

Acid-burnt victim cries for justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A housewife, who received acid-burn injuries allegedly by her former teacher in Bogra on November 9 for refusing his indecent proposal, has demanded immediate punishment to culprit.

The victim Taslima Akter Shilpi, 20, of Bhoronshahi village under Dhunat thana was admitted to one-stop crisis centre (OCC) of Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) on Wednesday for better treatment.

Taslima told The Daily Star yesterday that on November 9 when she was sleeping in her father-in-law's house at Bhoronshahi village, an unidentified person knocked the closed door of her room at about 9:00pm to inform her that her father was seriously ill and her mother had asked her to go home at once.

As she opened the door, her teacher Shawkat Ali, who was standing there, threw acid on her face, neck and wrist and fled the scene.

Hearing her scream, the mother-in-law and others came to the scene and rushed her to Dhunat thana health complex.

Shawkat, a teacher of Sonamukhi Primary School, made the attack along with his three accomplices, the victim said.

"Of them, I could recognise only Chan Miah, a friend of Shawkat," she added.

While Taslima was a student, Shawkat tried to have an affair with her in vain. So he proposed to marry her, but this proposal was also rejected.

Meanwhile she got married to a driver of a CNG-run three-wheeler.

The dejected teacher also made an attempt to rape her, she alleged.

"My husband Farazul Islam filed a case with Dhunat Police Station against Shawkat and his friends Chan Miah and Idris in this regard," she said.

At this, the teacher warned them of dire consequences including acid-attack if they do not withdraw the case, Taslima said.

Later, another case was filed against them for throwing acid on her, said the husband.

Police are yet to arrest any culprit.

RU Bangla deptt celebrates golden jubilee today

RU CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Bangla, Rajshahi University, will celebrate its golden jubilee today in a colourful way.

In this regard, the department took a two-day programme.

The programme includes hoisting national and university flags, colourful procession of teachers and students, discussion meeting, books publication ceremony, poetry recital, reminiscence sessions, Bangla song and drama presentation, cultural programme, books exhibition and lighting of Arts Building.

Prof Dr Abdul Jalil, chairman of the department, said former RU vice chancellor Prof Dr Khan Sarwar Murshid would inaugurate the two-day golden jubilee programme as chief guest.

Bangla department was established on November 1, 1955 with Dr Muhammad Shahidullah as founding chairman.

At that time, the department started its journey with only four students and now it boasts of 500 students and 18 teachers.

Lecture series on modern instrumental techniques

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A series of lectures on modern instrumental techniques will begin in the city on November 22.

The University of Asia Pacific, Protipalok Society for Culture and Science and Water Lab Limited have jointly organised the lecture series, says a press release.

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed will inaugurate the programme at the Russian Cultural Centre. A seminar will also be held on the day.

Technical sessions will be held at the University of Asia Pacific conference room on November 26 and December 3 and 10.

Science and ICT Minister Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan will be present as chief guest at the closing ceremony on December 12.

Journo Goutam cremated

BSS, Faridpur

Goutam Das, Faridpur bureau chief of the Samakal, who was strangled by unknown assailants on Thursday, was cremated at his village Chandni Dashi under Bhanga upazila yesterday.

Goutam Das, 30, was strangled at his office in Faridpur town.

Earlier, his body was kept in the mortuary of local diabetic hospital.

Editor of the Daily Samakal Golam Sarwar visited Faridpur on Thursday night to pay homage to the slain journalist.

Publisher of Samakal A K Azad urged the journalists and members of the civil society to wage a movement demanding arrest and trial of killers.

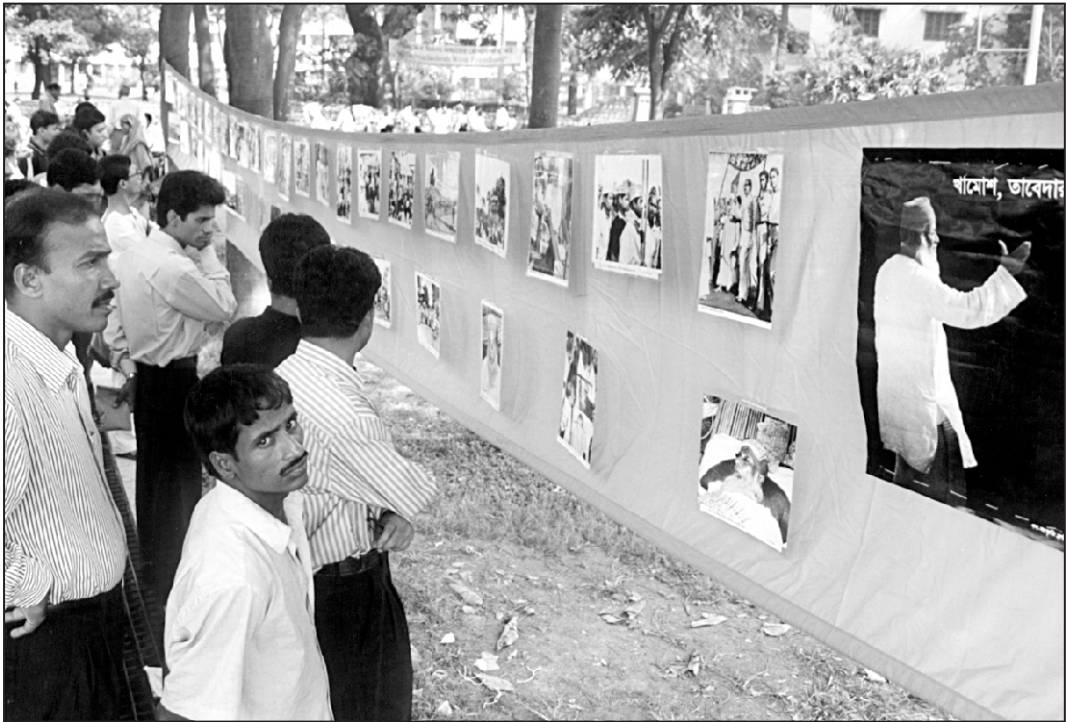


PHOTO: STAR

Bhashani Smriti Sangsad organised a photography exhibition on veteran political leader Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday to mark his 29th death anniversary.

Climate change claims 1.5 lakh lives a year

Study reveals

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Climate changes resulting from global warming is leading to at least five million cases of illness and claiming more than 150,000 lives around the world every year, said a study.

According to the report, published in the journal Nature, human-induced changes in the Earth's climate is responsible for these illness and deaths.

However, the health impacts of climate change affect different regions in markedly different ways. Ironically, the places that have contributed the least to warming the Earth are the most vulnerable to death and disease higher temperatures can bring, the report said.

A recent assessment by the World Health Organisation (WHO) reported that rich countries of the West, which have contributed the maximum to global warming, are at the least risk for enduring the health effects of climate change.

"It seems even the nature is biased towards the developed countries," the report maintained.

"Those least able to cope and least responsible for the greenhouse gases that cause global warming are most affected. Herein lies an enormous global ethical challenge," said lead researcher Jonathan Patz.

Regions at highest risk for enduring the health effects of climate change include coastlines along the Pacific

and Indian Oceans and sub-Saharan Africa.

Large sprawling cities, with their urban "heat island" effect, are also prone to temperature-related health problems. Africa has some of the lowest per capita emissions of greenhouse gases. Yet, regions of the continent are gravely at risk for warming-related disease.

"Many of the most important diseases in poor countries, from malaria to diarrhoea and malnutrition, are highly sensitive to climate. The health sector is already struggling to control these diseases and climate change threatens to undermine these efforts," said co-researcher Diarmid Campbell-Lendrum.



PHOTO: STAR

Revolutionary leader Binod Bihari Chowdhury speaks at a rally in Chittagong yesterday, organised by the Bangladesh Hindu Bouddha Christian Oikya Parishad to mark the 2nd anniversary of Banshkhali carnage.

Pakistan pins quake recovery hopes on donors' confce

APP, Islamabad

The future of Pakistan's earthquake survivors hinges on an international donors' conference that begins here today.

Thousands could be left without shelter to help them survive the Himalayan winter unless foreign

donors produce the money to help them, aid agencies warned ahead of the meeting.

Even if they survive the snow, which has already begun falling in parts of quake-hit northern Pakistan, their longer-term future also depends on the international community's financial support.

"Long-term relief and reconstruction would mean creation of new cities to relocate people before their cities can be rebuilt. This can take any time between one year to five years," foreign ministry spokeswoman Tasnim Aslam told AFP.

The United Nations has still only received about a quarter of its \$50-million-dollar emergency appeal for aid over the next six months, vital to get food and shelter to people before the bitter winter.

Long-term, Pakistan needs about 5.2 billion dollars and is pinning the hopes on Saturday's conference.

For the short-term relief and rehabilitation it has received pledges of 2.46 billion out of which only 211.2 million has been received, according to government officials.

"It will be a ministerial-level conference and around 50 countries have been invited," Aslam said. A foreign ministry statement said 25 nations had confirmed their attendance.

In addition, about 30 international organisations and 15 international financial institutions are also to attend the gathering, which is due to open at 8:00 am (0300 GMT) at Islamabad's Convention Centre.

Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf will unveil a strategy on plans to handle the mammoth task of rehabilitation of the victims, and reconstruction of infrastructure devastated by the October 8 earthquake in the country's northern regions.

The quake killed more than 73,000 people in Pakistan, left 3.5 million homeless, and also killed more than 1,300 in India.

Expected progress yet not achieved in specialised health services: Mosharraf

UNB, Dhaka

Health Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain yesterday said expected progress could not be achieved in the country's specialised health services as 60 per cent of the total annual allocation of the sector spent on primary healthcare.

The minister made the remarks while addressing the inaugural function of a four-day international seminar on Eye-Nose-Throat (ENT) at a city hotel.

Over 300 specialists, including 27 of international repute, from USA, UK, Netherlands, and Pakistan and took part in the seminar organised by Society of Autolaryngologist and Head Neck Surgeon of Bangladesh.

The Health Minister stressed the need for inclusion of ENT-related matters in primary healthcare activities.

Referring to treatment facilities of complicated ENT diseases in Bangladesh, he urged the organisation to take a complete plan, including development of human resources, for further development of the sector.

Presided over by society president Alauddin, secretary general of International Federation of Autolaryngologist Society Prof Jan J Grote, BMA president MA Hadi and Salimullah Medical College Principal Prof M Abdullah, among others, addressed the function.

BANSHKHALI CARNAGE

Arrest of perpetrators demanded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, Chittagong unit, at a rally yesterday demanded immediate arrest and punishment to the perpetrators of Banshkhali carnage that left 11 members of a minority Hindu family dead in Banshkhali on November 19, 2003.

The leaders at the rally, chaired by revolutionary personality Binod Bihari Chowdhury, accused UP Chairman Aminur Rahman Chowdhury, also cousin of local lawmaker and state minister for forests and environment Jafrul Islam Chowdhury, as the mastermind of gruesome carnage.

They demanded measures to bring all the criminals involved in the incident to justice and protested 'ongoing' oppression on the religious minorities in the country.

Council leader advocate Rana Das Gupta, former president of Chittagong District Lawyers' Association advocate Saiful Azam, Mohila Parishad leader Bijoy Laksmi Devi and Tegengra Lal Shil's family member Nirmal Shil, addressed on the occasion.

Obituary

BSS, Chittagong

Obidur Rahman Chowdhury, a social worker of Satkania upazila and father of Shahjahan Chowdhury MP, died of old-age complications at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) Hospital in Dhaka on Thursday night at the age of 85.

Family sources said he had been suffering from different complicated diseases including heart and kidney ailments for a long time.

Earlier, Obidur Rahman was admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital and later he was shifted to BSMMU Hospital for better treatment.

Obidur Rahman is survived by five sons, one daughter and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

Death anniversary



Today is the first death anniversary of Dr Selina Akhter, mother of Dr Capt. (Retd.) Mosharraf Hossain, secretary of Sandhani Life Insurance Company Ltd., says a press release.

A milad mahfil will be held at her house at 97 Dinnath Sen Road after Asr prayers.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the milad.

Mohammad Hossain



The first death anniversary of Mohammad Hossain, a former research officer at the planning ministry, will be observed today, says a press release.

He was the youngest son of late Kazimuddin Mollah of village Maligaon in Kachua, Chandpur.

Well-wishers are requested to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

'One eye specialist for every 2 lakh people in Bangladesh'

BSS, Chittagong

The ratio of ophthalmologists and population in Bangladesh is 1:200,000, which means that there is only one eye expert for every two lakh people in the country.

Dr M Khairul Islam, country director of Orbis in Bangladesh, disclosed this at a press briefing and said 300 ophthalmologists, out of around 700, are stationed in four big cities.

Quoting a 2003 survey jointly conducted by a UK-based medical institute and the National Institute of Ophthalmology in Bangladesh, Dr Khairul said 1.53 percent of the population aged over 30 years have been suffering from blindness.

The press briefing was held on the occasion of the second visit of Orbis Flying Eye Hospital in the port city to launch a two-week humanitarian mission titled "Orbis Plane Programme Chittagong-2005".

The objective of the Orbis mission is to provide expertise and knowledge to the local ophthalmologists and nurses side by side with practical training through giving direct treatment to local patients suffering from complicated eye diseases.

The DC-10 aircraft-turned-flying

hospital with necessary apparatus for ophthalmology treatment and surgery flew in here from Ethiopia on Thursday.

The two-week programme starting on Sunday is the Orbis's 9th Plane Programme in Bangladesh as part of their worldwide humanitarian mission in the field of ophthalmology.

"We hope that we will in two weeks have a better understanding of blindness and an increased capacity of our hosts to address issues related to the treatment and prevention of blindness," said Drew Boshell, director of Flying Eye Hospital.

The press conference was also addressed by Chairman of the Orbis Plane Programme Organising Committee Dr Rabiul Hossain, Dr Gordon Douglas, and President of Ophthalmologic Society of Bangladesh (OSB) Dr SM Tareq.

The Chittagong Eye Infirmary and Training Complex (CEITC) and the OSB, Chittagong chapter, are co-sponsoring the programme with the support of the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism.

Besides treatment and carrying out surgery on some select patients, the Orbis team will hold training, lectures, symposia, computerised simulator

and surgical demonstrators for 150 participants, including 64 ophthalmologists of the country.

A multi-national staff team of Orbis from the USA, the UK and Ireland will conduct the programme that includes surgical management of corneal diseases, cornea transplantation, diabetic retinal condition and peadiatric cataract and squint.

"Unfortunately unnecessary blindness is often not seen as a priority and, as a result, over 27 million people in the world today are blind because of lack of treatment and awareness," Drew Boshell said, adding that Bangladesh has one of the highest rate of blindness in the world.

"This is what we want to change and we are also striving to reach the WHO Vision 2020 Objectives of eradicating unnecessary blindness," he said.

Dr Rabiul Hossain said most of the eye-related diseases become complicated due to lack of awareness and early treatment.

He said the media and other public and private organisations could play a vital role in creating awareness among the people.



PHOTO: STAR

Orbis Flying Eye Hospital Director Drew Boshell speaks at a press conference in Chittagong yesterday.

Housewife beaten to death for dowry

UNB, Chandpur

A young housewife was beaten to death allegedly by her husband for dowry at Bhingulia village in Haimchar upazila early Thursday.

The victim was identified as Amena Aktar, 18, wife of Dulal Dhali. Family sources said Dulal often tortured Amena for more and more dowry money since their marriage

few years ago although Amena's father gave him Tk 70,000 in dowry.

During a quarrel on the day, Dulal beat her mercilessly up, leaving her dead on the spot, they said.

Receiving information, police rushed to the spot and sent the body to hospital morgue for autopsies.

Dulal went into hiding soon after the incident. A murder case has been filed.



PHOTO: STAR

Olama Mashayekh Samannay Parishad stages a demonstration in front of the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque in the city after Juma prayers yesterday demanding fixing of airfare for non-ballottee Hajj pilgrims at \$950.

**Discussion on Bhashani**

To mark the 29th death anniversary of Mawlana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, Bhashni Parishad will hold a discussion on 'Politics and terrorism in the name of religion: Today's context' with Badruddin Omar as keynote speaker. Venue: Business faculty auditorium, DU.

**Discussion on war**

A discussion on the book titled 'Bangladesh Wins Freedom' by Musa Sadiq, war correspondent of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra, will be held. Venue: Hotel Sundarban. Time: 11:00am.

**Discussion on Indira**

Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Kalyan Foundation organises a discussion to celebrate the birthday of Indira Gandhi,

former prime minister of India. Venue: Liberation War Museum, Segunbagicha. Time: 3:30pm.

**Roundtable on cell phone**

Citizens' Rights Movement organises a roundtable on 'Exorbitant connection and call charges of cell phones: The socio-economic context of Bangladesh'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 1:15pm.

**Children's rally**

Dhakabashi will hold a children's rally to mark the International Child Week. Venue: Bangladesh Shishu Academy. Time: 3:20pm.

**Literary meeting**

Bangladesh Lekhok Samity organises their monthly literary meeting. Venue: 125 Motijheel. Time: 4:00pm.