

DOWN TO EARTH

Rehabilitation of Released Prisoners

By A S M Nurunnabi

The Dhaka Central Jail is the biggest jail in the country. The conditions prevailing here are more or less representative of the situation in other jails of the country. In principle, this also applies to the question of rehabilitation of released prisoners. Unquestionably the question of taking appropriate steps for helping the inmates on their discharge from prisons is highly important.

The most common difficulty which an inmate faces immediately before or on his release from prison is to adjust to society to which he once belonged. Not to speak of the society at large, even in his family circles he often finds himself no more as welcome as before. Apparently the stigma of imprisonment which attaches to his person is difficult to erase.

Apart from the social context, this stigma casts its shadow on his future economic life. No employer would knowingly employ an ex-convict. On the other hand, both for purposes of helping an ex-convict to regain a foothold in the outside world and reducing recidivism, it seems absolutely essential to adopt a carefully planned programme to enable him to get over his initial difficulties after discharge.

Apart from taking such measures as probation, parole, remission, furloughs and short leave, followed in some developed countries as suitable pre-release programmes, it seems necessary to adopt specific steps in order to help an inmate upon his final release.

In some advanced countries, there are reportedly pre-release homes which provide accommodation to inmates on their release. While staying there, they are free to go out, seek employment or do some job, if already found, during the day and spend the night at the home. Normally, these are not big establishments; nonetheless these provide a sort of breathing space for the ex-convict who can take a fresh look at society and himself, and arrange things accordingly. Since family ties in our country are normally strong, it is generally expected

that an inmate on his release would prefer to rush to his family wherever it lives. But going back to his family may not solve his problem of adjustment to society. What he would need most is his social acceptance, particularly in the matter of suitable employment.

The problem of rehabilitation of women prisoners after release has some other aspects. Since there are no separate jails for women convicts, female convicts of lower age group are lodged together with veteran female prisoners. This creates adverse influence on the young female prisoners. As with male ex-convicts, the women prisoners are not easily accepted by their relatives with the result that sometimes they become shelterless. In this situation, they can be easily engaged in various anti-social activities with offers of small remuneration. Like other rootless people, they live a life of uncertainties. From sheer necessity of living, they roam about in residential and commercial areas and become a source of pollution of social environs in the hands of a class of touts and mastans.

We may learn from the examples in western countries. In UK, for example, pre-release preparations are made by arranging discussion groups which consider various domestic, social and employment problems with which the inmates are faced when they are released. Under pre-release employment scheme, it is learnt that prisoners serving short terms are allowed to be employed in civilian work even outside the prison before their release. They are even paid nominal wages which they may spend for supporting their families. When a prisoner is discharged, he is given necessary clothing and also paid a small discharge grant.

In the western countries, there are also private or social organisations which provide various types of facilities to ex-convicts, such as finding accommodation, giving some financial help, finding employment, etc.

Since there is neither any such regular voluntary organi-

sation (except for some isolated help from some NGOs) nor any government institution in our country to render necessary help to inmates on their release, it is felt worthwhile if government develops a well-organised after-care service whose aim will be to reintegrate an ex-convict into society as a useful citizen. Without organising a proper after-care service, it would be futile to think of rehabilitation of prisoners. It must therefore precede and not follow rehabilitation. The aims and objectives of the after-care service may broadly be as follows:

a) to establish a Discharged Prisoners' hostel or hostels for providing temporary accommodation to prisoners who are released.

b) to help released prisoners in obtaining employment.

c) to maintain and support discharged prisoners for such period during which they remain unemployed.

To make the programme of after-care and rehabilitation a success, it would be necessary to provide suitable training to inmates while they are inside the prison. Some facilities for such training already exist in the central jails. This aspect may not therefore present any serious problem. In view of the existing high rate of unemployment for unskilled labour, the need for such training in suitable trades is hardly any emphasis. To train up the prison inmates is therefore one of the major tasks for reformation and rehabilitation of the inmates.

To organise such after-care service, government would have to initially make some grant. If right type of people come forward to organise such service, they may be able to attract donations from generous members of the public as well as international agencies.

The principal effort of the after-service should be to prepare the released prisoners to lead a normal, free and useful life. The moment of release which every prisoner looks forward to with great eagerness and expectation must be seized properly with promise of after-care service on the indicated lines.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia inaugurated the construction work of the Buriganga Bridge at Zinjira in Dhaka yesterday. — PID photo

6 of Memon family held at Delhi airport

NEW DELHI, Aug 26: Federal agents have arrested six relatives of a key suspect in a terrorist attack that killed more than 300 people in Bombay last year following Hindu-Muslim riots, reports AP.

The Central Bureau of Investigation CBI, India's equivalent of the FBI, said its agents arrested them Thursday in New Delhi.

Two newspapers, The Asian Age and The Times of India, reported today that CBI agents accompanied the six members of the Memon family on an Air India flight to New Delhi from the United Arab Emirates and arrested them at the international airport.

But the reports gave conflicting accounts about how the arrests had occurred, and CBI spokesman S M Khan refused to say on Friday whether the Memons surrendered, were turned over by UAE authorities, or were caught sneaking into New Delhi.

On March 12, 1993, 13 bombs planted by terrorists exploded across Bombay, damaging the stock exchange, office buildings, five-star hotels and apartments, and killing 317 people.

The attack followed communal riots in Bombay in December 1992 and January 1993 that killed hundreds of people, mostly from the Muslim minority in the mostly Hindu city.

The street clashes broke out there, and across much of India, after Hindu extremists

tore down an ancient Muslim mosque in the northern holy city of Ayodhya on December 6, 1992.

Hundreds of Muslims have been arrested in Bombay and charged with the bombing, which reportedly was done to pay back Hindu extremists for killing Muslims during the rioting. India claims Islamic Pakistan funded the terrorist attack, a charge it denies.

A key suspect in the bombings is Mushtaq "Tiger" Memon, the only member of the Muslim family who is still at large.

Three weeks ago his brother, Yakub Memon, was arrested. CBI agents said he was caught in the New Delhi train station, but Yakub said he was captured in Nepal, blindfolded, and moved around and interrogated for days before CBI announced his arrest.

Khan, the CBI spokesman, said the six Memons arrested Thursday are Tiger's father, Abdul; his mother, Hanifa; three brothers, Suleman, Issa and Yusuf; and Suleman's wife, Rubina.

All six arrested Memons are accused of playing a role in the bombings, but they have not been formally charged yet.

Recently, Amnesty International accused Sharad Pawar, the chief executive of Maharashtra state, where Bombay is located, of failing to prosecute policemen who had helped Hindu radicals mount attacks on Muslims during the city's riots in 1992 and 1993.

Serbs may reject peace plan in referendum

SARAJEVO, Aug 26: Bosnia's Serbs prepared today for a weekend referendum likely to reject the latest peace plan, and a UN official said peacekeepers might have to leave pre-emptively if Washington then lifts an arms embargo, reports Reuters.

Election organisers say around a million Serbs are expected to cast votes in the referendum. Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic has predicted near unanimous backing for throwing out the deal, despite overwhelming outside pressure for compromise.

Introducing the resolution, Wallop said at a time when India was seeking closer economic ties with the US, the administration had not only the opportunity but the obligation to call on India to stop what he alleged as, abuses of security forces in Kashmir.

Clinton urged to ask India to abide by HR

WASHINGTON, Aug 26: Republican Senator Malcolm Wallop has introduced a resolution in the Senate urging the Clinton administration to ask the Indian government to "respond to human rights concerns," reports PTI.

The resolution "reiterates the need for all parties in the Kashmir dispute to enter into negotiations and resolve the conflict peacefully."

The senator wants both the US and the UN to work for that goal.

Introducing the resolution, Wallop said at a time when India was seeking closer economic ties with the US, the administration had not only the opportunity but the obligation to call on India to stop what he alleged as, abuses of security forces in Kashmir.

One dies in Barisal road accident

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Aug 26: One person was killed and 40 others were injured when a bus collided head on with a truck at Ashukathi under Gournadi thana here today.

Truck driver Momin died on the spot while 33 of the 40 injured were admitted to the Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital, Gournadi Thana Health Complex and Madaripur Sadar Hospital.

Police Commissioner Satish Sahney said 2,000 riot police were patrolling the city and helping its 37,000-member police force.

On Thursday, two men riding a motorcycle shot and killed Ramdas Nayak, 52, president of the Bombay unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party and an elected member of the Municipal Corporation, which manages most city services. His police guard also was killed.

No one claimed responsibility for Nayak's killing, and police said they had no idea what had motivated the killers, who escaped. But the attack, and the general strike, could set off clashes between the city's majority Hindus and minority Muslims.

Indian movies

From Page 1 Col 7

sparked controversy by posing the question, "What's beneath the blouse?" the answer was "My heart."

But saucy dialogue has also raised eyebrows. Singh Deo said censors frowned on "double meaning dialogues referring to women's anatomy for example breasts for apple or some other fruits" and "below-the-waist jerks suggesting copulation."

An above-average Indian movie costs anything up to 50 million rupees (1.6 million dollars) and the government said it wants detailed censorship guidelines so that film makers would not waste money on scenes that will be cut.

Buriganga Bridge

From Page 1 Col 4

strengthening its economy, she pointed out.

The Prime Minister expressed her confidence that the nation was certain to make further progress because of the development programmes of the government.

The Opposition is scared of seeing the development works done by the present government, she said and accused them (Opposition) of indulging in the politics of destruction.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdus Salam Talukdar, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, Communications Minister Oli Ahmad, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandakar Mosharraf Hossain, Information Minister Nazmul Huda, State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain, State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Abdul Mannan, DUCSU VP Amanullah Aman MP, Farida Hassan MP, JCD president Fazlul Huq Milon and local BNP leaders also addressed the function.

Phoolan threatens suicide over film on her life

NEW DELHI, Aug 26: The Bandit Queen, a poor woman who became a famous outlaw by riding through India on a horse and killing her upper-caste enemies, has threatened to commit suicide over a film made about her, United News of India reported today, says AP.

Phoolan Devi, 37, was released on parole in February after being held in jail 11 years without trial on 70 counts of extortion, kidnapping and murder.

With a red scarf around her head and a double-barrelled shotgun in her hands, she allegedly killed 22 Hindus at the top of India's caste hierarchy who she accused of murdering her lover and torturing her. She became the heroine of India's poor people.

Before Phoolan was freed,



Phoolan Devi

well-known Indian director Shekhar Kapoor and producer Bobby Bedi made a movie about her based on a biography, and it won acclaim at the Cannes Film Festival in France this year. The movie has not been released in India yet, and it is awaiting certification by the Film Censorship Board.

Some of the movie scenes broadcast on television show the Bandit Queen being paraded around by her captors in the nude, and slapping a lover around before they have sex.

In an interview with United News of India, she said: "If the Board clears the film without first showing it to me, then I will commit self-immolation in front of the Board's office."

"The film is an act of injustice against me. It is supposed to be based on my life story but it is replete with facts totally against my life and character. And I am deeply hurt at the way the film is being shown to select audiences but not to me."

When the clips of the film were shown on Doordarshan television last week, Kapoor and Bedi were interviewed.

The Midnight File

Clinton under pressure to open talks with Castro

WASHINGTON, Aug 26: President Clinton met his foreign policy advisers on Cuba today under pressure from key congressional Democrats to open up talks with Cuban President Fidel Castro. Bad weather in the straits of Florida separating Cuba from the US coast gave Clinton a reprieve from the daily flood of refugees. Rough seas sharply cut the number of Cuban rafters found at sea this morning with only 17 people picked up by coast guard vessels enforcing Clinton's new no-asylum policy, reports AFP.

Bosnian Muslims sweep into dangerous no man's land

ZAGREB, Aug 26: A new tide of Muslim refugees swept into a dangerous no man's land separating Croatian army and rebel Serb forces today, bringing the number of people packed into the zone up to 10,000. UN officials said, Peter Kessler, a spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, said thousands of people moved from a camp in the Krajina Serb-held part of Croatia into a heavily-mined UN patrolled zone close to the village of Turanj, reports Reuters.

Death anniversary

From Page 1 Col 8

will be held at the National Museum auditorium.

The discussion on "Studies and research on Nazrul's works in North America" will be held at the academy premises at 5:30 pm. It would be participated by president of the academy Lutfur Rahman Sarkar, general secretary Dr Rafiqul Islam, Dr Sajed Kamal, Minto Rahman, Masuma Khatun and others.

The academy has already started a three-day programme from Thursday at the Kabi Bhaban at Dhanmondi Road No 28 (Old) house No 330B.

Today, at the Kabi Bhaban, Prof Anisuzzaman will preside over a seminar while Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury, Deputy Leader of the Jatiya Sangsad will attend as chief guest.

The Shilpakala Academy will hold a discussion, poetry recital, dance and musical soiree at the academy auditorium at 7 this evening.

The programme will be attended by Kazi Mohammad Manzur-e-Mowla as chief guest while Bangla Academy Director General Dr Mohammad Harun-Rashid will preside. Dr Mohammad Maniruzzaman will be the principal discussant.

The university of Dhaka has drawn up an elaborate programme to observe the day. Vice-Chancellor Prof Emajuddin Ahmed will place a wreath at the mazar on behalf of the university. The teachers,

officers, employees and students of the university will assemble in front of 'Aparajito' statue at 6:45 am today and march towards the poet's mazar at 7 am.

The Awami League (AL) will also organise a procession towards the mazar to place wreaths at 8:30 am today, a press release says.

UNB adds, Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina yesterday paid tributes to the memory of national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam on the occasion of his 18th death anniversary.

In a message, she said Nazrul's creative and bold writings enriched Bengali literature and brought about a revolution in our thinking.

She said: Nazrul was the champion of the anti-imperialism movement and Bengali renaissance in the sub-continent. His pen always stood for the causes of the repressed and deprived people. The 'Bengali' nation got inspiration from his writings during the country's Liberation War.

The Awami League chief said rebel poet Nazrul came to Bangladesh on May 24, 1972 at the invitation of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The Bangabandhu government gave the poet state honour and made arrangements for his family's permanent stay here.

The best way to show respect to this great poet is to stand against all injustice, repression and exploitation, she said.

Pakistani beheaded in Mecca

RIYADH, Aug 26: A Pakistani was beheaded Friday in Mecca for kidnapping and raping a young boy, the Interior Ministry announced, reports AP.

The announcement identified the Pakistani as Ismail Abdul-Rahman Khan. It said he had seized the boy from a public street and taken him to an isolated area where he committed his crime.

The Pakistani was tried and convicted by a Sharia, or Islamic law, court. Beheadings are carried out in public squares opposite mosques, usually on Friday after Muslim Sabbath prayers.

More than 20 people have been beheaded this year, including Asians, Africans and Saudi nationals, mostly for smuggling and peddling of drugs.

Army major

From Page 1 Col 5

at Halim. Meanwhile, both Cantonment police and army intelligence men have been interviewing Halim until yesterday, a police source said.

Another source in the army said Halim may face immediate disciplinary action to facilitate impartial investigation into the charges against him.

Saifur

From Page 1 Col 4

etary process, the finance minister said it was one of the main reasons that the foreign entrepreneurs were not interested for investment in Bangladesh.

Regarding the efforts of the present government to realise huge bank loans and debts, the finance minister said that such efforts could not be made successful due to the delayed process of the judiciary system.

Dr Abdul Mayeen Khan, in his speech, said none could yet deliver a good governance suitable for an independent country. As a result 80 per cent of the people in the rural areas had no access to the government.

He pleaded for accountability, transparency and continuity of the government, for ensuring good governance.

Ctg oil

From Page 1 Col 7

tract last month, is negotiating for development of the Jalalabad gas field in Sylhet which was discovered and drilled by another foreign company — Schmitter — in the mid-eighties. The negotiation has not, however, progressed well because the government is yet to okay Occidental's PSC.

Indian merchant missing in Taiwan

TAIPEI, Aug 26: An Indian jewel merchant has gone missing in Taiwan carrying diamonds worth Taiwan dollar 6 million (230,000 US dollar) and police said today they suspected he had been robbed and murdered, reports Reuters.

The Hong Kong-based trader, identified as Masalia Manish Arvindkumar, 24, arrived in Taipei from the British colony on July 29 and has been missing since August 10, said an officer with the Foreign Affairs police.

Sirajganj bus workers' strike from today

SIRAJGANJ, Aug 26: The Sirajganj District Motor Sramik Union has called indefinite bus strike on all routes from Sirajganj from tomorrow, reports UNB.

Buses remained off the road on Sirajganj-Kazipur route following a clash between the students and bus workers at Kazipur on August 17.

Six vehicles were ransacked and some workers were beaten up on the day and the motor workers union called the strike.

President of the Union Abdul Awal and General Secretary Abdul Monim filed a case against seven student leaders of the Kazipur Munsur Ali College under anti-terrorism act after the clash. But none of the accused were arrested so far.

The union called the fresh strike from tomorrow on all the routes from Sirajganj demanding immediate arrest of the student leaders.

Suranjit

From Page 1 Col 8

Although Sengupta's name had been synonymous with the left-leaning Ganatantri Party, a split involving the leading members is imminent.

Other central leaders of the party were unavailable for comments.

Awami League Organising Secretary Mohammad Nasim told The Daily Star last night that he did not know anything about yesterday's developments.

"But I do hope he would be joining the Awami League soon." A few months ago there were similar media reports that Sengupta would be joining the AL. However, for reasons best known to himself, he had quashed such speculation.

Plot to topple ROK govt foiled

SEOUL, Aug 26: South Korea's internal security agency said today it had thwarted what it called a plot to overthrow the government, reports Reuters.

The agency for national security planning said in a statement it had arrested nine people and issued arrest warrants for four others for violating the national security law banning pro-communist activities.

No details of the alleged plot were given.

The agency said those arrested were members of the underground Saminchong, or the Federation of Social Democratic Youths. This was formed in 1991 to back the cause of communist North Korea and to sponsor anti-government demonstrations.

North and South Korea, divided at the end of World War Two, have been arch enemies since the 1950-53 Korean conflict ended in a truce.

The arrest of Saminchong members is the latest in a series of crackdowns on allegedly pro-communist movements in the South since the death of North Korean

2 BDR personnel arrested with Indian sarees

FENI, Aug 26: Two plainclothes BDR personnel were handed over to police with smuggled Indian sarees here today, reports UNB.

Police sources said Lance Nayek Ajar Uddin and Lance Nayek Jane Alam were caught by the local people when they were reportedly wrapping some 50 Indian sarees at Gumi in Sadar thana at about 11 am.

A case was lodged with the Sadar police station in this connection. The BDR personnel said they had seized the smuggled sarees at the Padua check post.

Police, however, freed them in the afternoon with the intervention of a senior BDR official.

President Kim Il-Sung on July 8.

The Seoul government launched its nationwide drive last month when leaders of Hanchongryong, South Korea's radical student organisation, set up altars at a university campus to pay tribute to the late North Korean leader.

Hardliners form alternative govt in Algeria

PARIS, Aug 26: The Armed Islamic Group (GIA), the most hardline of the underground fundamentalist movements in Algeria, today announced the setting up of an alternative government.

In a statement to AFP the group, which has claimed responsibility for a number of terrorist attacks, said its leader Cherif Gousmi, also known as Abou Abdallah Ahmed, would head the "Caliphate government, the name given to the Islamic administration."

A cabinet of 11 ministers listed a portfolio for Ali Belhadj, the number two from the rival extremist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) group, who is currently in detention.

The post of premier is to be held by Mohamed Said, a former FIS official who went over to GIA last month.

Khaleda

From Page 1 Col 5

ducing in politics of destruction. "They speak of democracy but do not believe in it," she said referring to the Opposition boycott of Parliament.

"Parliament is the focal point of democratic practices," she pointed out, saying this is the place where national problems can be resolved through discussion.

The opposition parties have been boycotting Parliament sessions since March to press home their demands, including constitutional provision for holding general election under a caretaker government.

'The Tigress' held in France

MARSEILLE, France, Aug 26: Police on Friday questioned a woman known as 'The Tigress', wanted in connection with 23 killings attributed to Spain's deadly separatist group ETA, reports AP.

Irene Idoia Lopez Riano, 30, reputedly one of ETA's most dangerous operatives, was arrested Thursday in Aix-en-Provence and transferred under heavy security to this Mediterranean port city.



Maria Idoia Lopez Riano

Police said that under anti-terrorism laws, she could be held up to four days before being charged, probably in Paris.

Wanted by police in France and Spain for several years, Lopez Riano was accompanied by an unidentified French citizen when she was arrested. It was unclear if the man was taken into custody.

She was carrying a pistol and false identity papers, as do nearly all ETA members in the hope they will be charged and sentenced in France and thus delay extradition to Spain.

Said to have been a member of ETA's lethal Madrid cell, Lopez Riano is wanted in Spain in connection with at least 23 killings, mostly members of the paramilitary civil guard and armed forces.

She is believed to have been behind one of ETA's bloodiest attacks July 14, 1986, when 12 civil guards were killed in two car-bomb blasts in Madrid. She was apparently told to lie low afterward and is believed to have fled first to Algeria and later to France.

She reportedly resurfaced in Zaragoza, Spain, in 1991 when she sought road assistance while driving a car packed with 35 kilograms (77 pounds) of explosives. She escaped capture.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, from City Publishing House Ltd, 90 Kakrai, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmandi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091 (Direct), Fax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA.