

Embezzlement of Tk 21.80 lakh Haj pilgrims file fraud case against three

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A fraud case was filed yesterday against three agents of a travel agency for embezzlement of Tk 21.80 lakh from 20 Haj pilgrims.

Alhaj Mojibur Rahman, one of the pilgrims, filed the case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka against Moulana Abdul Awal, Mohammad Masum Rana and Mohammad Ismail of Highlinks Travel International.

Magistrate Emdadul Haque took the case into cognizance and directed the officer-in-charge of Motijheel Police Station to take it as a regular case.

In his complaint, Mojibur Rahman said that he along with 39 other pilgrims paid Tk 43,60,000 to the agents for their pilgrimage on December 8 last year.

Awal took the money and handed over it to two other accused to make arrangements, he said.

The agency booked a flight on January 20 for all the pilgrims, but only 20 of them got the seats on the flight although all 40 pilgrims arrived at the airport on schedule.

The three accused went into hidings since then.

Liberation War Museum to launch human rights programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Liberation War Museum will launch a programme to help create awareness about peace and human rights among the school children through its mobile museum.

"The aim of the programme is to create a sense of respect for human rights among the children so that they could inculcate those values in them," said Mofidul Hogue, one of the founder trustees of the museum, at a meeting at its auditorium in the city yesterday.

He said the mobile museum is expected to visit around 100 schools across the country a year.

Earlier, Ruth Abram, head of the Lower East Site Tenement Museum of New York and International Coalition of Historic

Site Museums and Conscience, talked about the objective of the formation of the coalition of museums.

Ruth said the museum coalition would expand its activities through incorporating more museums in addition to the existing members.

The Liberation War Museum of Bangladesh is one of the founder members of the International Coalition of Historic Site Museums and Conscience based in New York.

The other members of the coalition are Slave-trade Museum in Senegal, Anti-oppression Museum in Argentina, Martin Luther King Museum and Women Rights Museum in the USA, Gulag Museum in Russia and the Apartheid Museum in South Africa.



Cabinet members received Prime Minister Khaleda Zia on her arrival at Zia International Airport on Monday after a four-day visit to Indonesia and Brunei.

Raising quality of primary education Homna UZ sets unique example

UNB, Dhaka

Homna upazila of Comilla set a unique example of introducing a common primary school-ending examination that started giving dividend in terms of quality education for the last two years.

Well ahead of the national plan, the Homna Upazila administration has been practising the combined examination system for class five for the last two years.

Reactivated Upazila Primary Education Committee brought the Upazila's 62 government, nine registered non-government and 18 community primary schools under the uniform system in 2002.

The success rate was 74 per cent in 2002 and 80 per cent in 2003. Out of the 2,152 students who passed in 2003, some 382 students or 18 per

cent scored 60 or above on average while 590 or 27 per cent secured 45 per cent marks. Seven schools saw 100 per cent success.

The system also brought qualitative change to the students and prepared them well for the next level, the secondary education.

The headmaster of a local high school said newcomers were found doing better in admission tests for class six in last two years than before.

Spontaneous involvement of the teachers' community of all levels, supported by union parishads and local community leaders has changed the face of primary education in the upazila under a social movement, local peoples said.

Best students and successful teachers were honoured on January 24 at a function at Homna, which was attended by Agriculture Minister MK Anwar, who is also the local MP and the key patron of the drive.

Advisor to the Prime Minister on

Primary and Mass Education Prof Jahanara Begum and Director General of Primary Education Mosaddekul Islam were also present.

Addressing the function, the Agriculture Minister recalled the shabby structures and inadequate sitting arrangements he noticed earlier in the primary schools of his home constituency, Homna.

"But now you won't find any school without good classrooms and furniture," he said, referring to his personal initiatives to improve primary education in the upazila, which lags far behind the national average of literacy.

He, however, pointed out that number of teachers is still less compared to the number of students and felt that schools must have at least 10 per cent additional teachers as 'leave reserve.'

Highly impressed by the success, Prof. Jahanara Begum said the government would replicate the 'Homna model' in all the upazilas gradually.

BRAC pays tributes to Salma Sobhan

Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) paid tributes to Barrister Salma Sobhan, a member of its governing body and a leading human rights activist, by holding condolence meetings at its 60 regional and 200 area offices simultaneously across the country on January 23, says a press release.

Around 27,000 people from different walks of life including BRAC workers, senior government officials, members of the bar associations, representatives of NGOs, cultural personalities and journalists attended the condolence meetings.

Eminent persons like Prof Rehman Sobhan, Dr Hamida Hossain, Advocate Sultana Zaman of Ain O Salish Kendro and Ayesha

Khanam of Bangladesh Mohila Parishad were also present.

From BRAC Head Office, Executive Director Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury, Deputy Executive Directors Aminul Alam and Dr Salehuddin Ahmed, Head of Education Programme Erum Mariam, Programme Coordinator of Training Division Fazlul Hoque and Senior Faculty Member Mahfuzul Bari were present.

The BRAC members expressed their sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul.

Salma Sobhan died of heart attack at her residence in Gulshan in the city on December 29 at the age of 66.

LGRD ministry asked to set up offices for MPs in their areas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speaker Jamir Uddin Sircar yesterday asked the LGRD and Cooperatives minister to set up offices for the lawmakers in their respective constituencies.

Responding to some lawmakers' plea for having offices in their respective constituencies, the Speaker said it is a matter of deep regret that the MPs did not have any office whereas the union parishad chairmen have got their offices.

The LGRD minister said construction of offices for MPs will depend on the availability of necessary fund.

In response to a query of an opposition lawmaker, he informed the House that the issue of reviving the upazila system is still under active consideration of the government.

Magnetic train will expedite dev activities, says Huda

BSS, Dhaka

Communications Minister Nazmul Huda yesterday said introduction of magnetic train would hasten the country's development activities.

"Magnetic train would be the train of future", Huda said as the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony of a two-day conference of Bangladesh Railway Diploma Engineers' Samity at Kamalapur Railway Officers' rest house premises.

The communications minister said the government had declared railway a 'thrust sector' and given priority to modernise the sector.

Workshop on prevention of child trafficking

Nari Unnayan Shakti (NUS) organised a two-day workshop titled 'Campaign on Child Trafficking Prevention' in Chittagong.

NUS Executive Director inaugurated the workshop on Monday.

A total of 330 child labourers and street children took part in the workshop.

NUS has been running a project in the port city since January 2003 for the rehabilitation of child labourers and street children with the support of labour and employment ministry and the USAID.

It has so far rescued 121 girls and one boy who were trafficked.

Student beaten up DU students damage shops on footpath

DU CORRESPONDENT

A group of students of Dhaka University damaged at least 15 shops on the footpath at Nilkhet on Monday night after the shop owners beat and injured a fellow student.

With serious head injuries, Faisal, a student of Salimullah Hall, was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Dhanmondi Police arrested three shop owners from the area on charge of beating the DU student. They are Mohammad Rubel, Abdus Salam and Mohammad Momin.

Sources said Faisal bought a CD (compact disk) from a shop on footpath at the eastern part of Nilkhet but later found the CD does not work.

He came back to the shop and requested its owner to replace it. But the shop owner refused to comply, leading to an altercation. He also beat up Faisal.

Angered by the incident, a group of about 40 students of SM Hall and Jahurul Haque Hall went to Nilkhet and damaged all the shops on the footpath. They also damaged three stationery shops in the area.

Additional police were deployed to avoid further untoward incidents.

Some shop owners claimed the students took away valuables from the shops during the melee.

A student said the footpath shop owners often misbehave with the students.

CSAF receives Tk one lakh

The Cleft & Social Aide Foundation (CSAF) received Tk one lakh from the organising committee of Down Under Glitter Party-2003 recently, says a press release.

The contribution will support the activity of the CSAF and ensure more plastic surgeries to the poor cleft-lip patients.

Since its inception in June 2003, the CSAF has successfully operated 85 poor cleft-lip patients, especially children, free of cost.

It is estimated that around 4000 babies are born with cleft lip and palate every year in the country.

On behalf of Down Under Glitter Party-2003, Beverly Aves and Maulee Rae handed over the cheque to CSAF General Secretary AKM Zakir Hossain and other executive members Anita Bell, Dr Rashedul Islam and AH Sufyani.



Beverly Aves and Maulee Rae of Down Under Glitter Party-2003 handed over a cheque for Tk one lakh to CSAF General Secretary AKM Zakir Hossain in the city recently.



The annual sports of Tiny Tots School was held in the city recently.



PHOTO: STAR

The National Front of Teachers and Employees observed a token hunger strike at Muktangan in the city yesterday in protest against discrimination in festival bonus for non-government teachers and employees.