

Three arrested over murder of teenager

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested three youths yesterday morning on charge of murdering a teenage boy at Tajmahal Road in Mohammadpur.

The three -- Saidul Karim, Nazimuddin and Rohan -- were sent to the court with a seven-day remand prayer.

The body of the victim, Kawser Ahmed Sony, 18, was recovered from Tajmahal Road in Mohammadpur on Monday night.

This was the second attempt on his life, his relatives said, adding that Sony was shot three years ago, but he survived at that time.

Police recovered his body bearing stab injuries at Tajmahal Road at around 10:15pm.

Sony's mother Parvin Begum identified the body at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) morgue yesterday afternoon. The boy lived

with his mother at Signboard in Siddhirganj, Narayanganj.

"He went out of the house on Monday noon to visit his aunt's house at Tajmahal Road, but his aunt said he could not reach there by the night," his mother said.

When Sony was some 25 yards from his aunt's house, local criminals Mishu, Rohan, Nadim, Shohag, Saidul and Rocky caught him in front of Bushra Clinic at Tajmahal Road and stabbed him indiscriminately after tying him at around 9:30pm, his aunt Jharna Begum said quoting witnesses.

Sony's body bore stab wounds in his knees and the back with his jaw crushed and his right hand tied with a rope.

"When we lived at Tajmahal Road three years ago, local criminals shot Sony over a conflict with them," his mother said.



PHOTO: STAR

Supreme Court Bar Association President Barrister Rukan Uddin Mahmud addresses a meeting at the High Court Auditorium yesterday protesting Monday's attack on the motorcade of Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain at Kaukhali in Rangamati.

Poverty map launched

50 per cent of population 'generally poor', 27 per cent 'extremely poor'

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and World Food Programme (WFP) yesterday launched a poverty map of the country, identifying low-lying areas of Sylhet, northern charlands, southern coastlines and southeastern hills as most "food insecure" areas.

The map, released at a workshop at the statistics Bhaban here, showed roughly 50 per cent of the population as "generally poor" while 27 per cent others to be "extremely poor" not having the capacity to buy enough food.

"Food insecurity is manageable if people have the buying capacity," which can be ensured through employment in agriculture and service sectors or through microcredit Planning Division Secretary M Fazlur Rahman said while he was inaugurating the workshop.

He identified population boom as a major obstacle to overcoming poverty saying "whatever amount of food we produce, the poverty cycle can't be overcome unless we can check the population growth".

Talking to BSS on the sidelines, WFP Country Director Douglas Casson Coutts also acknowledged Bangladesh's "tremendous success" in increasing food production.

"But this is half of the equation -- access to food has to be ensured ... meeting the needs of the most vulnerable through poverty alleviation," he said.

Coutts said the poverty map was based on updated and sophisticated data and could be used as a crucial tool or guideline for the government, donors and NGOs in fixing the development planning as it did not concentrate on food and nutrition situation alone.

BBS and WFP prepared the map depicting the poverty and food insecurity situation, identifying resource needs to overcome extreme poverty, projecting probability of high level of extreme poverty unions, probability of high

prevalence of stunting and probability of high prevalence of underweight among under-five children.

Explaining the map, WFP's vulnerability analyst and mapping expert Siemon Hollema said poverty was not always the lone reason for food insecurity or malnutrition rather communication infrastructures, health issues, habits and consciousness levels were also important factors to analyse the situation.

Prof Steve Haslett of Massey University of New Zealand, the supervisor of the mapping project, and Abur Rashid Sikdar presented key-note papers on the map while BBS director general AKM Musa chaired the inaugural session.

Dhaka to take steps to make SAARC dynamic

Khaleda tells Parliament

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in Parliament yesterday reaffirmed her government's commitment to take all possible steps for making SAARC more dynamic.

Replying to a question from Dr M Rustam Ali Farazi (BNP-Pirojpur), she said the South Asian leaders had welcomed her concept of 'Dal-Bhat' programme for alleviating poverty in the region.

Responding to Sarder Sakhawat Hossain Bakul (BNP-Narsingdi), the prime minister said the present government had put emphasis on increasing rice production in the country to implement the 'Dal-Bhat' approach.

She mentioned that protocols on social charter, SAFTA and addi-

tional protocol on earlier adopted convention for curbing terrorism have been signed for making SAARC more dynamic.

Khaleda said the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) would be completing its two decades next year and the next summit would be held in Dhaka in 2005. "This summit will draw up the decade's programme aimed at a more dynamic SAARC."

Replying to a supplementary from Begum Rawshan Ershad of Jatiya Party regarding Bangladesh's exports to SAARC countries, the prime minister admitted that a huge trade gap existed between Bangladesh and India.

She assured of taking pragmatic measures to reduce the gap as much as possible.

Khaleda informed the House of her proposal at the last SAARC Summit for drawing up programmes in six sectors: increase in cooperation on information technology among the member countries and setting up of a centre for information technology, setting up of a regional power grid, maintaining trade balance in the region, building up South Asia as an attractive destination for foreign investment, sustainable development and trust among the member countries.

As the founder of SAARC, Bangladesh has always been playing a leading role to achieve the desired goal of the forum, she said.

Untiring efforts for two years by Bangladesh made the last SAARC Summit successful, she added.

Justice Amirul Kabir takes oath today

UNB, Dhaka

Justice Amirul Kabir Chowdhury, elevated to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, takes oath of office today.

Chief Justice Syed J R Mudassar Hossain will administer the oath.

Chowdhury was elevated to the Supreme Court superseding his senior justice Syed Amirul Islam.

Born in Cox's Bazar, Chowdhury joined the legal profession in 1962 and served as deputy attorney general for seven years before inducted into the High Court bench in June 1996. He headed a number of inquiry committees including the Judicial Commission to review Under Trial Cases.



PHOTO: PID

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia distributes certificates among the graduates at the Defence Services Command and Staff College at the Mirpur Cantonment at the graduation ceremony of the 28th Army Staff Course, 22nd Naval Staff Course and 24th Air Staff Course.