

Two sentenced to death for killing one in Gopalganj

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A speedy trial tribunal in Dhaka yesterday sentenced two persons to death for killing a businessman in Gopalganj on December 6 in 2002.

RUTA condemns attack on writer Humayun Azad

RU CORRESPONDENT

The Rajshahi University Teachers' Association (RUTA) yesterday brought out a silent procession and held a rally to protest the attack on prominent writer Humayun Azad.

The procession, led by RUTA President Prof. Khalequzzaman and General Secretary Mammul Karamot, paraded main thoroughfares on the campus.

A meeting was also held in front of the Senate Bhaban.

Addressing the meeting, the RUTA president said there is no security for the teachers, students, progressive writers, intellectuals and journalists in the country.

He urged the government to take immediate steps to improve law and order ensuring security for all people.

The association also requested the government to send Humayun Azad abroad for treatment.

It also demanded immediate arrest and trial of the persons involved in the incident.

Judge Sheikh Jahangir Hussain of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-2 gave death penalty to two people for killing a 32-year-old Shah Alam in Gopalganj.

The convicts are Mehedi Hassan Howlader and Parimal Majumder. Parimal was present in the court while Mehedi was tried in absentia.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of 17 out of 41 prosecution witnesses.

The punishment of the fugitive will be effective from the date of his surrender or arrest and the convicts can appeal to the High Court against the verdict in 30 days, the judgement said.

In the case filed with Kotalipara Police Station, it was alleged that the accused chopped businessman Shah Alam to death in front of Habib Traders under Kotalipara Upazila in Gopalganj district on December 6, 2002 over a previous enmity.

Victim's brother-in-law Sheikh Habibur Rahman filed a murder case accusing Mehedi and two others on December 13 the same year.

Police pressed charges against four persons on April 28 last year and the court framed charges against them on February 25 this year.

The trial of the two accused Aqramuzzaman and Mohammad Masud was earlier stayed on an order of the High Court.

Special Public Prosecutor Moin Uddin appeared for the state while advocate Abdul Hye for the accused.



PHOTO: STAR

Awami League Presidium member Abdus Samad Azad addresses a rally yesterday at Bangabandhu Avenue protesting police action on AL leaders and workers and attack on writer Humayun Azad.

Media urged to work for welfare of society

Zayadul of The Daily Star, Sharifuzzaman of Janakantha and Liton of Bhorer Kagoj get TIB award

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) yesterday awarded the Investigative Journalism Award-2003 to three print media journalists for exposing corruption through their investigative reports.

Senior Reporter of The Daily Star Zayadul Ahsan and Senior Reporter of the Janakantha Sharifuzzaman jointly received the first prize while the second prize went to Liton Haidar, staff reporter of the Bhorer Kagoj.

Zayadul was awarded for his investigative report titled 'Murky way to millions' that brought to light how Titas Gas metre readers become millionaires through rampant corruption. The report was carried in The Daily Star in May, 2002.

Sharifuzzaman was awarded for exposing various misleading facts in the textbooks through a series-report titled 'Boarder Boi Ja Shekhachhey' (what textbook teaches) published in the Janakantha during January and February, 2002.

Liton got the award for his investigative report titled 'Kara Durnitee' exposing corruption, irregularities and mismanagement in the prison. It was carried in the Bhorer Kagoj in August, 2002.

Both Zayadul and Sharifuzzaman received cheques for Tk50,000 each, certificates and crests while Liton got a cheque for Tk10,000, certificate and crest at a function in the city.

TIB Chairman Khan Sarwar Murshid was in the chair.

He said, "In our observation, we have found 97.03 percent corruption reports accurate."

Prof. Muzaffer Ahmad, a trustee

member of TIB, said the journalists have enormous contribution to the present status of TIB.

Poet Shamsur Rahman called upon the media men to carry on their good work for the welfare of the society.

"An individual may be submerged in colossal corruption, but collectively human beings are not so because of their eternal quest for ultimate truth in their soul," said Dhaka's Assistant Bishop Theotonious Gomes.

The panel of judges for the Investigative Journalism Award-2003 comprised journalist Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul, Dr Asif Nazrul, Dr. Arefin Siddique of Dhaka University, Financial Express Editor Moazzem Hossain and writer Selina Hossain.

The TIB instituted the award-one for Bangla and one for English in 1999.

Two held for holding anti-US rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police picked up two persons for holding anti-US demonstration in the city yesterday.

The arrestees were identified as Jalal Uddin and Golam Nabi.

A group of people led by Jalal and Nabi brought out a procession and held a meeting at Sonadighi crossing.

Police dispersed the people.



Award recipients pose with, sitting from left, Bishop Theotonious Gomes, TIB chairman Khan Sarwar Murshid, poet Shamsur Rahman and Prof Muzaffer Ahmed.

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Dhaka, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions till 6pm today.

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country.

Day and night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met office said.

Highest temperature 35.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and the lowest 15.5 degree at Dinajpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 6.01 pm today and rises at 6:20 am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.8	22.0	80	40
Chittagong	28.5	21.0	72	85
Rajshahi	35.0	18.0	86	47
Khulna	34.5	22.2	85	49

72 Myanmar nationals sent back home

BSS, Cox's Bazar

A group of 72 Myanmar nationals, who served different terms in Bangladeshi jails, were sent back home on Saturday.

Following a top-level flag meeting between Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Nasaka Forces at Teknaf Rest House in Cox's Bazar, both sides agreed to deport them to their land, meeting sources said.

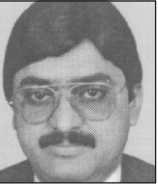
Most of the released Myanmar nationals spent seven to eight years in jails in Bangladesh after BDR personnel held them at different border points for illegal entrance.

Earlier, Bangladesh negotiated through diplomatic channel to send them back home after their jail terms expired, but the efforts failed due to reluctance of the Yangon authorities.

About 500 Myanmar citizens are to be deported from Bangladesh after their jail terms end, sources added.

Lt Colonel Taslim of 23rd Rifle Battalion of Teknaf range led a five-member BDR team at the talks while Aung Thing, deputy commander of Mongdu Battalion of Nasaka Force, headed as many members in Myanmar side.

Obituary



Fatik Kumar Roy Chowdhury, a freedom fighter and the owner of The Gold Queen Jewellers, died from brain haemorrhage at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital on February 26 at the age of 51, says a press release.

Fatik Chowdhury is survived by his wife, two sons and host of relatives to mourn his death. He was cremated at postagola crematorium.

Rezaur Rahman Khan

Rezaur Rahman Khan (Monir Meah) died from brain haemorrhage at his village home at Choura Bhatgati under Gazipur district on February 27 at the age of 69, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife, two sons and two daughters to mourn his death.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his village home after Zohr prayers tomorrow.

AD Khan

AD Khan, retired Customs Superintendent and a social worker, died at his Kalabagan residence on Friday night at the age of 85, says a press release.

He left behind his three sons and three daughters and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

His namaz-e-janaza was held at Kalabagan mosque. He was laid to rest at Mirpur intellectuals' grave on Sunday.

Death anniversary



The fourth death anniversary of Dr Samanta Bhadra Bhikkhu (Mutsuddi) a renowned Buddhist leader of the country

will be observed today, says a press release.

Dr Mutsuddi, was a member of former East Pakistan Medical Service and served different government hospitals as a gynaecologist. He was a founder member of Bangladesh Buddhists Association and President of Bangladesh Bouddha Krishti Prachar Shangha, Chittagong Zone.

Online interview Tarique refuses to entertain question on Hawa Bhaban

UNB, Dhaka

Brushing aside any allegations against Hawa Bhaban, BNP chairperson's political office, Tarique Rahman yesterday said henceforth he wouldn't give any answer about the power-wielding house without any specific complaint.

"I will not give any answer about Hawa Bhaban furthermore, without any specific allegation, rather ask those who raised the allegations against it and ask them to prove," said the BNP senior joint secretary general in an online interview with expatriates across the world on a website: <www.kobitaogaan.com>.

He received volley of questions from the expatriate Bangladeshis about the government and BNP activities, as well as his own, about welfare of the country and its people.

Replying to a question, he said Sheikh Hasina's allegation about siphoning off money and his business in Malaysia, Tarique said the opposition leader mentioned several figures several times. "Once Hasina says Tk 11 thousand crore have been smuggled and again mentioned 17 thousand crore and 34 thousand crore. Whereas Bangladesh development budget is Tk 20 thousand crore."

"Actually Sheikh Hasina should be asked what's the basis of her allegation; she should specify where and how many thousands were trafficked," Tarique said.

"I am living in my country with my mother, brother and my family - our family do not live abroad. So why should I smuggle money out of the country?" the rising BNP leader posed the question.

He said the people would not accept their allegations as they raised it without substantiating. "Such allegations are just a manifestation of their bankrupt politics."

He praised the role of Bangladeshis living and working abroad for their contribution to the country's economy.

On the US State Department Human Rights Report on Bangladesh, Tarique said they would have to see the report again as a "miss intelligence report led to attack on a country".

DHAKA TODAY

Drama festival

The inaugural ceremony of a week-long drama festival, organised by Bangladesh Pathnatok Parishad, will be held. Venue: Central Shaheed Minar. Time: 5.00pm. More than 60 drama groups from all over the country will take part in the festival. Around nine dramas will be staged everyday from 4.00pm to 9.00pm daily.

Art exhibition

The opening ceremony of a solo art exhibition titled 'Flight' by Rezwana will be held. French Ambassador Michel Lummaux will inaugurate. Venue: DRK Gallery, Dhanmondi. Time: 5.30pm. The exhibition will remain open till March 7 from 3.00pm to 8.00pm daily.

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen an American film titled 'About Last Night' (1986). Venue: Society auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

Prize giving ceremony

The prize giving ceremony of the IT-based quiz competition, sponsored by the University of Information Technology and Sciences (UITS) and the Jugantor, will be held with Education Minister Dr. M Osman Faruk as chief guest. Venue: UITS premises, Gulshan-2. Time: 11.30am.

Workshop

A workshop on 'Gender and mass media', organised by Policy Leadership and Advocacy for Gender Equality, will be held. Venue: Conference room of Bangladesh Institute of Communication Studies and Public Relations, Kataban. Time: 10.00am.

Reception

Bangladesh-Bharat Maitree Samity will hold a reception in honour of Veena Sikri, high commissioner of India to Bangladesh. Venue: Hotel Rajmoni Ishakha International, Kakrail. Time: 6.00pm.

NGO discussion

Coalition of Local NGOs, Bangladesh will hold a discussion on 'Urbanisation and Environment'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3.00pm.

AIDS discussion

A discussion on 'AIDS risk in Bangladesh: Women's health perspective', organised by Bangladesh Mohila Parishad, will be held. Venue: CIRDP auditorium, Tophkana Road. Time: 3.30pm.

NSU seminar

A seminar on 'Foreign policy and economic diplomacy', organised by North South University (NSU), will be held with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Reaz Rahman as chief guest. Venue: University campus, Banani. Time: 10.00am.

Roundtable

A roundtable on 'Institutionalised childcare: A holistic approach to national development', organised by Phulki, will be held. Venue: House-12, Road-2/A, Banani. Time: 11.00am.

Inauguration

The inauguration of Multipharma, country's first online pharmacy and co-ordinated healthcare service, will be held. Venue: 136, Elephant Road. Time: 7.00pm.

Discussion

A discussion on the 'Construction of Padma Bridge at Maowa is indispensable for national development' will be held. Venue: Seminar room of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, Ramna. Time: 3.30pm.

DHAKA TOMORROW Film show

Academy Film Society will screen an American film titled 'Two Moon Junction' (1998) and a French film titled 'Read My Lips' (2001). Venue: Society auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 3.30pm and 6.30pm.



PHOTO: STAR

Jatityatabadi Jubo Dal took out an anti-hartal procession in the city yesterday.