

Extortion: BNP men set cotton godown afire at N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

A group of BNP men set ablaze a cotton godown in Isdair area of the town yesterday morning as the owner of the godown refused to give them toll.

The owner claimed that cotton worth about Tk 1 lakh was gutted in the fire.

According to sources, a group of local BNP men led by Nazim, Mizan and Shahid demanded toll from Motiur Rahman few days ago.

They threatened to set ablaze the godown if he failed to meet their demand for Tk 50 thousand.

No case was filed till filling of this report at 7 pm yesterday.

Shazneen case

FROM PAGE 12
Mojibur Rahman, who is the first prosecution witness and complainant in the Shazneen Rape Case, was cross-examined in the same court yesterday.

After cross-examination by the lawyer for accused Hasan, judge adjourned the hearing till April 20.

During the cross-examination, Mojibur Rahman told the court that he submitted the charge sheet in the rape case to the CMM's Court, Dhaka, on December 12, 1998.

The witness also told the court that the two accused -- Minu and Parvin gave judicial statements to the court on April 26, 1998 as witness.

After taking over the charge of investigation into Shazneen murder case, he along with Hasan visited the place of occurrence, Mojibur Rahman said.

Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, 15, youngest daughter of Latifur Rahman, Chairman of Transcom Group, was raped and murdered at their Gulshan residence on April 23, 1998.

Latifur Rahman filed a murder case with Gulshan thana on April 24, 1998 accusing Shahid Islam alias Shahid, a domestic help at his house.

Moudud

FROM PAGE 12
strike although they knew that the Prime Minister would be present at the auditorium to distribute the Independence Day Awards, Moudud said.

He further said the government had no intention to stop the opposition from exercising its democratic right of holding meetings but they (the AL) would have to do so keeping the rules and regulations.

"When they (AL) were in the government, they also imposed such rules and regulations, but we do not want to refer to the previous incidents," Moudud was quoted as saying.

He also blamed the Awami League for not showing generosity while it was in power.

Regarding the repeal of the law for preservation and display of the portrait of father of the nation, the law minister said the law was against the constitution.

"A person can not be forcibly made to respect someone," he said, suggesting that the AL join the parliament and come to an understanding about the portrait issue.

Refuting newspaper reports regarding the government's intention to mention the name of Khandaker Moshtaq Ahmed in the constitution, Moudud said Moshtaq's name was only mentioned during a discussion as one of the founders of Bangladesh.

Moudud however observed that the name of Khandaker Moshtaq Ahmed could come alongside Tajuddin Ahmed, Syed Nazrul Islam, Kamruzzaman and M Monsur Ali as those who gave leadership during the Liberation War.

Kidnapped schoolboy

FROM PAGE 12
men subdued the abductors, who disclosed that two other operatives waiting in front of the bamboo shop near Kalyanpur knew about the boy's whereabouts.

"We cautiously went to Kalyanpur along with the abductors and arrested two more, who confessed that the victim had been confined in a house at Shyamoli-2," the officer-in-charge said.

"During the raid on the house, I was worried because a woman there told me that the boy had just been taken away. We arrested her husband, Shahid Bepari, and picked up the cell phone number used by the abductors," Ahmed said.

Meantime, the abductors threatened the victim's family on the phone that they would kill the boy for involving police and having some of them arrested.

Shahid Bepari admitted to his involvement in the incident and told the police that the boy could be found in a slum near an under-construction high-rise at Kalyanpur.

At midnight when police surrounded the slum, the abductors fired off shots and exploded crackers, leaving three constables injured.

Police stormed into the slum and found the terrified boy sitting on the floor with his bike beside him.

The arrested abductors are Mainuddin, Nazrul Islam Nazu, Mizan, Shahadat, Shahid Bepari, Monir Hossain, Shukur Ali, Masud, Kamal, Parvez Anwar, Shamsul Haque Bullet and Mujahid Hossain

Army to be deployed at WASA pumps

BSS, Dhaka

10 to 12 deep tubewells in the capital to meet the water crisis in the city. "The problem is likely to be overcome after commissioning of Sayedabad Water Treatment Plant in July next, which will produce 22.50 crore litre water everyday," he added.

Bhuiyan called upon the media men to extend all-out cooperation to implement government plans.

The minister also directed the WASA authorities to take necessary steps to provide water to the people on an urgent basis.

State Minister for LGRD Ziaul Huq Zia and Deputy Minister for LGRD Ruhul Quddus Talukder attended the briefing.

The minister said we have already taken steps to set up more

Cops baton strikers

FROM PAGE 1

Riot police clubbed and teargassed the opposition workers and leaders in front of the press club. Several persons, including Tanjim Ahmed Sohel MP, son of former finance minister Tajuddin Ahmed, and a female party worker, were injured in police clubbing in press club area, while some others including former home minister Mohammad Nasim were harassed.

Police also picked up former agriculture minister Motiul Chowdhury, Political Secretary to the leader of the Opposition Saber Hossain Chowdhury and AL lawmaker and actor Asaduzzaman Noor in front of the secretariat. They were detained at the Ramma Police Station for over three hours.

The token hunger strike was called to protest the passage of a law to remove the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman from public offices and 'misrule and repression' by the government and the price of essentials.

But the government clamped Section 144 in and around Osmani Udayan barely 12 hours before the scheduled programme to prohibit the AL from holding the programme.

Earlier, the AL shifted the venue, as it did not get permission to hold the strike at Paltan Maidan.

At around ten in the morning, as Motiul Chowdhury, Asaduzzaman Noor and Saber Hossain Chowdhury tried to walk down the Abdul Gani Road towards the Osmani Udayan, they were intercepted by the police.

After an hour-long heated argument, the on-duty police officers still could not satisfy them for not going towards the strike venue as they reasoned out that they did not breach Section 144. Besides, Noor was an invitee to the prime minister's function at the Osmani Memorial Hall.

The police officers told them that they had instructions from the 'higher authorities' not to allow any opposition leaders to proceed towards the Udayan.

At around 11:00am, police women backed up by some male counterparts bundled Moti into a police jeep and drove her away.

Minutes later, another police van arrived at the spot and the officer-in-charge of Ramma Police Station, Babul, caught Saber by the scruff and pushed him into the van. They also picked up Noor and drove the van away.

The three AL leaders were detained at the Ramma Police Station until their release at 3:30pm. Ramma police said they were detained for the sake of maintaining 'law and order' and later released on personal undertakings.

However, Saber told The Daily Star that none of them signed any such papers. Both Moti and Saber termed the police action 'completely unwarranted' since they did not violate Section 144.

"They've (police) physically



3 gunned down

FROM PAGE 12

microbus parked in front of the shop. "Tipu was in my shop," said Tipu's brother Selim Reza, who has a business in the same locality. "But he went out following a phone call."

"The miscreants killed my brother and locked the door of the shop," Reza said.

Police recovered ten empty cartridges from the shop.

The body of the victim was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for autopsy.

In another incident, Mohammad Ramjan Molla, 25, a garment cutter, was shot dead at Battala in the city's Pallabi area last evening.

Family sources said a gang of five led by an alleged criminal, Waliullah, called him out from his house and shot him in the head, throat and chest at about 3:00pm.

Fatally injured Ramjan was rushed to the DMCH and was dead on arrival. The reason behind his killing is still unknown, but sources said he might have been killed over control on garment trade in the area.

A case was filed with the Pallabi Police Station, but none was arrested.

A young man, Mohammad Selim alias Swapon, 19, was gunned down by unidentified miscreants at Avoydias Lane in the city's Sutrapur area last night.

Swapon, son of Nurul Mia, hailing from Meghna in Comilla, was engaged in hotel business but no other details on the reason behind the killing of the young man could not be known immediately.

Armed miscreants shot Selim in front of Brothers Union club at around 6:30pm yesterday. He was rushed to the Dhaka Medical

College Hospital (DMCH) and declared dead on arrival. The body was sent to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

The duty officer of Sutrapur Police Station said no case was filed in this regard till last night.

In yet another incident, Saddam Hossain, 8, died after being beaten by his father on Saturday evening.

Abdul Awal, father of the boy, was enraged as his mother complained of their son's misconduct with his friends. The angry father then beat up the son, which caused his death.

Mar 25 night

FROM PAGE 1
continued till the morning of March 27 when curfew was relaxed for some hours. As the curfew was relaxed, there were streams of people leaving the city for life.

In Dhaka city alone, they killed thousands of people, including students, teachers and Bangladeshi members of the then East Pakistan Rifles (EPR) and police.

In the wake of the military crackdown, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, leader of the majority party in the then Pakistan National Assembly, declared independence of Bangladesh and called upon the people to launch an armed struggle. He was arrested and taken to the then West Pakistan.

The foreign media reported the genocide, which created uproar and mobilised world opinion in favour of the War of Independence. Bangladesh was born on

December 16, 1971 after a nine-month bloody war.

Suvastu's letter

FROM PAGE 12
contrary to The Daily Star reply and the only requirement is to leave spaces of 1.5 meters at the front and back.

"For architectural reason, only the top floor has not been connected by the elevation system. Three lifts have been operating from the ground floor to the 14th floor of the 15-storey building, which is more than adequate for the building."

Alamgir

FROM PAGE 12
from a Janatar Mancha (people's dais) in 1996. Alamgir was a secretary to the government at that time.

Magistrate Kazi Meraj Hassain passed the order.

Alamgir was produced before the court at 12.45 pm yesterday. He was given a chair as he was not in a position to keep standing during the hearing.

The defence lawyers submitted three petitions before the court-- a bail petition, a contempt petition and a petition for a medical board for Alamgir's treatment in jail custody.

The defence lawyers argued in the court that Alamgir was implicated in the case as part of a conspiracy to harass him politically and police failed to bring any specific charge against him.

They said the IO violated the court order by not producing Alamgir before the court after expiry of his remand. This was violation of fundamental rights and human rights, they pleaded.

They claimed that Alamgir was physically tortured in remand and so should be given proper treatment in jail custody.

Alamgir said in the court that airport police took him on two days' remand but kept him in cantonment illegally.

He said he was kept in custody for more than 4 days after expiry of remand and was not given any bed sheet or pillow. He was not given diabetic medicine kept in his brief case. He alleged that he was tortured by mask-wearing persons.

The IO had told him that these were done as per directives from higher authorities, Alamgir said in the court.

After hearing the prosecution and the defence sides, the court rejected the bail petition and the contempt petition but granted the prayer for his treatment.

The defence lawyers argued in the court that Alamgir was implicated in the case as part of a conspiracy to harass him politically and police failed to bring any specific charge against him.

He said he was kept in custody for more than 4 days after expiry of remand and was not given any bed sheet or pillow. He was not given diabetic medicine kept in his brief case. He alleged that he was tortured by mask-wearing persons.

The IO had told him that these were done as per directives from higher authorities, Alamgir said in the court.

Moyeen

FROM PAGE 1
Due to the delay in assumption of his new office, a rumour was circulated in the political arena that he resigned from the cabinet. The speculation intensified as Dr Khan, who usually speaks to the press, did not talk to any journalist following the changeover in the cabinet.

The portfolios of Moyeen Khan and two other senior ministers and a state minister were changed at the same time on March 11. Dr. Khan aside, others have joined their new ministries.

The Prime Minister's Office has kept mum about the matter. Last week, Dr Khan visited his constituency instead of attending his new office -- the decision that spread the rumour.

Hasina calls hartal on Apr 6

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The hearing on the petition, seeking return of Shahriar Kabir's passport was held yesterday in the second additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's court, Dhaka.

Judge Hossain Shahid Ahmad will pass an order on the issue on March 27.

The defence lawyers Advocate Khondaker Abdul Mannan and Motazuddin Ahmad Mehedi submitted a criminal revision seeking return of Shahriar's passport to the metropolitan sessions judge's court, Dhaka on March 21 following the rejection order of the CMM's Court.

The CMM's Court rejected the petition, seeking return of the passport on March 18.

Separation of judiciary Cabinet body for completing process by May 31

UNB, Dhaka

The cabinet committee on implementation of Supreme Court's verdict on separation of judiciary in a meeting yesterday stressed the urgency of completing the entire process in that regard by May 31 for implementation of the 12-point directive as set by the court.

It discussed three sets of codes and draft law for amending the relevant act placed by the Law Ministry. Relevant ministries given the draft codes and law would submit their views by April 6 for full dress discussion at the next meeting scheduled for April 7.

The meeting decided to send delegations to gather experience of India and Pakistan where the process of separation of judiciary had been completed long ago.

He informed that the Aftab Sales Centre in the neighbourhood was robbed only three weeks back by people coming in a microbus.

He also complained of extortion. "We have lodged complaints with the police but there is no police patrol in the area and there are reports of mugging, robbery and theft every week," the young grocer said.

Meanwhile, the Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB) has strongly condemned the killing of its member.

The members of the IAB brought out a silent procession on Saturday and held a rally at the Central Shaheed Minar demanding exemplary punishment for Hasan's killer.

Leaders of the architect community urged the government to take necessary steps to protect professionals like architects, engineers, doctors and journalists.

"We shall hold a press conference at the Press Club on March 28 and urge all to protect the professionals and provide everybody the guarantee to live," said ASM Ismail, the IAB general secretary.