

Businessman murdered in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A businessman was beaten and stabbed to death by hoodlums at Zakir Hossain Road in the city's Mohammadpur area yesterday noon.
The victim was identified as Nurul Haq, 26, son of Mostaq Hossain, and a resident of Tollarbagh in the city's Mirpur area.
Sources said Haq, who owned a shoe shop at Savar Bazaar, had gone to the Zakir Hossain Road residence of his uncle, Haji Jamal Uddin.
Later, on his way to a mosque for Juma prayers, a gang of four comprising Shaheen, Jewel, Shafiq and another unidentified person stopped him.
During a subsequent altercation, the four hoodlums beat Haq with an iron rod and also stabbed him, leaving him unconscious.
He was later rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where on-duty doctors declared him dead.
Sources said the murder might be a sequel to previous enmity.
A case was filed with Mohammadpur Police in this regard.

Bid to snatch accused from police in Feni

UNB, Feni
Police foiled an attempt to snatch an accused from their grip in Chhaganaiya upazila on Thursday night.
Local people and police said that followers of the arrested Jasimuddin put up barricade on the road, attacked police and tried to snatch their leader.
Jasim was arrested from Kontaktor Masjid area in the upazila at about 8:30 pm on Thursday in connection with a dacoity case.
Police arrested five of the attackers from the spot. They are Siraj, Abul Bashar, Farid Ahmed, Abdul Halim and Sirajuddin.

AL activist murdered in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj
An Awami League activist was murdered by armed miscreants at Prannathpur bazaar under Shahzadpur upazila in the early hours of yesterday.
The victim was identified as Akkel Ali Pramanik, 43, son of the late Bisa Pramanik of village Prannathpur under Shahzadpur upazila in Sirajganj district.
Police said a gang of armed miscreants picked up Akkel Ali from his shop at gunpoint at about 3:30 am. They took him to a place nearby and beat up mercilessly. He died on the spot.
The reason behind the murder could not be known till 6 pm yesterday. A case was filed with Shahzadpur thana.

8 hurt as drug peddlers clash at Nakhalpara

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
At least eight people were injured in a clash between two rival groups of drug peddlers at Nakhalpara Rail Gate slum in the city's Tejgaon area yesterday morning.
The injured are Mohammad Khalil, Yunus Miah, Moinalu Haq, Rashed Miah, Abdul Majid, Nannu Miah, Mohammad Shahjahan and Bela Begum.
The clash erupted between Ata group and Ashik group at about 8:30 and lasted more than two hours.
Both the groups chased each other blasted crackers and fired several rounds of shots during the clash.
The injured were sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

AL leader held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Detectives arrested Amir Hossain Mollah, an Awami League leader, from his Doaria residence in the city's Mirpur area yesterday evening.
Headed by Assistant Commissioner Ali Hossain Fakir the detectives raided his residence at about 7 pm and arrested him.
DB sources said Amir is also involved in criminal activities in the area.
A case was filed in this regard.

Acid attack and rape

Stringent law, special tribunal soon: PM

UNB, Dhaka
Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday assured that the government was formulating a stringent law with provision of special tribunal to ensure quick justice against women oppression including rape and throwing of acid.
She, however, said that only formulation of laws would not work and stressed on ensuring timely justice.
Her observation came on the occasion of International Women's Day, when she held an exclusive meeting with women and discussed the overall situation of women empowerment, health, education, security and their rights in the society.
In the two-hour programme at the Prime Minister's Bhaban attended by women from different sections of the society, the women leaders spoke frankly of their problems and conveyed suggestions to resolve them.
Nutritionist Nasreen Huq of "Social Initiative" spoke about women health and nutrition status, chairperson of "Beijing Forum" Advocate Salma Khan about security of women, researcher Rashida K Chowdhury about education of women, Ainjibi Samonny Parishad's Advocate Elina Khan about laws for women and Farah Kabir spoke about women leadership.
"Women are coming forward nowadays," the Prime Minister said expressing her optimism but called upon them to work unitedly for ensuring upliftment of the womenfolk in the society. "Our women are conscious but there is lack of education and scope," she added.
Dealing on the present scenario in the society and the picture being portrayed, Khaleda Zia was critical of the role of a section of media and alleged that they, without being objective, were treating crime stories from a certain political point of view.
Urging the media to refrain from false campaign and biasness, she said, "This is neither fair nor good for the society."
She lashed at the section of the press for portraying Bangladesh as a Taliban and a fundamentalist state. "It is affecting the image of the country and is of embarrassment for Bangladeshis living abroad," she said mentioning her experience during her recent visit to Australia.
The Prime Minister lamented the failure to portray the positive sides of the country.
While discussing the recent incidents of oppression against women, she also recalled the incidents of rape and subsequent celebration in the highest seat of learn

BNP-Jamaat cadres unleashing repression on women: Hasina

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to restrain her 'cadre force from unleashing repression on women'.
"The prime minister is a woman. I hope good sense will prevail upon her and she will restrain her cadre force from repressing women," the opposition leader said while addressing a discussion on 'Women and Politics' at the Jatiya Press Club.
Bangladesher Nari, a women's organisation, organised the programme marking the International Women's Day.
She said, "The picture of women repression across the country is gloomy and it is most unfortunate that the government is patronising such offences."
"BNP-Jamaat alliance is perpetuating these tortures in a planned way. After every offence, the victim is forced to give statements that suit the government's interest."
The government is using the administration, police, and BTV camera to put pressure on victims of rape and torture to conceal names of the culprits who belong to BNP, she alleged.
To escape such pressure to give false statements, Bedana of Gafargaon and Shefali of Bhola left their homes and came to Dhaka, she claimed.
"Rahima and Champa were my polling agents in Narail in the last election. Because of this offence acid was thrown on them. Champa recovered immediately. I got badly burnt Rahima admitted to hospital through the Acid Survivors Foundation. Police later forced Rahima to conceal the name of the acid thrower who belongs to BNP."
The former prime minister said police also picked up Rahima's brother and pressured him for withdrawing the case.
Expressing deep concern at frequent incidents of gang-rape and other atrocities against women, Hasina said the actual number of such incidents would be much more than what is reported in the press.
"Many victims and their families conceal such incidents to save their dignity in society. Today, I like to urge all that we should hate the rapists, not the victims and their families," said Hasina.
She expressed concern at the slow disposal of cases of women repression.
To cur such incidents, she suggested that there should be at least one women police officer and one women medical officer at every thana.
In this regard, she recalled that her government during its tenure recruited women in police, army, navy and airforce and also appointed women to high posts in administration, judiciary and foreign service.
Though male and female voters were almost equal, the number of polling booths for women were far less than those for men in the October 1 elections, creating scope for staffing fake votes, she alleged.
The number of booths for female voters was more in 1996 election than that in 2001, she added.
Earlier, advocate Sultana Kamal and barrister Tania Amir also spoke at the programme while Nasima Haq presented a paper on the main theme.

Tk 12,536 cr railway bills unrealised

RAFIQ HASAN
Bangladesh Railway (BR) is yet to realise outstanding bills of Tk 12,535.94 crore from various private, public and autonomous organisations.
Of the amount, Tk 12,504.01 crore is due from 144 defaulters in the BR's eastern zone and Tk 31.93 crore from 19 defaulters in the western zone.
Adamjee Jute Mills Limited under the jute ministry is the biggest defaulter with Tk 8,178.57 crore outstanding bills.
This was revealed in a report by the Auditor General's office, submitted to the president recently.
If the dues were realised, the railway would have been a profitable organisation, not a loss making one and the government would not have to seek foreign assistance for various development projects of the railway, the audit report said.
The railway failed to reflect 'commercial attitude' though it is a government-owned 'commercial organisation', it noted.
When contacted, Director General of the railway Ataur Rahman said a number of inter-ministerial meetings discussed realising the dues but there was hardly any progress in this regard.
He however said the railway is incurring loss because it is a service oriented organisation run strictly as per government rules and regulations.
"To make it a profitable one, the railway should have decision making power, which it lacks" he said.
A big chunk of the defaulted amount is due against charges for 'siding', level crossing and electricity.
The railway provides extra lines or keeps wagons waiting for various organisations for loading and unloading of goods. Charges for this are called 'siding charges'.
Besides, there are dues in the form of licence fee for using railway land, commission for carrying goods from port, demurrage charge, sale proceeds from obsolete goods and engine rent.
Of the outstanding amount in the eastern zone, around Tk 12,400 crore is in the form of 'siding charges'.
The big bill defaulters and the amounts are : Jute Baling Company Limited Tk 61.96 crore, Bangladesh Jute Marketing Tk 38.55 crore, Bangladesh Jute Mills Tk 286.50 crore, Bangladesh Jute Corporation Tk 515.41 crore, Mymensingh Central Store Depot (CSD) Tk 6 6 7 6 7 6 7 6

Alleged BNP activists beat 3 Christians

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Boraigram, Natore
A temporary police camp was set up yesterday at Bhabanipur Christianpara in Boraigram upazila where three members of the Christian community were beaten allegedly by some BNP activists.
On Thursday, a gang of eight alleged BNP activists of neighborhood, Pabuapara village attacked the house of Ashok Koraiya, president of a welfare association of the Christian community for refusing to pay Tk 25,000 demanded earlier as compensation for expenses of a case.
The activists also beat up Herot Koraiya, vice-president of the association, when he came to save Ashok. Ashok and Herot were treated at the local health complex.
In the afternoon, the miscreants beat Sentu Kosta, a teacher of Saint Xavier's Primacy School in the area, at Bonpara Bazar when he was identifying the miscreants, riding a motorcycle with Sub-inspector

Certain quarter trying to create unrest: Altaf

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury has said that a certain quarter is active with a ploy to destroy communal harmony in the country and to create unrest through terrorist activities.
"Ours is a country of communal harmony. But a certain quarter has been actively engaged in a conspiracy to destroy the harmony after our government assumed power," he said addressing the 41st annual

ASM NURUNNABI
Life in the city's suburban areas of Savar and Kamrangir Char represents contrasting pictures. In Savar, factors such as availability of high land, particularly in the western part, easy access to electricity, gas, water supply and satisfactory road communications have contributed to its rapid development. This has also led to a spur in construction of houses, though mostly unplanned, and setting up of new mills, factories and other industries. The development of the area also got a boost with the establishment of Jahangirnagar University, the National Memorial for martyrs, the Savar cantonment and a big dairy farm. With the construction of new buildings for government and non-government organisations, high-rise shopping centres are also coming up. All these activities help bring new people to the place.
The manifold activities have already turned the suburb into a small town. The location of the Tongi-Ashulia Road providing easy access to the natural beauty of Ashulia with its promise as a recreational spot has added to the importance of the place as an important city suburb. This has created an impetus in the sale of housing plots on a large scale by real estate agencies in the private sector,

DOWN TO EARTH

Tale of suburban Savar and Kamrangir Char

attracting prospective buyers of land from Dhaka City as well as other places.
The ongoing building spree in the suburb however has been creating some problems. Many of the houses there have been built without proper approval from the pourashava or the Rajuk. The roadside lands by the Dhaka-Aricha highway have already become victims of encroachment in some areas by hawkers. Some of the new industries that have been established there are reportedly causing environmental pollution by spilling their toxic wastes into nearby waterbodies. The Kamrapara Khalis is such an affected waterbody.
A city suburb with such high potential for growth needs to be developed along well-planned lines, so that it may play a useful part in diverting some population load from the heavily congested Dhaka City. In this context, similar diversion to other city suburbs has assumed great urgency to ease population pressure on the metropolis.
In contrast, the city enclave at Kamrangir Char has assumed a dubious character. The enclave has steadily grown over the years with diverse population. It is now home to six to seven lakh people mainly of low-income groups comprising day-labourers, garment workers, small traders and a host of other groups of men engaged in similar professions. A makeshift bridge connects the Char to the mainland. Besides, a good number of ferryboats also serve commuters to and from the

Int'l Women's Day observed

UNB, Dhaka
International Women's Day was observed in the country as elsewhere in the globe yesterday with the theme "Protect Women's Rights."
In Bangladesh context, the theme of the day was "Guardianship of Child: Equal Rights of Parents."
The day commemorates the movement by female workers of a needle factory in New York in 1857 against 12-hour working day. Later, a women workers' union was formed in 1860.
The day was announced as International Women's Day by Clara Zetkin during an international women's conference in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1910. The UN included the day as an international day in its official list in 1984.
On the occasion, President Badruddoza Chowdhury, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, leader of the opposition and Awami League president Sheikh Hasina gave separate messages.
Government and different women and human rights organisations arranged elaborate programmes, including rally, human chain and meetings on the day.
International Women's Day Celebration Committee, formed in 1991 incorporating various women's organisations, yesterday brought out a colourful procession that was followed by a cultural function.
Hundreds of women from various organisations, including Concern, ASD, Ganosaasthya Kendra, Chhayabithi, Nari Moitri, Nari Pakkha, CARE, Plan International, Bangladesh Women's H e a l t h

7 injured in attack by extortionists in Pirojpur

UNB, Pirojpur
At least seven people, including three activists of JCD, were injured in an attack by extortionists in Koukhali upazila yesterday.
Locals said a group of people allegedly led by one Saidul was collecting tolls from 50 stalls set up on the bank of the river Sandha on the occasion of a 3-day divisional congregation of Tablig Jamaat that began on Thursday.
Saidul and his men attacked the JCD activists as they tried to resist them from collecting tolls.
Of the injured, Chirapara Union JCD president Kamal Quazi and activist Rijajul were admitted to Koukhali Upazila Health Complex.
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Attack on Hasina's car: AL to stage demonstration today

UNB, Dhaka
Awami League will stage demonstration across the country today to protest the attack on party chief Sheikh Hasina's car at Naogaon.
A young man attacked the motorcade of the opposition leader in front of Naogaon Women's College on March 4, damaged her jeep and two other vehicles of her motorcade.
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Sammilita Nari Samaj took out a procession in the city yesterday, urging all to build up resistance to repression on women.

CNG project for autorickshaws finally shelved

Only 30 converted in 2 years
SHEHAB AHMED
The pilot project for conversion of auto-rickshaws into CNG-run ones to reduce air pollution in cities including the capital has been put on hold due to poor response from the operators, sources said.
In two years, only about 30 to 32 autorickshaws were converted but their performance is not good due to technical reasons.
Even after conversion, two-stroke engine autorickshaws have to use lubricants with CNG (compressed natural gas). This produces hydrocarbon contributing to air pollution, an engineer of the CNG project of Rupantorita Praktirik Gas Company Limited (RPGL) said.
Besides the technical problem, lack of response from the operators who were unwilling to pay Tk 26,000 for the conversion dampened implementation of the project.
They were offered soft loan as an incentive for the conversion, but there were few to avail it.
The autorickshaw operators complained of poor performance of their vehicles after conversion and shortage of CNG fillings in the city.
RPGL sources however said six CNG filling stations have been set up in the city at Asad Gate, Tikatul, Tejgaon (near old airport), Tejgaon industrial area, Mahakhali and Kalyanpur to cater to the needs of over 16,000 motor vehicles whose engines have been converted into CNG-run ones.
Six more such stations are in the offing, they said.
The decision to put on hold the pilot project has been taken in view of a
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2 shot dead in dispute over mosque land

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet
Two persons were shot dead by their rivals at Bahar Village of Budhbaribazar union under Beanibazar Upazila yesterday afternoon.
The deceased are, Nazrul Islam, 60, and Nanu Miah, 35.
Police arrested four persons of the same family in this connection. They are Keramat, his wife, and two sons Saiful and Masud.
The incident took place as a sequel to a longstanding dispute concerning the land of a mosque at about 2pm after Juma prayers.
A tense situation was prevailing in the village, which was visited by the superintendent of police. A case has been started.

One killed, 30 hurt as BNP factions clash in Magura

UNB, Magura
One person was killed and 30 others were injured in a clash between two BNP factions at Kotbagh village in Shalikka upazila yesterday morning.
Police and witnesses said the supporters of BNP leaders Jamat Ali and Sabur Mondal clashed over local leadership.
Yesterday's clash was a sequel to chase and counter-chase between the followers of the two leaders on Thursday, local people said.
Shaheeb Ali, 35, a supporter of Jamat Ali, was stabbed to death on the spot. His body was sent to hospital morgue for autopsy.
Eight of the injured were admitted to Magura Sadar Hospital. They are Azizul, Sabuj, Siddique Laskar, Abdul Wahab, Anu Islam, Mustafiz, Moizul and Nawsher Kazi.
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