



Minister for Science and Information and Communications Technology Dr. Abdul Moyeen Khan speaks at a seminar on "Freedom of the Journalists and the Mass Media" at the Business Studies auditorium at DU. The Dhaka University Journalists' Association organised the seminar.

Journalists' freedom a must for free press

Media experts tell seminar

DU CORRESPONDENT

Freedom of journalists must be ensured before the freedom of press, said the media experts at a seminar yesterday.

They also called for strong editorial and sub-editorial to face the pressure from state and non-state factors to ensure the freedom of journalists.

The seminar on 'Freedom of the Journalists and the Mass Media' was organised by Dhaka University (DU) Journalists' Association at the business studies faculty auditorium.

Speaking as chief guest at the seminar, Science and ICT Minister Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan said people should not be deprived of their right to information.

He said there was a proposal to enact a law shrinking the press

freedom, but it could not be implemented due to strong opposition from within the government.

Editor of New Age Enayeturrah Khan said the government always criticises the media for publishing negative news and frequently urges for 'constructive journalism.'

But journalism is journalism, it cannot be defined as constructive or destructive, he added.

Enayeturrah Khan said newspapers should take stand in favour of good against the evil.

Chairman of mass communication and journalism department Professor Sakhawati Ali Khan said the print media is enjoying more freedom

than electronic media.

He said journalists should be united for ensuring their own freedom.

Later, Shaheed Shah Chisti Helalur Rahman Memorial Award 2002 and 2003 were handed over to Sahabul Haq of the daily Ittefaq and Qazi Saifuddin of Bhorer Kagoj.

DU Vice-Chancellor Professor SMA Faiz, Pro-VC AFM Yusuf Haider, Editor of News Today Reazuddin Ahmed, Editor of Bhorer Kagoj Abed Khan and News Editor of NTV Khairul Anwar Mukul were present on the occasion.

CU syndicate polls June 30

Move to unite Pro-BNP, Jamaat teachers fails

CU CORRESPONDENT

Election to the syndicate of Chittagong University (CU) is scheduled to be held on June 30.

Teachers are contesting the election under three panels.

The pro-BNP and pro-Jamaat teachers will contest the election separately for the first time while the pro-Awami League and left-leaning teachers are vying from a united platform.

Yesterday was the last day for withdrawal of the nomination paper.

As no-one withdrew the nomination paper, the initiative of the Vice-Chancellor Professor AJM Nuruddin Chowdhury to unite the BNP and Jamaat-backed teachers under a single 'white panel' had failed.

Earlier, the vice-chancellor held a meeting with the leaders of pro-BNP and pro-Jamaat teachers at his office on June 15 when

the faction leaders reached a verbal agreement to contest the election jointly.

But the BNP-backed 'white panel' teachers led by ex-Pro-VC Prof M Badiul Alam submitted a separate panel with their candidates for the election to be held under professor, associate professor, assistant professor and lecturer category.

The BNP-backed 'white panel' candidates are Professor ANM Munir Ahmed, Associate Professor Md Tayeb Chowdhury, Assistant Professor SM Nasrul Quadir and Lecturer Monzurul Kibria.

The Jamaat-backed 'white panel' candidates are Professor M Emdadul Haq, Dr Al Forkan, Dr Towhidul Hasan and Md Saiful Islam.

The 'yellow panel' candidates are Professor Kazi Mostain Billah, Hossain Kabir, Mahbubur Rahman and Md Delwar Hossain.

Trespassing dwarfs repatriation

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disclosed by Rohingya Refugee Repatriation Commission (RRRC) and backed up unofficially by district officials, border security force and police.

"Trespassing from Myanmar is a big headache for us. In the last six months, in this upazila alone, there had been 70 to 80 cases against 300 to 400 Burmese trespassers," says second officer of Teknaf Police Station, Aatur Rahman.

These trespassers have set up floating settlements in different places all over the Cox's Bazar district, including the beach town itself. One can find their settlements also in the other two hill districts and a few in Chittagong.

According to several sources in Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and police, the Rohingya influx has been continuing for years due to oppression of Myanmar government on them. "When any Rohingya leaves Burma, the Nasaka (Myanmar border force) don't stop them. But, they don't allow them to return home. It's also very rare for a trespasser wanting to return to Myanmar," says a BDR source, adding, "It all makes for the continuously inflating number of illegal Rohingya immigrants."

There is no official record of the real number of illegal Rohingya immigrants due to absence of census, while the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) remains totally silent on the issue. Despite repeated attempts, the Cox's Bazar UNHCR office refused to talk, with a staff saying, "We won't discuss the issue."

Back in 2001, former Rohingya Refugee Repatriation Commissioner joint secretary Borhanuddin Ahmed in a report to the government said, outside the registered refugees, there were over 150,000 Rohingya interlopers

in Cox's Bazar. Although his report created a stir, no step was taken to address the problem. Now district officials say the number of intruders from Myanmar has exceeded two lakh.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of bordering Teknaf, Matinul Haque, says, "Local people say there are over 50,000 Rohingyas in Teknaf."

Cox's Bazar Deputy Commissioner (DC) Saifuddin Ahmed adds, "Some put the figure at one lakh. Some say it's even higher. But, about a year ago, the DC office with the help of UNOs and union parishad chairmen of Cox's Bazar found there were 28,300 illegal Rohingyas in the district."

A source at the DC office however rejected the number, saying, "There was no survey or basis to credit the figure. There're nearly 11,000 Rohingyas living on a playground in front of Teknaf Upazila Parishad (UP) office alone. That's not any official camp. And such illegal camps are everywhere in the district."

The Daily Star correspondent visited Teknaf and Ukhia and found many small settlements of Rohingya squatters there.

In front of Teknaf UP office, over 1,250 Rohingya families have been living in a shabby and inhuman environment for the last two years. There are 41 supervisors, called 'majhi', to look after these squatters. One of them, Din Mohammad, says, "Most of these Rohingyas have entered Bangladesh in different times in 1994 to 95 through various border points. In crossing the border, they did not face any resistance."

Hossain Ahmed, Abul Hashem, Nurul Amin and others in the camp echo the majhi. They used to squat on isolated small patches in the area. About 18 months ago, the

ADB likely to fund Tk 100 cr RCC dev project

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is likely to finance a Tk 100 crore multidimensional project for the development of Rajshahi City Corporation, RCC sources said yesterday.

A high profile three-member ADB team from its Manila headquarters visited Rajshahi and discussed the project with the authorities on Thursday.

The team was comprised of ADB Chief Urban Economist Hun Kim, environment expert Tatiana Gallego-Lizon and consultant Rolland Wong.

They met RCC Chief Executive Officer Khalilur Rahman, Chief Engineer Sarit Dutta Gupta, Chief Health Officer Dr Rezvi Sultan, Water Development Board Superintending Engineer Khalilur Rahman, LGED project director Ahmed Hossain, UNDP

field coordinator Nazrul Islam and reviewed the project.

Another ADB team also visited Rajshahi last December.

At the request of Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu, the ADB team visited Rajshahi to look into the plan and the likely funding of the development project, sources

Over 1500 held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,507 people, including four listed criminals, on various charges during their countrywide drive in the last 24 hours till 6.00am yesterday.

During the drive, the law enforcers also recovered 10 firearms and 14 bullets and filed seven cases against 11 people under the Arms Act, says a police headquarters press release.

said.

The project is aimed at protection of rivers, construction of flood control dams, environment conservation, modern drainage system and better waste management.

When everything falls into place, the government and the ADB will sign a contract by next September or October and the project work will begin early next year, said sources.

The Water Development Board will implement the river protection and dam construction project. The RCC and the LGED will implement the other projects.

AL founding anniversary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition Awami League (AL) will celebrate its 55th founding anniversary across the country today with elaborate programmes that include discussion, procession and cultural function.

As part of the programmes to celebrate the founding anniversary, Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina will place wreath at the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Dhanmondi at 7:00am today. A mass rally will be brought out from AL central office at 3:00pm.

The party will hold a discussion titled 'Awami League and the struggle for Independence of Bangladesh' at the Institution of Engineers' auditorium tomorrow afternoon with Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

2 killed in city road mishaps

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two people died in road accidents in the capital yesterday.

One of them is Habib Ahmed, 22, who was run over by a truck at Shahjadpur in Gulshan at around 1:15pm.

Habib was going to his friend's house at Uttara from his home at Maddhya Badda when the truck hit his motorcycle, killing him on the spot.

Police arrested driver Aziz Ullah, 40, and seized the truck.

The other accident took place at Kalyanpur in Mirpur at around 2:50am.

Police found the body of an unidentified man, aged about 35, in front of Mohana Filling Station.

Police suspected that he was run over by a heavy vehicle while crossing the road.

Both the bodies were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsies.



Left Democratic Front formed a human chain in front of Agrani Bank at Motijheel in the city yesterday protesting appointment foreign advisors in the nationalised banks.

TRIPLE MURDER

Aga Shamim jailed for 60 years

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka Court yesterday sentenced top listed criminal Shamim Ahmed alias Aga Shamim to 60 years' for killing three people in the Old part of the city on October 4 in 1995.

The court acquitted three others including listed criminals Arman and Sweden Aslam alias Aslam as the prosecution witnesses did not mention their names during the trial.

The other acquitted is Swapan. Of them, Sweden Aslam was present in the court during the delivery of the verdict while Aga Shamim, Arman and Swapan are absconding after coming out on bail. But intelligence sources said Aga Shamim and his family members are now staying in Switzerland.

Judge AR Masud of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-4 gave the verdict at a jam-packed courtroom.

The punishment of the fugitive will be effective from the date of his arrest or surrender, the judgement said.

Aga Shamim was found guilty of killing the victim Abdullah Al Hassan

alias Mamun and was given punishment for life (30 years) in jail. He was also found guilty of killing Gopal Kar and was given conviction for life (30 years) in jail. Both the sentences imposed upon the convict Shamim will run consecutively from the date of his taking into custody, the judge said.

Earlier, the prosecution and defence completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of 14 out of 22 prosecution witnesses.

In the case filed with Kotwali Police Station, it has been alleged that three persons named- Mamun, Gopal and Nur Hossain- were killed by a group of assailants in front of the godown of Ayes Perfumery at 44 Syed Abdul Hadi Lane in the city at around 8:45 pm on October 4 in 1995.

Later, Major (Retd) Abu Taleb, Mamun's father filed a murder case without naming any suspect in this regard.

The investigation officer pressed charges against Sweden Aslam and three others on February 4, 1997.

Earlier, Sweden Aslam was convicted for life in jail in an arms case.



A five-member delegation of Bangladesh Public Relations Association (BPRA) led by its President Mostafa-E-Jamil and General Secretary Mirza Tarekul Quader called on Housing and Public Works Secretary Engr. Iqbal Uddin Chowdhury at secretariat in the city on June 20.

Nat'l mathematics festival begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A two-day national mathematics festival begins at Notre Dame College in the city today.

Bangladesh Mathematics Olympiad Committee has organised the festival in collaboration with the Dutch Banka Bank Limited and the daily Prothom Alo.

Winners of the competitions held earlier at six divisions across the country will take part in the festival.

Noted scientist Dr Jamal Nazrul Islam, Vice-Chancellor of BRAC University Professor Jamilur Reza Chowdhury and Vice-President of Bangladesh Mathematics Olympiad Committee Professor Mohammad Zafar Iqbal are expected to attend the festival.

The programme of the festival includes open discussion, seminar on mathematics and science exhibition.

The objective of the festival is to popularise mathematics among the students.

Obituary



He left behind his wife, three sons and three daughters to mourn his death.

Shanti Ranjan Karmakar, former district judge, died of old age complications at his residence in the city yesterday at the age of 84, says a press release.