

REFUSAL TO PAY TOLL

Shibir cadres beat bank officer, 2 RU students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Islami Chhatra Shibir cadres have beaten up a senior officer of the Agrani Bank in Khulna and two students at Rajshahi University in separate incidents for refusing to pay toll.

In Khulna, bank officer Abdul Mannan, also a freedom fighter, was severely injured in the attack on Wednesday. The cadres demanded Tk 5000 from him on the occasion of Siratunnabi Mahfil to be held in the city today with Maulana Delwar Hossain Saidee MP as chief guest.

Shibir cadres Moshtaque Ahmed, 24, and Sarwar Hossain, 25, attacked Mannan while he was going to his bank at Shamsur Rahman Road from the Agrani Bank Colony at Gallamari at around 9:00am.

As the two cadres tried to flee, other residents of the colony caught hold of them. Amob also beat up the two.

Later, the Shibir cadres made apologies to the banker and left the place.

Although police was informed of the incident, they did not turn up at the

scene.

Shibir cadre Moshtaque is a student of Khulna University while Sarwar studies in Daulatpur Govt. BL College.

Our RU Correspondent adds: Islamic Chhatra Shibir (ICS) cadres beat two students of Rajshahi University (RU) Suhrawardy Hall on Tuesday night for refusing to pay toll.

The students are Shahinur Islam Jewel, a 3rd year student of Bangla department, and Russell, a 3rd year student of political science department.

A resident student said Shibir cadres Helal and Iqbal came to Room No. # 314 and demanded Tk 100 and handed over a receipt to Jewel, saying that they are collecting money for a three-day grand rally of Shibir workers to be held on December 30.

As Jewel refused to pay toll, they were locked in an altercation with him. The cadres then took Jewel to their hall unit secretary's room and beat him

with broken chairs. Russell tried to resist them but he was also beaten up.

There are allegations that the Shibir activists have been collecting toll from university halls, nearby business centres, restaurants and shops for their rally.

They also went to the teachers' lounge and the administrative officers' room to collect toll. They have set up several camps on the campus to collect toll from the students.

Many students and student organisations have protested the move and informed the proctor of it. But the university authorities did not take any step in this regard.

When contacted, RU Shibir General Secretary Rokon Uddin denied the allegations, saying that all are willing to pay something for the rally.

Country Strategy Plan launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Plan Bangladesh, an international non-government organisation, has launched its five-year Country Strategy Plan (CSP) for the development of socio-economic status of the marginal and vulnerable people, specially the children.

The Country Strategy Plan for 2005-2010 was presented at a programme at BARI auditorium in Gazipur on Wednesday, with Additional Deputy Commissioner Abdul Latif in the chair.

Deputy Commissioner of Gazipur M Fazle Rabbi was present as chief guest while Country Director of Plan Bangladesh Edward Thomas Espey spoke as a special guest.

Thomas Espey said the current CSP has been designed to further promote the participation of children and strengthen local government while up-scaling pilot programmes at local and national levels through partnership.



Sheri-Nouane Johnson, deputy director, Population, Health and Nutrition office, USAID, speaks at the inaugural ceremony of a delivery service centre of CREA-FHI HIV Prevention Project at Lalbagh in the city recently.

CREA PROJECT

Service delivery centre opens

The Society for Community-health Rehabilitation Education and Awareness (CREA) opened a service delivery centre for treatment and rehabilitation of marginalised injecting drug users at Lalbagh in the city on Tuesday, says a press release.

The centre was opened as part of the CREA-FHI HIV prevention project.

"The knowledge and information on HIV/Aids is increasing among the stakeholders but intervention is still very low in our country, said Prof Nazrul Islam, chairman of the virology department of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University at the inaugural ceremony.

With the financial assistance of USAID and the technical support of FHI, Bangladesh, three organisations are providing comprehensive treatment and rehabilitation facilities for the drug addicts who are at risk of contracting HIV and STI.

Speaking on the occasion, Sheri-Nouane Johnson, deputy director, Population, Health and Nutrition Office of USAID, stressed the need

for greater involvement and coordination among different govt non-government organisations, gatekeepers of community and donors for the sustainability and success of HIV intervention projects in Bangladesh.

Presided over by CREA Chairperson Tarun Kanti Gayen, the inaugural ceremony was also addressed by Prof Mahmudur Rahman of Dhaka University, and Dr Robert Kelly, country director of Family Health International.