

Towfiq Aziz Khan

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suffering from lung cancer.
A milad mahfil will be held at his 278/2, Elephant Road residence after Asr prayer.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers have been requested to attend the programme and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Towfiq Aziz Khan was part of the core team that launched The Daily Star in 1991.

As the first Managing Editor he set up a management system and laid the foundation that made the newspaper financially viable. He worked closely with founding Editor SMAli and founder Executive Editor Mahfuz Anam to give The Daily Star a very strong administrative and managerial foundation.

His vision, professional commitment and devoted service gave the new born newspaper a very good beginning. His extraordinary capacity in creating a team spirit and inspiration gave The Daily Star a brilliant start.

He was always a loving, inspiring and encouraging leader with whom the staff members loved to work.

Born on July 16, 1936, Towfiq Aziz Khan began his career with the then Pakistan Observer (now The Bangladesh Observer) in 1958 as a staff reporter. He was also a student of Dhaka University at that time.

In 1968, he temporarily left the media to work in the then East Pakistan Industrial Development Corporation (EPIDC) and then in Titas Gas Corporation as Public Relations Officer.

He returned to the world of media in 1975 and joined as general manager of the then Danik Bangla and Weekly Bichitra.

In late 1990, SMAli invited Towfiq Aziz Khan to be the first Managing Editor of The Daily Star. He became the Executive Editor of the daily in 1997.

On January 10, 1972, Towfiq Aziz Khan made his mark as a television personality through his live television commentary from Kurmitola Airport on the historic home-coming of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman from London. Again in 1978, he gave live television commentary from the same airport when boxer Mohammad Ali and his wife came on a visit to Bangladesh.

Late Towfiq Aziz Khan was well known in Bangladesh as one of the first commentators in both Bangla and English. He worked as a radio commentator from 1958 and as a television commentator later.

He was the only Bangladeshi journalist who covered all the four Grand Slam tournaments of tennis - Australian Open, French Open, Wimbledon and US Open -- while working with The Daily Star.

He was also the Resident Editor of the Cricketer Asia, Hong Kong and the Sports Times, Lahore. He was also the founder editor of fortnightly Sports World (Kirira Jagat). He had also contributed to the Weekly Holiday at the initial stage of its publication.

He was the only Bangladeshi Journalist who was an Associate Member of the Australian Tennis Media Association (ATMA).

Besides, he was president of Bangladesh Sports Writer Association for six terms and its life member, permanent member of the Jatiya Press Club and honorary member of the Dhaka Club Ltd.

He was also a member of the National Committee of Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA), President of Rotary Club of Dhaka North-West for two consecutive years (1999-2000) and founder member and president of Bangladesh's first group theatre -- Drama Circle.

Hasina asks BCL men Take movement ahead, prepare for future challenges

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League chief and ex-prime minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday warned that the handpicked people of BNP-Jamaat government would turn against it to bring it down.

"That day is not far when your men set through politicisation will side with the people and take part in mass movement against you," she said of the coalition government while speaking at the inauguration of a 'political workshop' of Bangladesh Chhatra League at the Awami League central office.

Hasina bitterly criticised the government for 'politicising' every sector and warned of its dire consequences.

Referring to the government criticism of the last budget presented by the AL government, she said it was formulated very carefully taking all aspects into consideration.

The incumbent government, failing to continue the uptrend in economic growth, is now shifting its responsibility on to the past government of Awami League, she alleged.

"We formulated the budget according to our capacity and had we been in power, we would have

been able to achieve it," she said, defending the previous government's economic strategy.

The Awami League president called upon the BCL leaders and workers to take the movement ahead and prepare to face the future challenges.

Accusing the government of distorting the country's history in a planned way, she said the new generation would be ashamed someday when they would come to know the real history.

Hasina said the BNP-Jamaat clique wants to rewrite history of the country at their will. "They do not want to let the people know the real history."

The AL chief said the BNP-Jamaat government wants to erase the history of the country's glorious past.

Her party's student wing organised the 'political workshop' to train up its workers through a series of workshops on different national and international issues.

Hasina called upon the BCL leaders and workers to equip themselves with knowledge and the spirit of the liberation war, ignoring the threat by BNP-Jamaat alliance.



Workers of Kamalapur ICD stage a demonstration yesterday protesting the setting up of an AC bus terminal at TT para in the area.



PHOTO: STAR

Top leader of PBCP Mrinal group held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Dumuria thana police arrested a top ranking leader of Biplobi Communist Party at midnight on Thursday.

Swapan Kumar Roy, 40, alias Abdul hails from Balabunia village under Dumuria thana. But police disclosed the arrest of the outlawed party man on Saturday night.

Swapan, the second-in-command of Mrinal group of BCP is an accused in four murder and three other criminal cases recorded with Dumuria thana, OC said.

He was taken on a three-day remand yesterday.

JTV goes into operation soon

UNB, Dhaka

A new terrestrial TV channel, Jamuna Television (JTV), goes into operation soon.

JTV, a sister concern of Jamuna Group, has started its preparatory works.

TV viewers across the country will be able to watch the JTV programmes to be aired using UHF system.

ETV case

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ETV and argued before the court that the licensing agreement was declared valid by the President's notification.

He also submitted that the Telegraph and Telephone Acts of 1885 and 1933 are not applicable to the matter because when these Acts were enacted, none thought of establishment of the private TV channel.

Barrister Rafiqul Haque, another counsel of ETV, argued before the court that there is no scope for broadcast through terrestrial system without valid licence, so the contents of the petition are self-contradictory.

Attorney General A F Hasan Arif took part in the hearing on behalf of the government and submitted before the court that the then finance minister exempted ETV on his personal responsibilities from paying the government Tk 1,200 in revenues per hour for using BTV towers.

The hearing has been adjourned until Wednesday.

JS debates

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some politically sensitive questions by the speaker.

Treasury bench MP Shahidul Islam whipped up the debate after the speaker had rejected two of his questions one about monitoring of the opposition leader's activities while she stays abroad and the other on "brutalities" by the Rakkhi Bahini during 1972-75.

An angry Shahid accused the parliament officials of misleading the speaker in rejecting his questions. This prompted others to join in the debate about whether the speaker should explain the reason for rejection to the House.

The speaker repeatedly referred to the parliament's rules of procedure that empower him to accept or reject any question without assigning any reason.

But others including Law Minister Moudud Ahmed and the communications minister argued that an explanation would do no wrong.

Both the speaker and the chief whip pointed out that there was no such precedence. The speaker added the parliament rules must be amended for giving way to such practice.

Others who participated in the debate included State Minister for LGRD Ziaul Haq Zia, State Minister for Disaster Management Ebadur Rahman Choudhury, BNP lawmakers Mashur Rahman and Sarwar Jamal Nizam and independent MP MM Shaheen.

Outlaws

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murders, mostly committed by cadres of outlawed organisations. It is an open secret that most of them are sheltered by political parties, they claimed.

Last year, 250 people were killed by them. Even top political leaders were not spared, said three police superintendents of crime-prone districts when asked about telephone why they are failing to arrest the outlaws and recover illegal arms.

They said they have nothing to do in recovering illegal arms so long political influence "disturbs" their work.

"Our lives are also not secure in the hands of outlaws", said one of them.

"Why should we feel secure if a notorious terrorist like Tapan can be easily snatched from police custody from the corridor of a district judges' court?"

A member of the ruling party who does not move out of his house without police escort said, "Armed terrorists seem to be stronger than policemen".

2 shot dead

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Meanwhile, followers of Tauhid Khan went on the rampage at the DMCH at about 10:00pm after the on-duty doctors declared him dead.

When contacted at about 10:30pm last night, Shutrappur police failed to give details of the incident.

Minister promises

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Awami League government, Kajal along with his men had run the 'bank' in Kotchandpur of Jessore, offering abnormally high interest rates to depositors.

Lured by his apparently lucrative offers, many even sold out their homes, ornaments and other valuables to deposit money with Kajal's 'bank'. But at one stage, he stopped giving interests, leaving thousands of people in financial distress.

Later, police arrested Kajal and tried to recover the money without any success.

Lawmaker Shaidul Islam, who raised the issue in the parliament yesterday, accused some former ministers and their relatives for having links with the swindler. He however did not go into specifics.

The home minister informed the House that Kajal was released three times on parole for talks on how to recover the money, but nothing happened. He said the then police super of Jessore filed a case against Kajal and 139 of his associates, most of whom are now absconding.

Extortion: Many faces

FROM PAGE 1
forms would not be processed otherwise.

"I was asked to pay Tk 100. When I refused to do so, one of the student union leaders warned that I would not be able to sit for the exams. They noted down my form number and threatened to disqualify me if I did not pay the money," said one student requesting anonymity.

Similar allegations were made by at least two dozens of candidates who appeared in the exams in different medical colleges.

A total of 1350 students will be admitted into 13 medical colleges this year while as many as 10,000 students sat for written tests. The highest number of 4500 appeared in the DMC exams.

When contacted, Javed Ahmed, vice-president of the student's union at the DMC, admitted collection of fees from examinees. He said, "The fees were collected mainly for raising a fund for the wellbeing of the students of the college. In fact, we took the decision with a prior approval from the college authorities. We had informed the college principal and he knows about it."

"The money would be used to set up a gymnasium, a cyber café and on other social works including helping poor students," Javed, who is also president of JCD, DMC chapter, claimed.

He denied allegations that the union leaders had forced applicants to pay fees. He said applicants were requested to pay fees on a voluntary basis and some 4000 students had contributed to the fund.

Asked why applicants, who are not yet students of the college, should contribute to the union's welfare fund, he said, "I think everyone should contribute. This is a national institution. Besides, we have already done some good works like gardening, cleaning of the premises and tree plantation."

Javed, a final year student, also said he might cancel the system next time if he is voted to the student body again. "I have already faced enough criticism for this and if anyone wants, I am willing to pay

them back."

When asked, Professor Tofael Ahmed, principal of the DMC, said, "There is no written approval for collection of fees for welfare fund although the matter is in my knowledge."

He said, "The student leaders came to me for verbal approval and I neither encouraged nor discouraged them. I told them that they can go ahead with the plan if the system is in place in other medical colleges."

Ahmed also told the student leaders that they should not raise money without any receipts.

JCD activist hurt in factional clash at DU

DU CORRESPONDENT

An activist of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) was injured in a clash between two factions of the ruling BNP's student wing on the Dhaka University campus yesterday.

The injured JCD activist was identified as Rana, a student of the Department of Geology and resident of the newly built Amar Ekushey Hall of the university.

At least three rounds of gunshots were fired during the clash at the cafeteria in the Curzon Hall area at about 1:00pm leaving general students lunching there running for cover, campus sources said.

Sources said Shahidullah Hall unit JCD activists Javed, Rashed and Azad led by Shantu wasp on Rana and other Amar Ekushey Hall unit JCD activists at the cafeteria as a sequel to an incident on Saturday night when Rana allegedly threatened Shantu with a firearm.

Later, police raided Shahidullah Hall and arrested Shantu, Masud and Monju for their alleged involvement in the clash.

Tale of Asian migrants

FROM PAGE 12
Thailand and China too...

Australia has offered cash to refugees who return home and to poor Pacific neighbours to take others off its hands.

Malaysia, where there are an estimated one million illegal workers, is planning new foreign labour laws, with stricter registration. Punishments include whipping.

Indonesia expects 40 million jobless this year and needs all the \$500 million its workers abroad toiling as maids, construction site and plantation workers send home each year.

It's the same story in the Philippines.

But deportation camps in Malaysia and Australia are concentrations of human misery.

Last year, Indonesians rioted at one Malaysian camp. In January, despairing Afghans went on hunger strike in Australia, some sewing up their lips and others trying to hang themselves.

Human rights groups express outrage. Governments, unwilling to give in to human traffickers, express frustration.

Australia and Indonesia have organised a ministerial conference to counter human smuggling, involving nations from Southeast Asia and the Pacific Rim, in Bali on February 27-28.

Further north, human smuggling is rampant in southern China. The IOM says migrants may pay "snakehead" smuggling gangs more than \$30,000, often by borrowing from crime syndicates.

With 1.3 billion people, China, the world's most populous nation, is the largest source of unskilled labour in the region.

The rights of "undocumented workers", as the NGOs prefer to call migrants without papers, should be recognised, she says.

Remittances give pause for thought

Sender countries tend to stay silent on the issue, for fear of losing valuable remittances by their workers abroad.

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Strike at Ctg port

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Nurullah Bahar, General Secretary of Bandar Sramik League Abu Jafar Azad, General Secretary of Bandar Islami Sramik Sangha Kazi Jahangir Khokan and General Secretary of Bandar Sramik Union Sharif Ullah were present at the meeting in the boardroom of Chittagong port.

At one stage, the labour leaders tried to press their counterparts for the 30-day incentive bonus, following a few other entreaties being unheeded, sources said.

Citing 'mounting discontent' among general workers, they urged the port authority to immediately meet the demand, the sources said. But the chairman reportedly refused to make any specific commitments to the incentive bonus.

He requested them to give him some time so that he could talk the matter with the higher authorities and the ministry concerned, the sources added.

At around 6.30pm, the meeting ended in disagreement.

The sources said the authority's refusal came on the heels of a directive by the finance ministry for "not achieving the cargo handling target" in the fiscal 2000-2001 at Chittagong port.

The shipping ministry gave 'no objection' to the demand for the incentive bonus, though.

The finance ministry set a target of about 1.76 lakh MT of cargo handling for 2000-2001, while Chittagong port handled around 1.40 lakh MT, the sources said.

Unhappy with the outcome of the meeting, the labour leaders came out of the boardroom to announce the strike to be enforced from 7.30am to 12.00 on February 13,

rejecting outright the chairman's request to backtrack on the programme.

AL convention

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besides physical harassment, rape, and killing, even fish were looted from ponds and crops damaged forcing a large number of minority people to leave their homeland.

He said organised and systematic political attacks were launched on pro-liberation and progressive forces and the religious minorities after the election. "Such attacks are still going on in the country and that's why we are going to hold this convention to evoke the humanitarian will of the nation to fight this evil and to stand besides the distressed people."

Barrister Amir-ul-Islam lamented that trials of post-71 political killings have still not been held, burdening the nation with a great sense of guilt. "The ultimate goal of the convention is to remove this sense of guilt and establish justice," he said, adding that the government's political will would be instrumental in stopping violation of human rights.

Strongly criticising Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's recent address to the nation, he said such irresponsible statement without facts and figures only help the offenders.

Former vice chancellor of Dhaka University Prof. AK Azad Chowdhury called upon all to establish a culture of peace in the country.

Among others, Prof. Harun-ar-Rashid and Asaduzzaman Noor MP addressed the press conference.

EU-OIC bid

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against being unfair to a country that has done so much in the past for Muslim populations in difficulty," he added.

Cem might face a difficult task in winning advocates after US President George W Bush in late January described Iran and Iraq, two Muslim nations, along with North Korea, as an "axis of evil" threatening world peace with weapons of mass destruction.

His remarks drew swift condemnation from the OIC.

"The recent statements and campaigns against Islamic countries are unjustified and would make the international coalition against terror lose its credibility," secretary general Abdullwahed Belkeziz said.

French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine gave full support to the Istanbul meeting in a speech at the end of January and urged that the path lay in a "frank" and comprehensive dialogue not limited to only governmental levels.

"I plead for real work, not from France but also from other European countries, a real knowledge, a real approach instead of superficial politico-diplomatic slogans," he said.

"This dialogue should not concern only government and administrations, you should start from the realities of societies, economics, security," he added.

In addition to a Christian-Muslim dialogue, the forum is expected to focus on the Middle East question, which has seen a serious show-down between Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat

amid spiralling violence. The Istanbul meeting could also renable regional rivals Turkey and Greece to extend their tentative dialogue into more thorny issues plaguing bilateral ties, such as territorial issues in the Aegean Sea.

Through the meeting, Turkey, a full member of the OIC and a candidate for EU membership, is hoping to bank on its image as a bridge between two continents and two civilizations.

"We are the only country to come up with and realize a meeting of this kind, drawing upon our European and Asian identities and the western and eastern aspects of our culture," Cem said earlier in the week.

Laser beams

FROM PAGE 12
ising such mega-events.

"The expenses are high." But Chowdhury said his company would be more than enough happy just to be in the breakeven position, as it is an investment for his company to access markets.

He hoped that the event would be successful and his team is already working, installing wires and other equipment.

"The feedback is good. Ticket sale is also very good," he enthused. The security arrangements have been ensured and at every gate ten trained personnel will be posted.

The home ministry has also assured the company of security backup of police and four battalions of the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), Chowdhury said.

Police seized the bus, but its driver managed to escape from the scene.

A case was registered with Shakhipur Thana in this connection.

In Jessore, two people were killed and 30 others injured in a road accident in front of Kazi Nazrul Islam Degree College on Jessore-Dhaka highway on Saturday night.

The accident took place when a bus, carrying a picnic party, plunged into a river, breaking the railing of a bridge at about 11-30 pm.

Ashraf Ali, 28, and an unidentified man, aged about 22, died on the spot.

All the victims were the workers of Raj Textile Mills at Noapara in Abhoyagar upazila of the district. They were going to Mujibnagar to have their annual picnic.

The bodies were sent to Jessore General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Road accidents kill five in Tangail, Jessore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least five people were killed and 55 others injured in separate road accidents in Tangail and Jessore districts yesterday and on Saturday night.

Of them, three were killed in Tangail and the rest two in Jessore.

In Tangail, at least three people were killed and 25 others injured, 12 of them seriously, in a road accident in Shakhipur area yesterday morning, according to BSS.

Police and local people said the accident occurred at about 9-30 am when a Dhaka-bound passenger bus from Shakhipur upazila headquarters hit a roadside tree as its driver lost control over the vehicle.

Police said a passenger died on the spot while the two others succumbed to their injuries at Shakhipur Thana Health Complex. The seriously injured passengers were shifted to DMCH.

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Tour operators

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The rates for accommodation, camera and video camera have also been increased.

The government should have discussed with TOAB before increasing the rates as private tour operators handle most of the tourists, he said.

The fees should be logical for the sake of promoting tourism. A family of five will now have to pay Tk 1000 more per day for a tour of the Sundarbans, he said.

"If we charge the enhanced rates from foreign tourists who have already booked tours, it will create a bad image for the country", he pointed out. The enhanced rates should be effective from July, he suggested.

The TOAB leaders urged the government to ensure TOAB representation in the Sundarbans Biodiversity Project and not to allow any private organisation to build any tourist centre there.

They said the Bangladesh Porjatan Corporation (BPC) has no marketing wing, which is essential for promoting tourism.