding the sanctity of the Shaheed Day and safeguard national independence.

Democratic Forum leader Dr Kamal Hossain has condemned Saturday's incident at the Central Shaheed Minar and said this "could only be done by dark forces opposed to our independence."

Dr Kamal described it a "heinous and barbaric action of destroying symbols of our nationalism displayed at the Shaheed Minar."

In a strongly worded statement he said "the dark forces" have behaved like true heirs of Yahya Khan who launched his war against the nation by a military attack to demolish the Shaheed Minar.

Inspired by the sacrifices of our martyrs, we must act unitedly to ensure that these forces are effectively dealt with and to remind them that these forces were decisively defeated in 1971 and have no place in independent Bangladesh, added Dr Kamal.

CPB President Saifuddin Ahmed Manik and General Secretary Nurul Islam Nahid condemned the incident at the Central Shaheed Minar.

In a statement, the CPB leaders described the incident as an attack on the national spirit of the Bangladeshi nation.

They demanded action against the persons responsible for such dastardly acts of desecrating the Central Shaheed Minar.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia flanked by the recipients of Ekushey Padak '92 at the Osmany Memorial Hall in city yesterday. — PID photo



Vandals smeared black paint on the wall writings near the Central Shaheed Minar (top) that sparked instant protest in the area yesterday (bottom). — Star photo



Sheikh Hasina addressing a discussion meeting on Ekushey in front of the party central office yesterday. — Star photo



A large crowd of people gathered for a discussion meeting on Ekushey.

Homage to martyrs

The day is a public holiday and the national flag will be hoisted half-mast. Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television will put up special programmes and newspapers will bring out special supplements.

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has chalked out elaborate programmes to mark the day. They include hoisting of national and black flags at half-mast atop the party office Sunday morning.

Party leaders and workers will place wreaths at the Azimpur graveyard and the Shaheed Minar. The cultural wing of the party will organise a discussion at the Ramna Batamool.

The Awami League will also hoist black flag and party flag atop the Bangabandhu Bhaban in Dhannondi and the party central office. The leaders and workers will wear black badges and participate in a mourning procession to place wreaths at the Shaheed Minar.

Besides the placing of wreaths at the Shaheed Minar by people from all walks of life, and poetry recitation sessions in the morning, the Bangla Academy will hold a discussion "Democratic practice in Bangladesh; and its institutionalisation."

The Shilpakala Academy will organise an open discussion in the afternoon which will be followed by a cultural programme.

The other organisations which have announced programmes to observe the day include: Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Samannye Committee, Communist Party of Bangladesh, Bangabandhu Parishad, Bangabandhu Gabeshana Parishad, Tamaddun Majlis, cultural organisation "Kranti", Joybangla Sanskritik Oikya Jote, Biswa Kala Kendra, Bangabandhu Shishu Kishore Organisation, Nazrul Academy, Bangladesh Ganasanskritik Unnayan Samity, Doyel Sanskritik Gosthi, Janapad Natya Dal, Islamic Foundation, DUJ (S-A), DUJ (Z-G), Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA), Shishu Academy, Vivekananda Shiksha and Sanskritik Parishad, Jatya Kabita Parishad, Lekkhok Shibir, DU hall student unions, JSD (Inu), JSD (Rab), Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, Mujahidul Islam Party, Agargaon Family Development Project, Dr Alim-al-Razee Smriti Sangsad, Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB), Progosh and the Yoga Foundation.

Representatives of foreign missions in Dhaka will place wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar between 9:00 am and 10:00 am. The day will also be observed by Bangladesh missions abroad.

Some important road-lands in the city have been decorated with festoons inscribed with Bangla alphabets.

Similar programmes are being arranged at district and thana levels in observance of the day. (Editorial on Page 4)

Martyrs' dreams

From Page 1 Col 3

Hossain for drama and Hashem Khan for fine arts.

The Prime Minister urged awareness of Ekushey Padak to contribute to the enrichment of our national life by their new and novel contributions. It is through their contributions to science and technology, art, literature and culture that they can bring laurels to the country of nations, she added.

Members of the cabinet, noted intellectuals, writers, poets, litterateurs and elite of the city were present at the function.

Begum Zia said the nation would have to make strides along a long and arduous course to impart fulfilment to these sensibility of Ekushey.

Explaining the significance of Ekushey the Prime Minister said it represented our national identity and symbolised the spirit of self-scrutiny. "Treading the path of Ekushey we have achieved our liberation, ousted autocracy and restored democracy. The sublime day is, therefore, inextricably linked with our national identity."

The Prime Minister thought it is an embodiment of our soul-searching and self-questioning. "It represents our struggle, as citizens of a sovereign country, to assert the right to alleviate hunger and poverty, receive education and culture, attain self-sufficiency and prosperity. The ideals of Ekushey will remain unrealised unless and until we achieve these rights," she said.

Hasina: Fanatics

From Page 1 Col 7

East Bengal Legislative Assembly during 1954-58.

She lamented that the spirit and values of the great War of Liberation were banished and elements opposed to the independence war rehabilitated in a planned way by the post-1975 regimes. Against all odds and obstacles, Hasina said the intelligentsia in this country upheld the independent entity of the Bengalee nation through their writings.

Focusing on the present political scenario, the opposition leader alleged the BNP government was ruling the people with the "same outlook as of the Pakistani regime".

"The way BNP is governing the nation gives the impression that the lovers of Pakistan are ruling the people." She told the meeting that the post-75 governments of Zia and Ershad destroyed the values of independence by amending the Constitution.

She also alleged the government had resorted to the old tactics of bringing opposition workers in the workers in the ruling party fold by means of intimidation, harassment and temptations.

Zero hours

From Page 1 Col 4

Vice Chancellor of the Dhaka University Prof Emaujuddin Ahmed received the Prime Minister at the Central Shaheed Minar premises.

Meanwhile, hundreds of people crammed the area hours before the clock struck twelve.

Heavy contingent of police, plain clothes securitymen, BNCC and University volunteers struggled hard to maintain discipline.

A section of people shouted anti-government slogans and a small cracker was blasted at 11:40 pm.

Dhaka University central students union leaders appealed to the people to preserve the sanctity of the Shaheed Minar.

Trains of processions began arriving at the minar from all directions.

As the people placed wreaths, loudspeakers blared "Amar Bhaier Rakte Rangano Ekushey February, Ameer Ki Bhulite Part."

Nazrul Institute, Pahari Chhatra Parishad, Martin Hall of Notre Dame College, Dr M Shahidullah Hall students union, Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, Haji Md Mohsin Hall, Bangladesh Chhatra League, BKSAL, Samajtantrik Chhatra Oikya, Ekattor Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee, Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation, Jatiatabadi Mukttijodha Sangsad and Udichti were among the organisations which placed wreaths in the first minutes of the day.

The Midnight File

Azerbaijan plane hijacker surrenders in Stockholm

STOCKHOLM, Feb 20: A hijacking drama which started when an airliner was commandeered in Siberia ended on Stockholm today when an armed man identified as a national of Azerbaijan gave himself up to Swedish police, reports Reuter.

7 prisoners, 3 cops killed in Pak gunfire

ISLAMABAD, Feb 20: Gunmen shot dead seven prisoners and three policemen in a hall of semi-automatic gunfire after ambushing a prison van in northern Pakistan today, the official APP news agency said. Police were taking the seven prisoners back to Haripur jail after their cases were heard at the Abbottabad Sessions Court, about 65 km (40 miles) northwest of Islamabad, reports Reuter.

Exporters' suggestions

From Page 1 Col 4

increasing the export... but desired success could not be achieved in implementing the policy. Expansion of export cannot be expected without the implementation of the export policy."

The FBCCI chief also suggested formation of a National Export Council (NEC) for implementation of the export policy and for solving the problems in export.

During the discussion, an agitated Mahbubur Rahman said it is regrettable that many of the policies okayed in the cabinet meeting could not be implemented due to reluctance of some ministries or authorities.

The acting President of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), Azimur Rahman said, "very few of the recommendations approved in the past meetings of the EPC have been implemented. This matter should be discussed."

While the President of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) M Yunus said, "the private sector have always been putting forward concrete suggestions to the government for expanding export. We also received assurance for their implementations. But in most cases, we did not find any reflection of the commitments."

A thin attendance was observed in yesterday's EPC meeting as many major chambers and associations like Chittagong Chamber, Rajshahi Chamber, Narayanjan Chamber, Jute Goods Exporters Association and Bangladesh Association of Consulting Engineers stayed away from the meeting.

The private sector put forward 126 suggestions at the EPC meeting usually held annually to draw suggestions from private sector for formulating export policy.

The meeting also reviewed the 37 recommendations put forward by the FBCCI and adopted all but two for recommendations.

The EPC meeting was presided over by the Commerce Minister, M K Anwar while other government officials including the Commerce Secretary, Nazem Ahmed Chowdhury, Vice Chairman of Export Promotion Bureau (EPB), S M A Gazi, National Bureau of Revenue (NBR), Dr Akbar Ali Khan, Executive Chairman of Board of Investment, M Mostafizur Rahman and other senior officials of different ministries and banks were present.

Earlier, inaugurating the ceremony, Commerce Minister M K Anwar said the government would help in all possible ways to help boost export. He also said a national committee on export with Prime Minister as head was in the offing. He also said the government would soon announce the 1992-2000 export promotion strategy.

He said the government is active to draw foreign aid for expediting the export process of the country. He mentioned a number of projects with the financial help of USAID and World Bank are being implemented under this process.

He said the government is providing supports to make the country's products more competitive in the world market.

The Commerce Secretary, Nazem Ahmed Chowdhury asked the exporters to avail the opportunity of liberal export policy of the government and urged them to increase export of unconventional items.

However, the private sector alleged bribery in the customs service and long procedural delay in arranging export documents leading to a stagnation in export.

The FBCCI chief also recommended that the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) should be strengthened for overall development of the export and that a product development institute be established.

Mahbubur Rahman also suggested that professional commercial counsellors be appointed and export and investment wing be opened in Bangladesh missions abroad.

The MCCI chief Azimur Rahman proposed that the disparity between the export oriented industries situated inside the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) and outside should be removed. He mentioned that units inside EPZ do not have to pay advance income tax.

The DCCI chief, M Yunus demanded the establishment of an export bank and a body called Bangladesh Institute of International Trade.

The Vice Chairman of EPB, M S A Gazi admitted that many of the recommendations of the export policy could not be implemented these mainly lies with different ministries and organisations. "EPB only plays the role of co-ordinator", he said adding that it had often tried to implement these through the ministries.

UNB adds: Bangladesh Finished Leather Exporters Association demanded a clear-cut leather policy so that foreign investment can come in this "tremendous prospective sector".

The Jute Exporters Association sought cut in the insurance premium rates to lessen the burden on the crippled jute sector.

The Vegetable and Fruit Exporters Association strongly recommended immediate arrangement of special cargo plane for export of vegetable and food.

Bangla Craft, the association of handicraft exporters, suggested immediate arrangement of commercial farming of bamboo and cane to ensure supply of raw materials to the sector.

In response to queries from the private sector, the meeting was told the proposed 5 million US dollar credit line for CIS countries could not be arranged because of Russian Central Bank's refusal to provide guarantee.

To a recommendation for extending Special Bonded Warehouse facility to all export-oriented firms, the Chairman of the National Board of Revenue disclosed in the meeting that an amount of Tk 174 crore in duty remained unrealised from the users.

Mostafizur Rahman indicated at lack of drive on the part of exporters themselves. "You are the masters of your situation now."

Exports fetch Tk 4668.53 cr in six months

The country earned 1205.72 million US dollars, equivalent to Tk 4668.53 crore, from export in the first six months of current fiscal year, reports UNB.

This was disclosed in the 23rd meeting of the Export Promotion Council (EPC) in Dhaka yesterday.

Investment in private sector goes up

The first extended meeting of the Planning Commission with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair last night discussed the salient features of the revised Fourth Five Year Plan (FFYP), reports BSS.

Held at Sugandha here the meeting was attended, among others, by Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman and Planning Minister A M Zahir Uddin Khan.

The meeting was told that investment in the private industrial sector had increased. It was further informed that steps had been taken in the revised plan to patronise small scale investment in rural areas to generate self-employment.

The meeting was informed that the share of internal resources in the Annual Development Plan (ADP) was 25 per cent as against zero during the autocratic regime. The tax collection suffered due to stagnancy and increased expenses in the unproductive sectors during the autocratic regime, the meeting observed.

It was further told that by the year 1995 the share of local resources would increase to 42 per cent in the ADP and the growth rate would increase to 5 per cent of the end of the plan period.

Armed vandals

From Page 1 Col 4

the wet 'alpaha' on the road. But the intruders disregarded the request and beat up the institute students brandishing sawed-off rifles and other weapons, witnesses said.

The attackers then went on a rampage around the Central Shaheed Minar as students and others present in the area ran in all directions for safety.

The attackers, witnesses added, divided into two groups with one group bringing down the red sun and setting it on fire, and the other splashing bucketsfull of paint on the wall-writings.

Students and members of the public rushed to the spot immediately after the incident and brought out sporadic processions to vent their anger.

A cross section of people also went on a three hour spontaneous hunger strike from 8:30 pm to protest the incident.

Nearby food vendors said that a small group of police posted near the Central Shaheed Minar failed to respond to the acts of vandalism.

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Investment projects in dairy, poultry farming

A high level meeting on investment programmes of financial institutions yesterday approved the launching of an investment promotion project in the dairy farming subsector, reports BSS.

The meeting, held at Bangladesh Bank under the chairmanship of Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman also decided to launch similar project in the poultry-farming subsector very soon. The meeting was attended by Finance Secretary Nasimuddin Ahmed, Governor of Bangladesh Bank Khorshed Alam and heads of various financial institutions.

Under the promotional project dairy farms purchasing five cattle will be provided with an incentive package of 30 per cent of the borrowed amount. Bangladesh Krishi Bank along with Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank will implement the project and the Department of Livestock will provide field level support for the purpose. Fund has already been released by Bangladesh Bank for the project. The project is designed to generate large-scale self-employment opportunities among the youths.

The meeting decided to provide Bangladesh Shilpa Bank with an additional credit line of Taka 50 crore for increased investment in the industrial sector. The House Building Finance Corporation will also receive an additional fund of Taka 100 crore for increasing its lending programme in the housing sector.

Similarly Bangladesh Krishi Bank and Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank will receive an additional fund of Taka 50 crore for rapid expansion of its credit programme in the rural sector.

IJO scientists will meet Feb 22-25

Scientists from the six major jute producing countries will meet in Dhaka from February 22-25 at IJO headquarters, reports UNB.

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