

JU 'rapists' now threatening reporters

By JU Correspondent

Correspondents of national dailies at Jahangirnagar University (JU) who covered a news item about a rapist and his co-laborers being allowed to sit for their exams last month, are being threatened of dire consequences over the telephone.

The Sangbad correspondent Rashed Mehedi, Prothom Alo correspondent Sohail Ahsan Nipu and The Daily Star correspondent Shamim Ashraf yesterday jointly filed a written application to the JU proctor to ensure their security on the campus following threats to their lives.

The correspondents alleged that some unidentified persons were issuing death threats to them over telephone.

"You will be taken care of if any report on the students (rapists) appearing in their examinations are published further," the unidentified persons warned over telephone at their homes and at the office of the Jahangirnagar University Journalists Association (JUJA).

The Daily Star correspondent was threatened four times. Prothom Alo correspondent three and Sangbad correspondent twice during the last two days.

The correspondents had published news items in their respective newspapers on January 28 about a rapist and two of his co-laborers being allowed to take their exams at a 'sub centre' outside the campus where JU authorities had made special arrangements for them.

Meanwhile, Jahangirnagar University Journalists Association (JUJA), Gonoatmik Chhatra Oikya (GCO), Jatiyatadhi Chhatra Dal (JCD), Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) in separate statements condemned the threats on the three reporters and demanded immediate action against those responsible.

ABM Shahjahan denies allegations

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Party president member ABM Shahjahan has denied the allegations made by seven of his fellow party colleagues that appeared in a section of the press on Monday and Tuesday. The report was also published in The Daily Star on February 2.

Contradicting the news item on misappropriation of party funds during 1991 national election, he said that he didn't take a lot of money from the party as alleged by the seven party leaders. He also said that the then office secretary knew it well how much money he had taken.

Shahjahan said that he contested the elections from two constituencies as there was no candidate of the party due to bad days of JP. And, he said, he didn't lose security money from both the seats. "The number of votes that was cast in favour of me in Bogra-3 seat was enough to protect security money of one more candidate," he claimed.

He also refuted the charge of his involvement regarding the split of JSD and denied the allegation of his involvement with the Gano Bahini and killing of unspecified number of people.

The JP president member said that he was strongly opposed to the formation of Gano Bahini and was always vocal against the force. Even the decision to abolish Gano Bahini was taken in 1976 on the basis of his argument. So the question of his involvement with the Bahini is not at all correct, he added.

FEMA calls for dialogue among all political parties

By Staff Correspondent

Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) yesterday called upon the political parties to start discussion for bridging up differences among them in order to evolve a democratic country from imminent political crisis.

FEMA leaders at a press conference in Mohammadpur yesterday said that people's option for leadership would be squeezed if the opposition parties do not take part in the ensuing municipal elections.

"Validity of any political institution will come under question if it is formed without the participation of a main political stream. In this situation, political institution will be nipped in the bud and many of the conscious voters will refrain from taking part in the democratic process as a result of it," FEMA leaders said.

The press conference was arranged to express FEMA's concern following the opposition parties' decision to boycott the upcoming municipal elections.

"The municipal election is of great importance as a female commissioner will be directly elected every three wards and it will help decentralizing the local government activities," FEMA leaders said.

Among others, FEMA secretary general Firoze M Hasan, chairperson of the media committee Shaokat Ara and member secretary Tariqul Ghani were present at the press conference.

Zikr mahfil

The monthly Zikr mahfil will be held today after Magrib prayers at 27, Siddheshwari Road in the city, says a press release.

The gaddisin Peer of Darapur Sharif, Hazrat Mouna Shah Sufi Alhaj Abul Hasan Muhammad Abdul Quayum will conduct the Zikr mahfil.

Tofail calls for consensus on economic issues

Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed called for consensus on economic issues to make best use of Bangladesh's tremendous potential for investment, reports UNB.

"Hartal-blockade do not do any good to anyone. Rather it hampers the economy, affects businessmen and country's image," he said about opposition option for hartal.

He was addressing the third annual conference of Bangladesh Fertiliser Association (BFA) at the Institution of Engineers Bangladesh (IEB) auditorium yesterday.

Some 2800 dealers from across the country joined the conference.

"A one-hour speech of the Leader of the Opposition on country's development in Parliament will be more fruitful than 10 hartals," said the minister, urging the opposition parties to make constructive criticism of government activities, instead of taking recourse to shutdown.

The commerce and industries minister reaffirmed government's pledge to reach fertiliser and insecticides to the farmers at fair prices to bring about an "agrarian revolution" for the growth of export-oriented agro-based industries.

He called upon the BFA members to perform their duties with utmost sincerity. FBCCI president Abdul Awal Minto, BCIC chairman M Anwarul Huq and BFA president Kafiluddin Ahmed also spoke on the occasion.

The minister hoped supply of gas would be ensured as per demand and six urea factories be able to go into production in full swing.

"If local mills become profitable, we won't require to import fertiliser to meet domestic demand."

Bangladesh, with its reserves of natural gas and human resources, turned into a potential destination of foreign investors, he said.

Result of written test for govt primary school teachers announced

The result of the written test for government primary school teachers held on Nov 13 last year by the Primary Education Directorate was announced yesterday, says a directorate press release.

The dates for the viva-voce test for selected candidates will be held very shortly, the release added.

JS snippets

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leading to her seat. Annoyed by the absence of quorum in the House, she was heard asking Chief Whip Abul Hasanat Abdullah to look into the matter.

She asked Abdullah to introduce 'token system' for the party MPs. "Those who will come on time will be given such tokens at the gates and those who won't will be deprived of their day's allowances."

Yesterday's JS business began late at 5.02 pm instead of 4.30 pm as usual. The premier came at 4.25 pm when attendance in the Treasury Bench was very thin and the Opposition Bench almost empty.

Jatiya Party lawmaker Fazle Rabbi turned up to participate in the discussion the PM was dominating. But he left the scene immediately after Hasina said to him, "I see, your leader (HM Ershad) is a Satan. It's not me, but (BNP lawmaker) Mashur Rahman who has said so."

"How could you tell me this, netree leader?" an embarrassed Rabbi said and fled the scene.

Replying to AL criticism of a BNP-JP alliance, Mashur had told the House, Tuesday that forging alliance with Satan was even justified to fight against the jalems (oppressors).

AL MP from reserved seats for women, Shahin Monwara Haq termed the lawmakers of her kind as the pride of the House. "The 30 members from reserved seats were called ornaments during the JP rule while they were termed as artificial flowers during the BNP regime. But now we've emerged as pride of the House."

Amid laughter all around, she said the women MPs were dedicated to working for people. Then, Monwara Haq wanted to know from the state minister for relief Talukdar Abdul Khaleque whether they would be allowed to serve the people in remote areas.

"Presently, 10 per cent of the test relief are sanctioned to the women MPs," Khaleque replied.

JS body on health ministry holds meeting

A sub-committee of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Health yesterday directed the authorities concerned to form a curriculum committee for formulating recommendations to improve and gear up medical education, reports UNB.

The directive was given at a meeting of the Number-4 sub-committee at the Sangsad Bhaban with its convenor State Minister for Health Prof M Amanullah in the chair.

Causes of deterioration of medical education system and ways and means for its remedy also came up at the meeting for discussion.

Members of the committee Dr Ziaul Haque Molla and Dr Dewan Mohammad Salauddin attended the meeting.

Public dialogue on Political Protest: Search for Alternatives



Participants at The Daily Star Public Dialogue on 'Political Protest: Search for Alternatives' held at the National Press Club yesterday. (Top) From left are Dr Intiaz Ahmed, Dr Selimul Huq, Aly Zaker, Habibul Alam, Dr Hanif, Dr Ahmed Kamal, and Md Jahangir. (Middle) From left: Enam Chowdhury, M Rashid Ahmed, Dr Yunus, Rubi Ghaznabi, Syed Sirajul Huda, Shamim Ahmed and Nazmul Ahsan. (Above) From left: Forkan Begum, Nurul Alam Chowdhury, Dr Golam Zaki, Md Kamrul Islam, Keramat Ali, Mahmud Hasan, and Rehana Ferdous Moni.



Preparation for inauguration of Ekushey Boi Mela is yet to be completed. The boi mela will begin tomorrow.



A scene from a play staged at the Shaheed Minar yesterday as part of the Street Drama Festival organised by Bangladesh Group Theatre on the occasion of Amar Ekushey.

SAARC Secy Gen calls on FM

Visiting SAARC Secretary General Nihal Rodrigo called on Foreign Minister Abulhasan Azad at his Sangsad Bhaban office yesterday, reports UNB.

During the meeting, they emphasised expansion of SAARC visa system, particularly for businessmen, so that they could strengthen the volume of export and exchange visits for better cooperation.

The Foreign Minister hoped that SAARC would continue to play a constructive role for furthering the existing relationship among the member states and help to open up new areas of cooperation in various fields.

Sultan Mohammad Mansur MP, Mirza Shamsuzzaman, a director general of Foreign Ministry, were present on the occasion.

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One found dead in hotel room

By Staff Correspondent

A 36-year-old man was found dead inside a room of a residential hotel at the city's Tejgaria Bazar under Tejgaria thana yesterday noon.

The body was found lying on the floor with both his hands and legs tied. There were black marks around his neck.

The identity of the victim could not be known. The motive behind the murder could not be known immediately. Police suspected that he was strangled to death.

One Jainal Abedin booked the room of Grand Hotel on Saturday. And the victim was his guest who came here on Monday, police said quoting the hotel authority.

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Confce on 'violence against women' begins Feb 6

A three-day international psychological conference on 'Violence Against Women and Children' begins in the city on February 6, reports UNB.

The conference is a step towards providing appropriate mental health services in Bangladesh aiming at creating a forum to bring new ideas.

It is expected to be a belting response to the demands for counseling and therapeutic services for diverse group of people, particularly women survivors of violence and abused children, said a press release.

Researchers, academics, psychiatrists and psychologists dealing with mental health from eight countries are expected to attend the conference, jointly organised by Psychology Department of Dhaka University and British Council.

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Ctg: Crime

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home from nearby Chittagong Medical College Hospital in an ambulance.

In both the cases, the dacoits escaped unchallenged though 61 checkpoints have been set up in the city amid deployment of patrol force, sources said.

So far, police could neither arrest the dacoits nor recover the goods.

A senior police official of CMP, however, told this correspondent that efforts were on to nab the dacoits.

Many other incidents of dacoity took place in the city and surrounding areas which were not recorded with police, sources said.

Besides, illegal toll collection has become a common phenomenon here, residents and businessmen said.

Whether at shops, business houses or residences, it continues unabated but police hardly take action against the extortionists, they alleged.

Bill in JS

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district judges, if the Bill got passage of the House again. But, he pointed out that under no circumstances the same power could be given to the additional district judges.

Explaining the reasons for not giving assent to the Bill and returning to the House for reconsideration under Article 80 (C) of the Constitution, the President's message said the revisional power was entrusted only with the High Court (now High Court Division) till 1978.

The same year, the message said the law reforms committee was formed, and considering the opinion of the committee, the district judges were given revisional power for the first time under the Ordinance No XLVIII of 1978 by amending section 115 of CPC. The reasons for this amendment were shown that the revision matter of a case remained pending for years when the case record of a case was summoned by the High Court from the lower court after filing of revision petition on a pending case. This process took several years for settling the case, the message said.

The President's message said, within five years the amendment of the CPC was repealed by the Ordinance No 83 of 1983 and the revisional power of the district judges was withdrawn. The reason for withdrawing the power was very clear. The objective for which the revisional power was given to the district judges was not at all achieved. On the other hand, disposal of original case took longer time.

The President enquired about the reasons for giving the revisional power to the district judges after a lapse of 15 years of the withdrawal of the power. Moreover, he said the 1998 amendment bill had given the same power to the additional district judges in addition to the provision of second revision or appeal of the High Court Division.

Int'l Short Film Festival begins today

The 6th International Short Film Festival begins in the city today, reports UNB.

Some 213 short films, including 14 Bangladeshis and the rest from 30 countries, will be shown in the 9-day festival.

Organised by the Bangladesh Short Film Forum, the festival will be inaugurated at the Public Library auditorium this evening.

The theme of the festival is "Free Cinema, Free Expression," said the organisers at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

Poet Shamsur Rahman will inaugurate the festival while film producer Cristof Jansul of Polish will be special guest.

Four short films will be shown every day of the festival. During the 9-day programme, 30 film personalities from within and outside the country will take part.

Tanker workers call off strike Fuel supply restored in northern region

Normal fuel supply in the country's northern region was restored after six days as oil tanker workers called off their strike yesterday official sources said, reports UNB.

The workers of oil tankers and cargo ships went on a work stoppage on January 28 in protest of increased robbery and extortion on river routes.

They withdrew their strike this morning after a "fruitful" meeting with officials, including DC and SP of Manikganj, and representatives of cargo ship owners and workers.

Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) in a press release said 10 oil tankers stranded at Aricha Ghat for the last one week sailed this morning for Baghabari depot, the main oil supply centre of the northern region.

The oil tankers were carrying 50 lakh litre diesel, eight lakh litre kerosene and six lakh litre petrol. Of them, five reached Baghabari this afternoon and five were on their way to the depot.

On the other hand, 30 tank wagons left Daulatpur depot in

Khulna in addition to normal supply for Natore, Harian, Parbatpur and Rangpur.

The stock capacity of Parbatpur oil depot has also been increased on an urgent basis while supply of oil from Daulatpur depot has been developed through the railhead wagon.

BPC said the government has already finalised the tender procedure to increase the capacity of Baghabari depot by 25,000 metric tons due to increased demand for fuel in the northern region.

Besides, six control rooms have been working round-the-clock across the country for smooth supply of fuel. BPC said there would not be any short supply of diesel for irrigation purpose in the region.

Besides DC and SP of Manikganj, the negotiation at Aricha Ghat Tuesday night was attended by BPC's Director (operation), Additional DIG of Police, Dhaka and leaders of Cargo Ship Owners Association and Bangladesh Riverine Transport Workers' Federation.

Dhaka, Colombo can share experiences

By Staff Correspondent

A Sri Lankan delegation now on a tour of Bangladesh expressed satisfaction following study of various projects in the fields of education, agriculture, economic and rural development projects.

Headed by Jeyaraj Fernando, Minister of Plan Implementation and Parliamentary Affairs, the Sri Lankan team comprises Deputy Minister for Agriculture Salinda Disanayaka and several members of the Sri Lankan Parliament.

The team is participating in the 51st anniversary celebrations of Independence organised by the Sri Lankan High Commission of Bangladesh.

There are many similarities between the two countries and both could share experiences and build on it. Our economies can make further progress through bilateral cooperation," the leader of the delegation said.

3 bodies recovered

By Staff Correspondent

Police recovered three unidentified bodies including those of a young woman and a minor girl from the railway track between Airport and Tongi station yesterday evening.

Government Railway Police (GRP) quoting the memo sent by Tongi rail station said that the three bodies were found lying beside the railway track in the morning. It is suspected that they were run over by a train.

Police recovered the bodies from the spot in the evening and kept them at the GRP thana premises. The bodies will be sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for autopsy today.

A case has been lodged with GRP thana in this connection.

New president, GS of SDDC elected

By Staff Correspondent

Advocate Abed Raja and Nazmul Islam Naz have been elected unopposed president and general secretary respectively of Sylhet Division Development Council (SDDC), says a press release.

This was announced by the three member election commission comprising advocate Mohammad Hannan, advocate Abdul Bari Chowdhury and Ilias Ali to hold the election of SDDC.

The election for other posts and council of the SDDC will be held as per election scheduled on February 6 at the Jatiya Press Club, the release added.

Death anniversary

By Staff Correspondent

Sixth death anniversary of renowned poet, former secretary and ambassador Sanaul Haq will be observed today.

A *mitad mahfil* will be held at the Chaura Kabi, A M Sanaul Haq Junior High School in Brahmanbaria on this occasion, says a press release.

The 7th death anniversary of MR Siddique, the first Commerce Minister of Bangladesh, former ambassador, ex-president of greater Chittagong Awami League and the father of Lionism in Bangladesh, will be observed on Saturday.

A *quarkhwan* and *mitad mahfil* will be held at his graveyard in the morning on the day as part of the anniversary programmes.

Discussions on late Siddique will also be held at Latifa Siddique Girls' College in Kumira and Masjidha High School ground in the evening.

Obituary

Yunus Chowdhury died at a Delhi hospital yesterday morning, says a press release.

He was undergoing treatment for heart ailments.

Chowdhury, who comes from Sriula under Khulna district had worked at ADC, BTMC and the Partex Group of Industries at various times. His body will arrive in the city today afternoon.



Memorial meeting on birth anniversary of Abu Sayeed Chy

A memorial meeting and stipends distribution ceremony amongst meritorious students have been arranged today at 4:30 pm at Mahila Samity Auditorium, New Baily Road in

observance of the 75th anniversary of birth of late president Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury.

Dr S A Malek, Political Adviser to Prime Minister will attend as chief guest. Ambassador of Norway Hans Fredrik Lehne and Dr Syed Anwar Hossain, Director General, Bangla Academy will attend as the special guests.



Death anniversary of Dr A R Mallick today

The second death anniversary of Dr Azizur Rahman Mallick will be observed today, says a press release.

Dr Mallick was the professor of South Asian History of the University of Pennsylvania, USA in the early '60s. Subsequently he became the founding Vice Chancellor of Chittagong University where he initially set up resistance during the Liberation War. He worked relentlessly to mobilise support for Bangladesh in India, United Kingdom, United States and the United Nations.

After independence, he became the secretary at the Ministry of Education. He was the first High Commissioner of Bangladesh to India in 1972. In 1975 he was made the technocrat Finance Minister in the cabinet of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Dr Mallick was awarded the status of Professor Emeritus, Jahangirnagar University in 1983.



Qulkhwan

By Staff Correspondent

The *qulkhwan* of Abdur Rahim Mufti who died on Monday will be held at Nurbagh Jame masjid at Khilgaon Tal-tola after Asr prayers today.

Friends, relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the qul.

Abdur Rahim Mufti was actively involved with progressive movements since the 40s and worked relentlessly for the improvement of the conditions of labour and farm workers. He was also associated with an NGO, Aranya Craft.

He is survived by his wife, three sons and two daughters. One of his daughters, Rafia Mufti, is the Senior Administrative Assistant at The Daily Star.

Students of Azimpur Girls' High School stage a demonstration inside the school yesterday protesting the alleged misbehaviour with the headmaster.

— Star photo