

## 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 collaborators 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 Sohel 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 halls and at the office of the Jahangirnagar University Journalists Association (JUJA).

The Daily Star correspondent was threatened four times, Prothom Alo correspondent thrice 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 collaborators 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), Gomontanik Chhatra Oikya (GCO), Jatiyatabadi 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 presidium 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.

Contesting 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 presidium 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 culture and save the 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 institutions 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 Tarique Ghani were present at the press conference.

## Zikr mahfil

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

The gaddins Peer of Darbar Sharif, Hazrat Moulana Shah Sufi Alhaj Abul Hasan Muhammad Abdul Quaiyuan, 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 Institute 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 Mintoo, 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 Hasnat 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) Mashru Rahman who has said so."

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

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

AL MP from reserved seats for women, Shahin Monwarha Begum, the lawmaker of her bind as the pride of the House. "The 30 members from reserved seats were called ornamens 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, Monwarha Begum 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 Sangsabha 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.

## News

### Public dialogue on Political Protest: Search for Alternatives



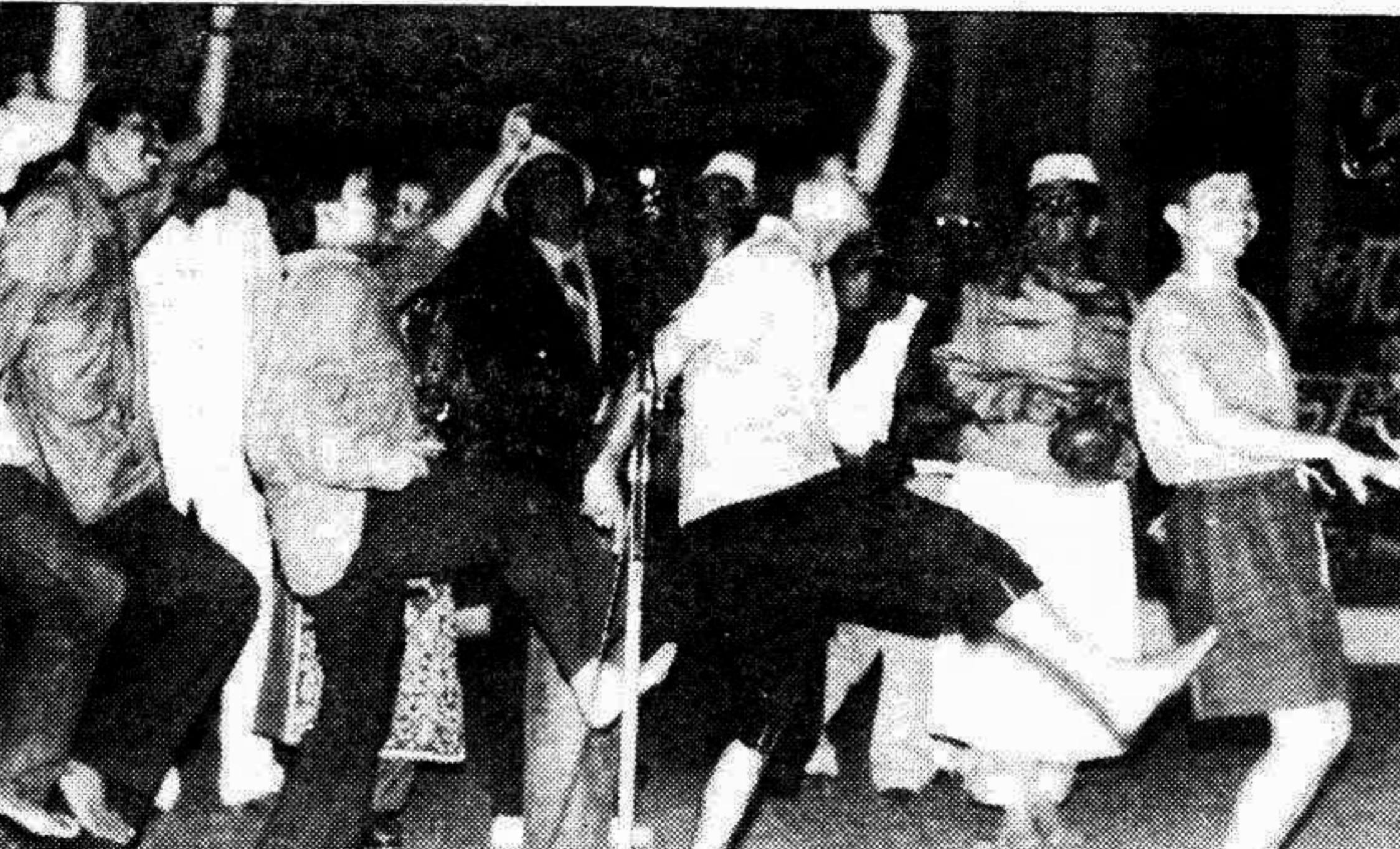
Participants at The Daily Star Public Dialogue on 'Political Protest: Search for Alternatives' held at the National Press Club yesterday. (Top) From left are Dr Imtiaz Ahmed, Dr Selimul Huq, Aly Zaker, Habibul Alam, Dr Hanif, Dr Ahmed Kamal, and Md Jahangir. (Middle) From left: Enam Chowdhury, M Rashid 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.

— Star Photo



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

— Star photo



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.

— Star photo

### SAARC Secy Gen calls on FM

Visiting SAARC Secretary General Nihal Rodrigo called on Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad at his Sangsabha 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.

On Tuesday, Jaiyal left his hotel room locking it from outside at around 8pm but he did not return.

### 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 Tejgori Bazaar under Tejgori 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 Jaiyal 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.

On Tuesday, Jaiyal left his hotel room locking it from outside at around 8pm but he did not return.

### 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 befitting response to the demands for counseling and therapeutic services for diverse group of people, particularly women survived 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.



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

— Star photo

### 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 Bangladeshi 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 Jansu of Poland 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.



Memorial meeting on birth anniversary of Abu Sayeed Chy

A memorial meeting and stendip distribution ceremony amongst meritorious students have been arranged today at 4:30 pm at Mahila Samity Auditorium, New Bailey Road in observance of the 78th anniversary of birth of late president Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury.

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