



Barrister Ishtiaq's anniversary of death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the second death anniversary of Barrister Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed, a senior advocate of the Supreme Court and former advisor to the caretaker government.

On the occasion, wreaths will be placed at his grave at Banani and fateha will be offered. A milad mahfil will also be held at his Gulshan residence in the morning.

The Asiatic Society of Bangladesh will launch the 'Barrister Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed Memorial Foundation' at Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Auditorium at the National Museum today to mark the day.

Former chief justice Mustafa Kamal will attend the launching ceremony as the chief guest while former attorney general Mahmudul Islam will present a paper titled 'Rule of Law in Bangladesh'.

ALLEGATION OF RAPE National hospital staffs protest reinstatement of ward master

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Employees of Dhaka National Medical College and Hospital yesterday kept its director confined to his office for about three hours in protest against the reinstatement of a ward master who was earlier suspended on charges of raping a female worker.

Hundreds of third and fourth class employees confined Director Prof MR Azad to his office and Ward Master Mizanur Rahman to his hospital quarters and began a strike at noon.

The employees alleged that Rahman used to tease the female worker and tried to have illicit relations with her. On March 16, he abducted her on her way home to Kazla in Demra and took her to a hotel at Moghbazar where she was raped, they said.

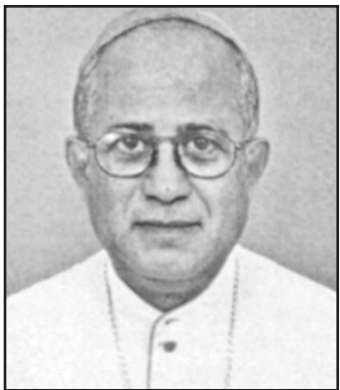
"Rahman also warned her not to disclose the incident," said an employee.

But she got pregnant and had an abortion at the hospital on May 16. She also complained to the authorities, prompting them to suspend Rahman.

However, the hospital director reinstated him recently, sparking a wave of protests.

The agitated employees went back to their work at 3:00pm after the authorities informed them that a three-member probe committee has been formed and it would submit the report today.

When contacted, the director declined to comment on the issue.



Paulinus Costa made new Archbishop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bishop Paulinus Costa has been appointed as the new Archbishop of Catholic Christian Community of the country.

Pope Benedict the Sixteenth of Vatican announced the name of Bishop Paulinus as the Archbishop of Dhaka on July 9, says a press release.

He has replaced Archbishop Michael Rozario.

Paulinus Costa, 69, had been the bishop of Rajshahi Diocese since 1996.

He is also the chairman of Caritas Bangladesh and Episcopal Commission for Social Communication.

Bishop Paulinus was born at Kaliganj upazila under Gaziupur district on October 19, 1936. He completed his matriculation from Bandura Holy Cross High School of Nawabganj and intermediate from Notre Dame College.

He did his PhD in Theology from an Italian University in 1983.

The Christian Community has congratulated him on his appointment as the fourth Archbishop of Dhaka.

Corruption main hurdle to poverty alleviation

Saape members tell press confce

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Corruption and higher defence expenditure seriously impede poverty alleviation efforts in the South Asian region, said speakers at a press conference in the city yesterday.

They said the issue of corruption in the seven South Asian countries came up as a recurrent topic of discussion at the third annual general meeting (AGM) of the South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (Saape) held in Kandy, Sri Lanka, recently.

The Saape members presented the strategies adopted at the AGM at the press conference held at the National Press Club.

The AGM and a regional workshop organised by Saape identified five major roadblocks to poverty alleviation in the region. These are lack of food security for common people, gender inequality, lack of workers' rights, arms race and absence of good governance, said Saape member Mohiuddin Ahmad.

Common people must have food security and sovereignty to choose their foods," said Rezaul

Karin Chowdhury of Supra, an NGO. "It is not acceptable that the developed world will define the types of food for the poor and apply biological approach to poverty reduction."

Neo-liberal economic policy of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organisation is responsible for the increase in poverty in South Asia while the developed world is trying to deny people's food sovereignty, turning the poor countries into dumping ground of genetically modified (GM) foods, Chowdhury said.

A total of 1.4 billion people, that make up 22.2 percent of the world population, live in the seven South Asian countries -- Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, said the Saape members.

One-third of the population or 433 million people are compelled to live an ultra-poor life while 328 million people are malnourished, 205 million are deprived of safe drinking water and 614 million have no access to sanitation facility, they said.

The Saape, an alliance of civil society members, professionals and non-government organisations, was established in 2001 with an aim to build a poverty-free and just society.

Saape members former ambassador Waliur Rahman, Masroor-ul Haq, Bir Uttam, and Prof Gitara Nasreen of Dhaka University were present at the press conference.



PHOTO: STAR

Former ambassador Waliur Rahman, a member of the South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication, speaks at a press conference at the National Press Club yesterday.

Dhaka Zoo contractors threaten to stop food supply

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The animals and birds at the Dhaka National Zoo might face another food crisis as the authorities failed to pay the outstanding bills amounting to Tk 1.35 crore to the contractors engaged in food supply.

Earlier, the contractors stopped supply on June 5 demanding payment of their arrears keeping the animals unfed for over 30 hours.

The zoo authorities at a meeting with the suppliers sought time till June 16 to pay their outstanding bills.

The suppliers at the meeting threatened that they would stop supplying food

if their demand was not met by June 17. But the authorities have failed to keep their words again.

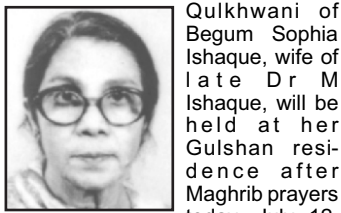
One food supplier it is not possible for them to continue the food supply by their own money.

"We will be compelled to stop food supply if the authorities further failed to keep their promise," he headed.

Curator of the zoo Mafizur Rahman said it would take more time to pay the outstanding bill, as they are yet to get money from authorities concerned.

He, however, hoped that they would be able to pay the bill by July 17.

Qulkhwani



Qulkhwani of Begum Sophia Ishaque, wife of late Dr M Ishaque, will be held at her Gulshan residence after Maghrib prayers today, July 12,

says a press release.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are kindly requested to attend the qulkhwani and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Masum's killing

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take revenge on the family or they might have killed him on the basis of 'misleading information'.

Still reeling from the shock, the family members of the slain student alleged that a Tk 26.9 lakh money suit brought by Masum's father against a union parishad (UP) chairman and some police officials might be the reason behind the killing.

Masum's father Khandaker Abul Khaer filed the case on October 17, 2001 against the chairman, two officers-in-charge (OCs) of Charfashion Police Station, a Sub-Inspector (SI), and three others with a Bhola court.

"The hearing on the deposition of the last prosecution witness is scheduled for July 25 and the verdict is expected to be delivered soon," Khaer told The Daily Star.

A retired UN official-turned-businessman, Khaer said he included the policemen as accused along with Nilkomol UP Chairman Iqbal Hossain Likhon, as they did not take action against the chairman and his men for damaging on several occasions his vehicles and goods.

Inspector Moshleh Uddin, his successor Forkan Shikder, and SI Abdus Sattar did not even take a case against the chairman.

The police had identified Masum as 'Gharkata Masum', and claimed that he was accused in four murder cases. But they have yet to come up with any specific evidence or records to substantiate the claim though three days have passed since the killing.

The police claim appears even flimsier after an investigation by The Daily Star, which reveals that Masum's name was not included even in the FIRs (first information report) of those cases.

Police said Alamgir Malik, arrested in connection with a double-murder in 2003 on Dhaka University campus, recently gave statement to a magistrate under 164 of Criminal Procedure Code, mentioning one Masum as accused. He told the magistrate that six people including he and Masum were involved in four murders.

The police claim and Alamgir's confessional statement raised doubts as Alamgir could not even mention Masum's full name in the statement.

Meanwhile, attempts by the police to establish Masum as an infamous criminal are still on. The public relations section of the DB yesterday supplied to reporters some papers they claimed to be of cases against Masum. But none of those contains any official signature.

The locals of Shershah Suri Road area said Masum was modest and polite, and they never found him to be in company of local hoodlums. His sister Shimul Khandaker said she wonders how come her brother be a criminal when most of the time he would confine himself to the boundary of their house.

She said he secured first division both in Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinations. A student of honours in management, Masum was supposed to sit the first year final examinations on July 28.

IFJ concerned over violence against journos

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) expressed concern over "brute" assault of 10 journalists by the National Security Intelligence (NSI) forces on Thursday.

The IFJ condemned the acts of the NSI and urged the Bangladesh government to bring the perpetrators to justice.

IFJ in a statement yesterday said the problem began when members of the NSI physically attacked Sheikh Enamul Kabir as he took photographs of political graffiti that was written on the boundary wall of the NSI complex at Segunbagicha July 7.

He was then arrested and taken to custody with another colleague, Sheikh Mamun, who had also been assaulted for objecting to Kabir's arrest.

In response, a group of 15 to 20 journalists from various publications assembled outside the NSI headquarters to protest. It is alleged that the NSI personnel attacked the group with bamboo sticks and iron rods, leaving 10 protesters injured, two of them critically.

"To prevent a journalist from doing his job through physical intimidation is a low act in itself. Attacking a group of protesters exercising their right to freedom of expression is absolutely deplorable," said IFJ President Christopher Warren.

Local members of the media community have been outraged by the attacks.

In response, hundreds of journalists staged a sit-in in front of the National Press Club on July 8. The protesters demanded that the NSI members responsible for the attacks be punished and the victims of the attack be duly compensated.

"In another blow to media freedom in Bangladesh, warrants for arrest were issued against the editors of two Bengali-language daily newspapers in a defamation suit filed by a member of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)," the statement said.

"The Bangladeshi government should heed the simple message of our campaign - don't jail journalists," he said.

US academician defends embedded journalism

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

American journalists were free to gather and write news during the Iraq war although they were embedded with the US-led joint forces, said US Professor Janet E Steele at a discussion in the city yesterday.

"I do not think embedded journalism tarnished the image of journalism, rather the way the reporters organised the stories can be criticised," said Janet, an associate professor of School of Media and Public Affairs of George Washington University.

The discussion on 'Embedded Journalism in the Context of Iraq war' was organised by the Press Institute of Bangladesh at its auditorium.

Defending embedded journalism, she said, "It is not the fault of government or military, rather it was the fault of the journalists who covered it."

She claimed that the torture on the prisoners Abu Ghraib prison by the US soldiers was revealed as the journalists got the information from some military persons.

Janet said there is a misconception about embedded journalism, a term used for the first time during Iraq war in 2003.

"I think embedded journalism is probably better than other alternative. The people in the US were interested to know what the US troops were doing in Iraq. So without being embedded with the troops, it was difficult to gather news," she opined.

Obituary

UNB, Dhaka



Aminul Islam, former chief engineer of the then WAPDA, passed away due to respiratory problem yesterday at the Birdem Hospital at the age of 85.

After completing graduation from Shibpur Engineering College in Kolkata in 1946, Aminul Islam joined the Irrigation Department, the Government of India.

In his long career, he joined WAPDA after the partition of India and was later elevated to Chief Engineer of the organisation.

His quikhwani will be held at his family residence at Asad Avenue in the city on July 14.

ABM Siddique



a press release.

He left behind his wife, one son and daughter to mourn his death.

He was laid to rest at his family graveyard in Kosba under

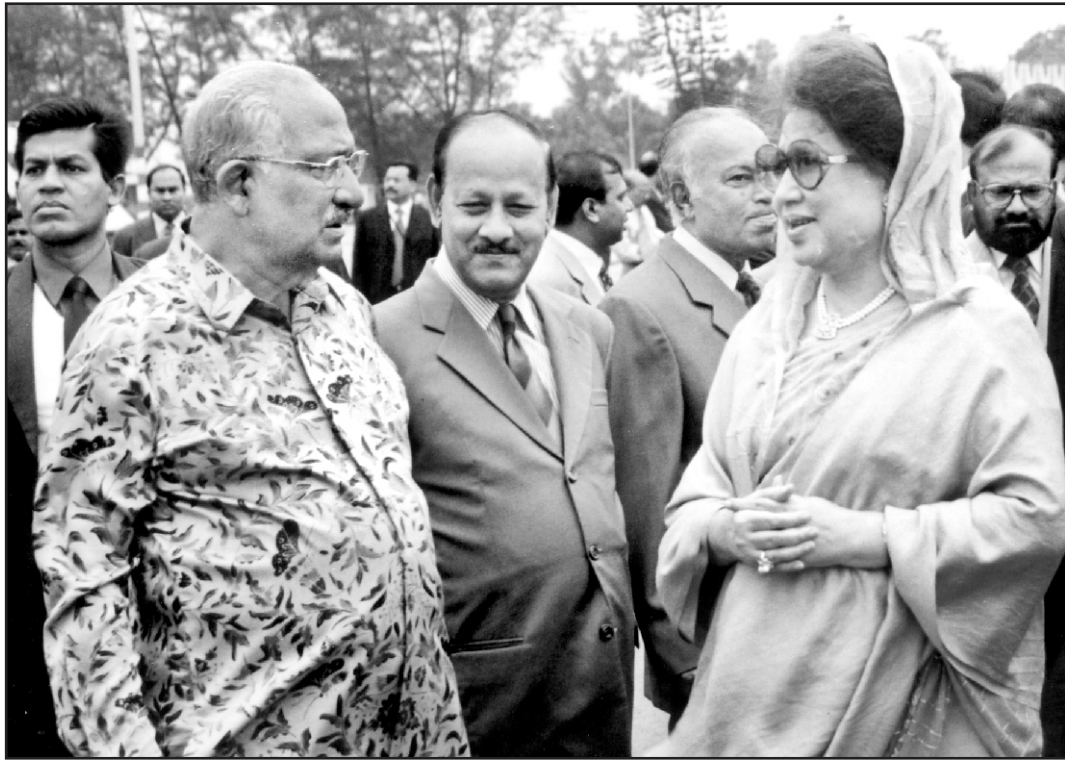


PHOTO: PID

Cabinet members see Prime Minister Khaleda Zia off at Zia International Airport in the city yesterday prior to her departure for Japan on a five-day official visit.

792 women killed in three months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 792 women were killed and 766 others injured in different incidents across the country in last three months, says a survey report of Mass Line Media Centre (MMC).

The report, which was released yesterday, said a total of 2052 incidents of human rights violation of women took place during the period, but only 635 cases were filed and 471 people arrested in this connection.

The report was prepared on the basis of stories published in 12 national dailies and 195 local newspapers published from different districts.

Information Centre to Enhance Women and Child Rights Issue of MMC conducted the survey funded by Manusher Jonno, a non-government organisation.

A total of 299 women were

raped and 62 others killed after rape during the period. In Rajshahi alone, 87 rape incidents took place.

Besides, 104 women were the victims of sexual harassment. Only 28 cases were filed and 17 were arrested in this connection.

Some 264 women were victimised for dowry. Of them, 143 were killed and 121 others injured.

The report also showed that 208 women committed suicide, 48 became the victims of acid throwing, 58 were kidnapped, 74 trafficked and 13 were the victims of Fatwa.

This was revealed at a newspaper research report conducted by the Information Centre to Enhance Women and Child Right Issues of Mass Line Media Centre (MMC), funded by the donor consortium Manusher Jonno (MJ).



PHOTO: STAR

Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil signs the condolence book in memory of the victims of London bomb blasts at the residence of British High Commissioner in the city yesterday while AL presidium member Zillur Rahman and British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury look on.

Cancel new exam rules

Demand docs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Post-Graduate Doctors' Association (PGDA) on Sunday demanded cancellation of the new rules for examinations of Masters of Surgery and Doctors of Medicine, saying that many students will be deprived of the degree due to such regulations.

The authorities have introduced new rules that allows a student to sit for the exams only for four times, instead of eight times, narrowing down the chances of a pass in the exam, said Association President Prof Quazi Shahidul Alam and Secretary General Dr Rakibul Islam in a statement.

They also threatened to launch a movement if the new rules are not withdrawn.

Several hundred students now face uncertainty as they could not take part in the examination, the leaders said.

Tributes paid to Sitara Parvin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a condolence meeting on Sunday paid rich tributes to Sitara Parvin, a former professor of mass communications and journalism department of Dhaka University, saying that the country needs persons like Sitara who was very meritorious and intelligent, but never ran after publicity.

The speakers, comprising journalists, teachers and students of the department, said the soul of Sitara will rest in peace if her qualities are followed by us.

They said at present where all are busy to show off themselves, Sitara was totally different although she had everything to do that.

The society needs dedicated personalities like Sitara," they added.

Moderated by Prof Golam Rahman, the meeting at the National Press Club was addressed by Prof Shakhawat Ali Khan, Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, Prof Ahaduzzaman Mohammad Ali, journalist Mijrurul Ahsan Bulbul, NIMC Director Mahbubur Rahman, Mass-line Media Center (MMC) executive director Quamrul Hasan Monju and journalist Mohitul Islam Ronju. The mass communication and journalism department and MMC organised the condolence meeting.

'Set up Biswa Vedic University at Sitakunda'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Jatiya Hindu Parishad yesterday called on the government to set up Biswa Vedic University at Sitakunda in Chittagong.

The Sitakunda Shrine Committee has long been trying to establish the university with a view to creating opportunity for advanced study in philosophy and science and many scholars have shown their interest in its efforts, said Parishad President Prem Ranjan Deb in a statement.

The committee has already formed a panel of reputed researchers and professors from home and abroad in this end, he said.

"The university, if established, would also brighten the image of the country," he added.

Khulna journos' protest today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna Metropolitan Union of Journalists (KMUJ) will hold a mass rally on the press club premises at 3.00pm today demanding immediate arrest of culprits involved in the murder of journalist Shaikh Belaluddin and their exemplary punishment.