



The Thai embassy in collaboration with Agora and Novo Cargo Services Limited organises a three-day Thai Fruit Festival that began at Agora in Gulshan yesterday.

8 get life for killing schoolboy

Principal accused acquitted of charges
COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka Court yesterday sentenced eight people to life term rigorous imprisonment for killing Shaiful Islam Suman, astudent of class nine, on May 25 in 1997 in Munshiganj.

The convicts are Bashir Uddin, Suman son of Abdul Rahman, Suman son of Sirajul Islam, Abdul Jallil, Abdul Hannan, Ruhul Amin, Mohammad Liton and Manu-

Of the convicts, Abdul Jallil was present in the court during the delivery of the judgement while seven others were tried in absentia.

The court, however, acquitted the principal accused Bachchu Sheikh alias City Bachchu of charges.

Judge Abu Hanif of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-3 gave the verdict at a jam-packed courtroom.

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

In the case filed with Munshiganj Sadar Police Station, the victim's

mother Basirunnisa alleged that at about 8:00pm on May 24 in 1997 a gang of miscreants led by City Bachchu called Suman out of his house and took him to a nearby place and stabbed him to death. Then the gang dumped the body under a bridge at Bazrajuguni under Munshiganj district.

Police recovered the body on May 27 from the place. Later, a murder case was filed accusing City Bachchu and four others and the police pressed charges against City Bachchu and eight others on June 11 in 1998.

The victim's mother Basirunnisa expressed her dissatisfaction at the judgement saying that the principal accused was acquitted of charges for non-cooperation of the Special Public Prosecutor (PP). Had the PP conducted the case properly, the main accused could not be acquitted, Basirunnisa told the Daily Star.

Special PP Nurul Iman Babul appeared for the state while advocates Mahbub Ahmed and Abdul Quayum Khan defended the accused.

Trader carrying explosive materials lynched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A mob lynched a trader at Khulna bazaar Tuesday night after he was found carrying a huge quantity of explosive materials.

Saidul Islam Morol, 35, a spice seller, came under attack at around 10:00pm when he got down from a rickshaw near his shop. He succumbed to his injuries on way to Khulna Medical College Hospital.

Later, police recovered two kilograms of sulphur, two kilograms of potash, four kilograms of gunpowder, 10 kilograms of marble, one dozen of large-sized tapes and 2,000 chocolate crackers from his possession.

According to the traders at Khulna bazaar, Saidul had been selling explosive substances undercover for the last three years.

Saidul, who was arrested under

Special Powers Act on April 27 last year for possessing bomb-making materials, was on bail, police said. A charge sheet against him was also submitted on September 13.

The traders also said that he had links with the extremists and armed cadres of different political parties.

Police arrested Nizamuddin, 20, who worked as salesman at Saidul's shop, for interrogation.

Keep UPs out of politics to ensure development

Speakers tell workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday urged the government to strengthen the Union Parishad (UP) with a view to ensuring development at grassroots level.

They said that UP should be kept out of partisan politics to give the democracy an institutional shape and village-centric development.

Khan Foundation, a non-government organisation, arranged the workshop at its auditorium in the city.

Speaking at the workshop as chief guest Mohammed Mizanur Rahman, Director General of the NGO Affairs Bureau, said there should be a close cooperation between the government officials at upazila level and the UP chairmen to implement the projects properly.

"Due to lack of understanding among them many projects are not

being implemented properly that causes financial loss to the government," Mizan said. Besides, many upazila level officers do not perform their duties regularly, he added.

Chairman of National Union Parishad Forum Golam Sarwar said that local government, especially the UP, was being neglected.

Sarwar said a UP chairman has to suffer a lot to receive fund from upazila office for any kind of development work.

"Every government considers the UPs as an instrument of power rather than a democratic institution," Rokhsana added.

"Party in power always thinks that it is easy to clinch the state power through establishing dominance over UPs," she said.

There should not be any partisan interference in the UP activities for the sake of development, she said.

The elected UP representatives and upazila level government officials attended the workshop.

Palash Upazila under Narshingdi, said there should not be any political interference in the UP activities.

Rokhsana Khandaker, executive director of the Khan Foundation, in her address of welcome said that without strengthening the local government it was not possible to engage the grassroots level people to development process.

"Every government considers the UPs as an instrument of power rather than a democratic institution," Rokhsana added.

"Party in power always thinks that it is easy to clinch the state power through establishing dominance over UPs," she said.

There should not be any partisan interference in the UP activities for the sake of development, she said.

The elected UP representatives and upazila level government officials attended the workshop.

'Quality seeds can up paddy yields by 3.2m tons a year'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Annual production of paddy can be raised by 3.2 million tons using quality seeds, which can provide food for 12.7 million people, a survey revealed yesterday.

Bangladesh currently produces 37.5 million tons of paddy each year.

The additional produce could meet the demand for rice of the growing population for seven years, said the survey presented at a work-

shop in the city.

Mahbub Hossain, head of social science division of Manila-based International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), conducted the survey under the Seed Health Improvement Project (SHIP).

The IRRI has been implementing the five-year project since 1999 in collaboration with Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI), Bangladesh Agricultural University, Rural Development Academy, Bogra, Brac, Proshika, Care, Grameen Krishi Foundation and Wave.

Hossain said the amount of rice produced by the trained farmers under the project was higher by 0.7 tons per hectare in the amon season and by 0.43 tons per hectare in the boro season than the rice yield produced by the traditional farmers.

Agriculture Minister MK Anwar appreciated the project findings and urged the farmers to use healthy seeds for crop production.

According to BRRI Director General M Mahbub Haque, the project was taken to assess the quality of seeds produced by the farmers, estimate the yields from quality seeds and impart training to women on improved method of selection, drying and preservation of seeds.

A total of 14,000 farmers have been trained in the last four and a half years under the Tk 100 crore project.

Tarik Hassan, director general of Department of Agriculture Extension, and Noel P Magor, IRRI representative, also spoke at the workshop held at Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC).

Obituary

BSS, Mymensingh

Former lawmaker and Awami League leader Advocate Shamsul Haque died of a cardiac arrest at Ibrahim Memorial Diabetic Hospital in Dhaka on Tuesday at the age of 65.

He left behind four sons and seven daughters. He was buried at his family graveyard.

Major (retd.) Bazlur Rashid



Major (retd.) Bazlur Rashid, a freedom fighter and member of Cadet College Club, died at his home in Chapainawabganj yesterday at the age of 53, says a press release.

He was a student of the first batch of Rajshahi Cadet College. He fought in the Chapainawabganj sector during the Liberation War.

He is survived by his wife and three children.

Members of the club expressed condolence at his death and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

Akram Hossain Molla

Akram Hossain Molla, a freedom fighter and social worker, died at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital on July 6 at the age of 62, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife, three daughters and one son.

He was buried at his village at Tilchhara in Kashiani upazila, Gopalganj, with state honour yesterday.

Begum Fazilatunnesa

Begum Fazilatunnesa, wife of renowned industrialist and sports organiser Moazzamul Haque, died at her home yesterday at the age of 74, says a press release.

She left behind two sons, one daughter and grandchildren.

A doa mahfil will be held at her Dhamundi home after Magrib prayers tomorrow.

Death anniversary

Today is the 14th death anniversary of Dr MA Mutalib, founder of Community Health Research Association, says a press release.

A discussion and doa mahfil will be held at 4:00pm, with Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka as chief guest.

Law Reporters Forum

Law Reporters Forum will hold a discussion in memory of Barrister Syed Ishaque Ahmed on the occasion of his first death anniversary. Venue: National Press Club, Time: 10:00am.

Dhaka Community Hospital

Dhaka Community Hospital (DCH) will



PHOTO: STAR

Amirul Rasul Babul, second from right, of Nirapad Naupath Bastaboyon Jote speaks at a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium in the city yesterday to press home their demand for a safe and accident-free river route.

WEATHER TODAY

Heavy falls likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at most places over the country with moderately heavy to heavy falls at places till 6:00pm today.

Heavy falls are also likely over the regions of Rajshahi, Pabna, Bogra, Jessor, Khulna, Faridpur, Dhaka, Mymensingh, Noakhali, Comilla, Chittagong, and Sylhet, Met Office said.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, it added.

Highest temperature 31.3 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Teknaf and the lowest 23.2 degree Celsius at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:50pm today and rises at 5:18am 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	28.2	25.8	89	83
Chittagong	27.0	25.2	88	91
Rajshahi	29.7	24.8	95	91
Khulna	28.7	25.0	97	89
Barisal	28.7	26.4	85	89
Sylhet	26.0	24.1	98	97
Cox's Bazar	29.8	26.8	77	93



PHOTO: STAR
Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina congratulates the newly elected pourasava chairmen and commissioners when they called on her at the party office at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday.

Tanneries to be shifted to Savar: Khaleda

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday said the tannery industry at Hazaribagh in the capital would be shifted to Savar.

It will help earn more foreign currency through export of leather goods, she old the Jatiya Sangsad in reply to a supplementary question.

The prime minister said the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) is implementing a Tk 170 crore project to shift the tannery to Savar. Land acquisition is expected to be completed in two months, she added.

She listed a number of measures taken by her government for improvement of leather industry and boost export.

Relying to a question from M Amzad Hossain, Khaleda said Pakistan will import 10 thousand tons of tea from Bangladesh at zero tariff following a request from her government.

She said Bangladesh Tea Board has taken necessary steps to create tea gardens in Chittagong under individual initiatives. Work on creating tea gardens in Panchagarh has also begun, she added.

Businessman, 2 daughters found dead in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A businessman and his two daughters were found dead at a house at Senpara in Rangpur yesterday afternoon.

Police recovered the bodies of Khaibor Ali, 48, a distributor of Finey Tea, and his two daughters, Dolon, 8, and Dipali, 5, from the house used as office rooms of the businessman.

Quoting his wife Jasmine, police said Ali had been staying in his office for the last few days following a family feud. Their house is located at Adarsapara of Rangpur town.

On Monday, the two daughters went to Ali's office after their father sent one of his employees to his home to bring them, Jasmine said.

As they did not return home on the day, the worried mother went to the office the next day only to find it under lock and key.

Detecting a bad smell coming out of the locked office, they informed the police who broke open the office and recovered the bodies.

Some believe that a well-organised group killed the three while others said Ali may have committed suicide after killing his daughters with poison.

Police said they are yet to establish the motive behind the deaths. The bodies were sent to the morgue for autopsy.