



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia poses with the recipients of the Independence Award 2004 for photographs at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in Dhaka yesterday.

Care (USA) president arrives today

President of the Care (USA) Peter Bell arrives in Dhaka today on a six-day official visit, says a press release.

He will meet the representatives of donors' community and share experience with the members of the civil society during his stay.

Peter Bell will also meet Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, minister for local government and rural development.

He will visit different programmes on prevention of HIV and see activities in different sectors for empowerment of women.

Peter Bell is accompanied by Barbara Murphy Warrington, senior vice-president, Human Resource, Deb Neuman, senior vice-president, External Relations, and Christina Chan, assistant to the president.

The Care is an international non-governmental organisation working in 71 countries to ensure better future of the poor people.

Slaughtered body recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the slaughtered body of an unidentified man from the bank of the Turag at Basilla in Mohammadpur yesterday morning.

The body of the victim, aged about 30 years, was sent to the morgue of Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Clad in brown shirt, chocolate trouser and black shoes, the body bore 13 stab injuries in chest and stomach while the neck was almost severed.

The morgue sources said the killers first strangled him with a white nylon rope and later slaughtered him.

Police suspected that the assailants might have killed him elsewhere and dumped the body in the secluded riverbank.

16 Bangladeshi fishermen freed from Indian jail

Legal aid bodies continue efforts to release 14 more

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sixteen Bangladeshi fishermen have been released from Alipur jail of West Bengal, India, recently following an initiative by the two legal aid services of West Bengal (LASWEB) will provide legal aid to Bangladeshi prisoners.

"We found the idea of initiating a legal collaborative mechanism in the face of increasing trafficking in women and children from Bangladesh to India as they often end up in jail custody but do not get any legal support," said LASWEB Chairman Justice DK Basu.

"Many Bangladeshi citizens have been languishing in various jails of West Bengal, Mumbai and Delhi," said BLAST Vice-Chairman Justice Naimuddin Ahmed. But he could not give the exact number of the prisoners.

DK Basu said there are 32 Bangladeshi prisoners in Tamluk jail in Medinipur district and 46 Indian prisoners in Jessore jail and 14 in Rajshahi jail.

The two organisations signed a

Memorandum of Understanding to work out a mutual collaboration on November 21 last year.

According to the MoU, they will provide legal aid to the prisoners without any fee.

"But the handing over of any prisoner will depend on mutual understanding and proper inquiry by both the governments," Naimuddin said.

The organisations have facilitated the release of 16 Bangladeshi fishermen from Alipur jail on January 20 and they returned home on January 25.

These fishermen had been missing from their fishing trawler since October 2003, said Director AN Mahmood of BLAST.

The BLAST has also filed a writ petition for release of 13 Indians who have been languishing in Rajshahi jail even after they have completed their prison terms about one and a half years ago.

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'8th amendment to constitution done from political point of view'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 8th amendment to the constitution was done not from religious but from political point of view, said the speakers at a discussion yesterday.

The interest of human being should be put above all things, said the State Minister for Religious Affairs Mosharaf Hossain Shahjahan.

He said communalism cannot be eradicated in a day, rather it is a continuous process.

Death anniversary



Today is the fourth death anniversary of Dr Syed Ali Naqi, former professor of Sociology of Dhaka University, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be arranged at his daughter's residence at the Shaheed Giasuddin Ahmed Residential area on the Dhaka University campus. Relatives, students and admirers have been requested to attend the doa mahfil and pray for the eternal peace his soul.

Khandker Mozharul Karim The first death anniversary of prominent writer and journalist Khandker Mozharul Karim will be observed today, says a press release.

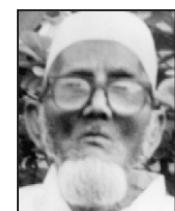
Mozharul Karim died of cardiac arrest on this day in 2003.

Sultan Ahmed Mollah The first death anniversary of Alhajj Sultan Ahmed Mollah of Mirpur will be observed today, says a press release.

On the occasion, the Pallabi Jame Masjid after Asri prayers.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the doa mahfil and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Afsaruddin Sheikh



Today is the first death anniversary of Afsaruddin Sheikh, says a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani, milad and distribution of foods among the destitutes have been arranged at his residence at 15/1 Farashganj Road in the city.

Qulkhwani



Qulkhwani of pharmacist ASM Ilias will be held at his residence at Uttara, Sector-3, Road-5, House-36 after Asri prayers today and at his father's residence at 14/1 Faridabad Lane tomorrow, says a press release.

Ilias, former general manager of BCIC, died of cardiac arrest on March 23.

He left behind his wife, two daughters and one son.

DFAhmed



Qulkhwani of DF Ahmed, ex-deputy postmaster general of the Bangladesh Post Office, will be held at his R-1 Nuruhan Road residence after Zohr prayers tomorrow, says a press release.

He died of cardiac arrest at the Samarita Hospital in the city on Tuesday at the age of 82.

He was laid to rest at Mohammadpur graveyard after his maz-e-janaza at Mohammadpur Jame Masjid on Wednesday.

Cheholum



Cheholum of Tariqul Islam (Omar), former additional SP Madaripur, will be held today at his village home Bararchar in Narsingdi after Juma prayers, says a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani, milad mahfil, special prayers and distribution of foods among the destitutes, will be arranged.

Attempted rape case against Babul Hearing of remand prayer adjourned till Mar 30

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka Court yesterday adjourned till March 30 the hearing of a remand prayer of Nurul Islam Babul, chairman of Jamuna Group, accused in an attempted rape case.

Magistrate Mohammad Shamsul Alam of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court adjourned the hearing following a time petition by the defence lawyers.

In the petition, the lawyers said they filed a quashment petition on Wednesday with the High Court (HC) challenging the legality of the sections under which the charges were brought against Babul.

If the time petition is not granted it would be tantamount to contempt of court as the matter is pending with the HC, Barrister Aneek R. Haque told the court.

The HC fixed March 28 for the next hearing on the issue, he added.

Moreover, the sections mentioned in the FIR (First Information

Report) of the case were repealed by parliament last year, he said.

The prosecution side opposed the petition, saying that the defence lawyers could not bring a stay order from the HC. They prayed to the court for continuing the hearing on the issue. But the court adjourned the hearing.

Police yesterday produced Nurul Islam Babul before the court at 1:00pm amid tight security. The hearing took 45 minutes.

On March 23, police prayed for a seven-day remand to interrogate Babul, showing him an arrestee in the attempted rape case.

In the case filed with Badda thana, a woman alleged that she met Babul, also owner of the Bangla daily Dainik Jugantor, at his office in Motijheel on March 17 for a job and he took her to Kuril Bishwa Road by a tin-shed house and attempting to rape her.

Advocates Syed Rezaur Rahman, Abu Sayeed Sagar, Quamrul Islam, Md Anwar Hossain, Abdul Baru and Nurul Islam Babul's wife Salma Islam appeared for the accused.

Ershad Shikder brought back to Khulna dist jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Condemned prisoner Ershad Shikder was brought back to Khulna district jail from Khulna Medical College Hospital prison cell yesterday afternoon.

He has been placed at the disposal of Dr Mizanur Rahman Khandaker, jail physician, for the treatment of his self-inflicted injury in the abdomen in a bid to commit suicide in the toilet attached to his cell.

When asked, Jail Superintendent Mohammad Farhad Hossain said Shikder is a convict and will be hanged till death when the president will confirm his death penalty.

An official letter from the Supreme Court confirming his death penalty is expected shortly, the superadded.

Necessary preparations will then begin for execution of the death sentence.

As there is no hangman in Khulna district jail, he would be brought from Jessore Central Jail for hanging Shikder till death.

The deputy commissioner, the police commissioner, the civil surgeon and the jail super will remain present in front of the gallows.

The jail super told The Daily Star yesterday that there are nine convicts including Shikder in Khulna district jail who are facing death penalty.

DHAKA TODAY

Cultural function

'Determination.' Venue: New China Town Chinese Restaurant, Mirpur Road. Time: 7:00pm.

BSSF discussion

Bangladesh Sanjukta Samik Federation (BSSF) will hold a discussion to mark the Independence Day. Venue: 23/2, Topkhana Road. Time: 4:00pm.

DHAKA TOMORROW

Kite festival

Akite festival and kite flying competition, sponsored by The Oriental Bank to mark the Independence Day, will be held. Venue: University Ground near Doel Chattar. Time: 11:00am.

Cultural function

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad organises a cultural function. Venue: Sufia Kamal auditorium of the parishad, Segun Bagicha. Time: 4:00pm.

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen an American film titled 'The People vs Larry Flynt' (1996). Venue: Society auditorium, 21/1 C Jigatola. Time: 6:30pm.

Launching ceremony

The launching ceremony of a book titled 'Biodiversity and Millennium Development Goals' authored by Dr P Bal Krishna of IUCN will be held. Venue: FEJB conference room, National Press Club. Time: 10:00am.

Workshop

The opening ceremony of an international workshop on 'Participatory Action Research' organised by Research Initiatives, Bangladesh will be held. Venue: BRAC Centre Inn auditorium, 21/1 C Jigatola. Time: 9:30am.

Soft fair

The closing ceremony of the 5th Soft Fair will be held with Science and ICT Minister Dr Abdul Moeen Khan as chief guest. Venue: Sheraton Hotel. Time: 6:30pm.

Cleanliness campaign

The Gulshan Society in collaboration with Dhaka City Corporation and the Rover Scouts organises a day-long cleanliness campaign throughout the Gulshan area. Time: 8:00am.

Kennel club meet

A meeting of the governing council of Bangladesh Kennel Club will be held. Venue: House-8, Road-3, DOHS, Banani. Time: 4:30pm.