



PHOTO: STAR

Different organisations stage demonstrations in different parts of the city yesterday to protest the killing of former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria. Clockwise from left: Sylhet Division Development Action Council stages a sit-in at Paltan, Awami Jubo League takes out a procession at zero point, Workers Party of Bangladesh form a human chain at Muktangon and Gono Forum and Communist Party of Bangladesh also form a human chain at Paltan.



Convicted BNP man gets amnesty after 22 years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Mohiuddin Jintu, who was awarded death sentence 22 years ago in a double murder case, got presidential amnesty within 10 days of his surrender before the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court on January 3.

The president granted him amnesty on January 13 and the home ministry immediately sent his release order to Dhaka Central Jail where he was sent following surrender. Jintu, a Bangladeshi expatriate in Sweden, had been absconding for the last 22 years since a military court sentenced him to death along with notorious criminal Galkata Kamal and two others for killing businessmen Abdul Khaleq Rana and Firoz Al Mamun of Demra.

Kamal was executed and the two others are still on the run. In his submission to the judge's court, Jintu identified himself as founder vice-president of city unit of Jubo Dal and presently president of BNP's Sweden unit.

The constitution empowers the president to grant amnesty to a person awarded death penalty. "President can grant amnesty on humanitarian grounds and in case of a flaw in a judgement," said Dr Zahir, a constitution expert.

"But it is not clear to me on which ground the president granted amnesty to a person convicted in a murder case," he told The Daily Star.

The judge's court sent Jintu to jail on his surrender and directed the jail authorities to forward the convict's amnesty prayer to the authorities concerned.

Jailer of Dhaka Central Jail Kamrul Islam said the amnesty prayer was not forwarded through the jail authorities. The respondents themselves sent the prayer to the president through the home ministry.

According to records, Galkata Kamal and his accomplices killed the two businessmen, Rana and Mamun on January 25, 1982.

Rana's wife Nilufar Yasmin filed a murder case with Demra Police Station and police filed charge sheet against Kamal and three others including Ruhul Amin Hawlader, a minister in the then autocratic regime of HM Ershad. Jintu's name was included in a supplementary charge sheet.

A military court on July 20, 1982 gave death penalty to Kamal, his accomplices Shahid Hossain and Abul Kashem, and Jintu.

Jintu told the Judge's court that he had joined the BNP being inspired by the ideals of founder of the party late president Ziaur Rahman but he fell victim to political vengeance as the situation changed after Zia's assassination. He was falsely implicated in the murder case, he claimed.

He also said that on the advice of BNP leaders, he had fled the country after the fall of justice Sattar government in 1982.

He went to Sweden on political asylum and did not come to Bangladesh in the last 22 years. He had consulted the BNP leaders before he came home for surrender to court, he added.

Naming a BNP minister and a pro-BNP lawyer, Jintu said everything was arranged as per their advice and they lobbied for me at the top level.

Nizami denies party's link with Islamic militants

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh's Ameer and Industries Minister Maulana Motiur Rahman Nizami yesterday denied his party's link with Islamic militant groups.

"We don't know them (militants), they have no name and address. They are either distracted from the religion or puppets of anti-Islam forces. They are rather working against us," he said.

He was addressing Rajshahi city Jamaat workers' council at Shah Mokhdum (Rh) Eidgah field in the noon yesterday.

He asked the party men to identify those who try to link Jamaat with the militant groups and said, "Resist those who are conspiring against Islam."

Rajshahi city Jamaat Ameer Maolana Ataur Rahman chaired the daylong council addressed among others by Rajshahi City Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu MP, Mia Golam Parwar MP, Jamaat's Assistant Secretary-General Abdul Kader Mollah.

Quoting columnist Farhad Majhar, Nizami said that the Israeli secret service Mossad and that of a close ally of Israel were behind the rise of the militants in Bangladesh.

An evil power is plotting against the country," he said adding Muslims must remain alert to the evil.

He also said that the postponement of the Saarc summit was the outcome of an anti-Islam conspiracy. "Kibria was murdered to have logics behind the postponement."

Nizami also claimed that Jamaat is a complete Islamic party as it follows Al-Qur'an and Al-Hadith. "Our party believes in democracy and laws of Allah and his Rasul (Sm). And those who question us do not have the right to claim themselves Muslims."

Attack on port labour leader protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong Dock Bandar Sramik Karmochari Oikya Parishad held a rally on Bandar Bhaban premises yesterday to protest the attack on its leader.

Yar Ahmad Majumder, general secretary of Bandar Samajtantrik Sramik Jote backed by Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, was shot by five gunmen near his residence at the Port Colony on Wednesday night.

Speakers at the rally said Yar Ahmad was always vocal against corruption and nepotism.

He fell victim to another attack some six months ago when some identified miscreants stabbed him seriously, they added.

The speakers alleged that the same syndicate of culprits made the attack to kill him.

They demanded immediate arrest and punishment to the persons involved in the attack.

The parishad also decided to submit a memorandum to the Chairman of Chittagong Port Authority and Deputy Police Commissioner (port) today.

With Dock Bandar Sramik Karmochari Federation President Sirajul Islam in the chair, the rally was addressed by Bandar Jatiya Sramik League President Mahfuzur Rahman Khan, Dock Jatiya Sramik League President Abdul Khaleq Chowdhury, Chittagong Bandar Sramik Union President SM Nazrul Islam, and Chittagong Bandar Sramik League General Secretary Abu Zafar Azad.

Yar Ahmad, an employee of marine department of Chittagong port, was flown to Dhaka following deterioration of his condition, and admitted to Combined Military Hospital on Thursday.

He was operated successfully and some splinters of cartridges were removed from his head, victim's family members said.

However, he was still in coma, they added.

IU reschedules admission tests

UNB, Kushtia

The Islamic University (IU) has rescheduled the admission test for the first year honours courses (2004-2005 session) due to unavoidable circumstances.

The tests, which were scheduled for February 5, 6 and 7, will now be held on February 14, 15 and 16 respectively.

EAST WEST UNIVERSITY 44 students get scholarship

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As many as 28 students of East West University have received Full Tuition Merit Scholarships and 16 Medha Lalon Fund Scholarships under the Merit Award Scholarship Programme of the university.

The scholarships for Spring semester 2005 were distributed at a function held at the university auditorium on Tuesday.

Last year, a total of 690 students received Tk 1.90 crore in merit scholarship and other forms of need-based financial assistance.

The amount and number of beneficiaries are likely to go up this year, a press release said.

SM Nousher Ali, member of the Board of Directors of East West University, presided over the function and distributed the certificates among the recipients.

HN Ashequr Rahman, another member of the board of directors, attended the function as chief guest.

Registrar of East West University Firdaus Ali also spoke on the occasion.



Metropolitan Bar Assoc executives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Advocate Arfan Uddin Khan and Advocate Quamrul Islam have been elected president and general secretary of Dhaka Metropolitan Bar Association for 2005-2006.

Their panel has swept the election to the association held in the city on February 2, said a press release yesterday.

Other office-bearers are Narayan Chandra Das and AKM Zakaria -- vice-presidents, Pran Ballav Ghose -- assistant general secretary, M Ohidul Islam -- treasurer, M Hafizur Rahman Patwari -- library secretary, Hanufa Razia (Kohinur) -- cultural affairs secretary and Din Mohammad -- accounts affairs secretary.

And the members are Shah Ilyas Ratan, Nazma Akter, Rokeya Sultana, Md Ayub Khan, Md Mainuddin (Manik), Saidur Rahman, Syed Sakhawat Hossain and Shamsul Islam.

CMES to celebrate silver jubilee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Centre for Mass Education in Science (CMES), a voluntary organisation, will celebrate its silver jubilee in the city on February 7 and 8.

On this occasion, two seminars will be held at the auditorium of the Institution of Engineers Bangladesh.

Prof Muhammad Yunus, managing director of Grameen Bank, and Taherunnesa Abdullah, a development personality, will preside over the seminars.

Besides, an exhibition of technology with the participation of young members of the organisation will be held, said a press release.

The CMES has been providing deprived adolescents with effective and technical education for 25 years.

Rheumatoid arthritis raises heart attack risk: Study

REUTERS, Washington

Rheumatoid arthritis seems to raise the risk of silent heart disease in patients -- even before they know they have the chronic condition, US researchers reported on Thursday.

They found patients who later were diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis were three times more likely to have been hospitalised for an acute heart attack and five times more likely to have an unrecognised heart attack.

After diagnosis, the rheumatoid arthritis patients were twice as likely to find out they had a heart attack and did not even notice, or to die suddenly from a heart condition, the researchers wrote in the journal Arthritis & Rheumatism.

The increased risk could not be accounted for by other factors such as elevated cholesterol, blood pressure, weight or alcohol abuse, said Dr Hilal Maradit Kremers of the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, who led the study of 600 patients.

"What we are finding is that though traditional cardiovascular risk factors are important, they are less important for those with rheumatoid arthritis," Maradit Kremers said in a statement.

"Something else is going on. It could be that rheumatoid arthritis and heart disease have a common origin. What we do know is that the cause cannot be explained by just one factor."

Rheumatoid arthritis, which affects more than 2 million Americans, is an autoimmune disease caused when immune cells mistakenly attack the joints and organs.

It causes chronic pain and disability and there is no cure.

The pain may make them unaware of having heart attacks, Maradit Kremers said. The heart attacks are diagnosed later during heart examinations.

WEATHER TODAY

Mild cold wave may continue

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry over the country during the next 24 hours till 6.00pm today, with chances of light to moderate fog in the early morning.

Light rain or drizzle is expected at places over Sylhet division during the period, Met Office said.

And the mild cold wave over Rajshahi division and the regions of Tangail, Srimangol, Satkhira, Jessore and Kushtia may continue, it added.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 28.5 degree Celsius was recorded at Rangamati and the lowest of 7.0 degree at Srimangol.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:48pm today and rises at 6:37am tomorrow.

The 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	24.6	13.2	73	46
Chittagong	27.2	12.7	67	49
Rajshahi	24.0	09.8	79	65
Khulna	25.2	10.5	71	69
Barisal	25.2	10.0	85	31
Sylhet	27.0	11.3	81	58
Cox's Bazar	26.1	15.0	63	57