

Abducted job seeker rescued in city, one held

DMCH CORRESPONDENT

Detective Branch police rescued an abducted youth from a house at Circular Road in the city yesterday and arrested a member of the gang involved in the kidnapping.

Saiful Hossain Milton, a 25-year-old youth who came to Dhaka from Comilla for a job interview, was abducted on December 1 from North Circular Road. The gang then demanded a ransom of Tk 3 lakh from his father, Md Anwar Hossain, a retired officer of the Air Force.

His father informed the police who used some tactics to track down the abductors. According to the advice of the police, his father bargained with the kidnappers over phone and agreed to pay Tk 2 lakh as ransom.

As per direction of the gang, Milton's family members met a member of the gang near the Ananda Cinema at Farmgate at 11:00am yesterday. Soon a team of police who were waiting nearby swooped on the abductor who identified himself as Palash Mia, 25.

During an interrogation, Palash confessed to the abduction and later showed the house where Milton has been kept confined.

Police then raided the house and rescued the victim from the fourth floor of the house.

Save country

B Chy urges people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) President Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday called upon people to save the country by being imbued with the spirit of the liberation war.

He was speaking at a function organised on the occasion of joining the BDB by hundreds of leaders and workers of BNP, Awami League and Workers' Party of Rajshahi Metropolitan unit at K C Memorial Clinic in the city.

Prof Chowdhury said without the good will of the government it is not possible to check militancy.

The government must expel the 'accused ministers' from the cabinet and put them to trial to prove its sincerity, he added.

BDB Vice-president Dr Mozaffar Ahmed, Advocate Joyнал Abedin Zaedi and Joint Organising Secretary Abdur Rauf Mannan also spoke on the occasion.

Channel-S TV to air programme in Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A London-based private television channel plans to expand telecast of its programme to Bangladesh from next month.

The Channel-S TV will air the programme in Bangladesh and other countries of South Asia, South East Asia and Middle East from January 15.

The Bangla language TV channel was established by Mahee Ferdous Jalil, a leading expatriate Bangladeshi businessman in London, on December 16, 2004.

The channel, which has got much popularity among the Bangalee community in Europe, is now telecasting its programme in West Europe, West Asia and North Africa mainly for Bangladeshis living over there.

Beside news, the channel will telecast talk show, current affairs, children and entertainment programme from Bangladesh, said a press release.

Earlier on November 30, the management of Channel-S hosted a reception at Sheraton Hotel on the occasion of its first anniversary and expansion of its satellite footprint to South Asia and Middle East.

Ministers, MPs, senior journalists and elite of the city attended the reception.

M Mozammel Hoq, former press secretary to the prime minister, joined the channel as vice-chairman and editorial chief.

RU controversial staffs demand job confirmation

RU CORRESPONDENT

Several hundred controversially appointed employees of Rajshahi University (RU) yesterday staged a demonstration in front of the administration building and demanded immediate confirmation of their jobs.

They also met RU Pro Vice-Chancellor Prof Mamnunul Karamat at his office and asked about their job status.

Later, the 544 employees, led by Okya Parishad Convenor Rafiqul Islam Sabar, held a protest meeting in front of Shabbas Bangladesh premises.

They threatened to launch tougher agitation along with their wives and children if the authorities do not confirm their jobs by December 15.

Masud Rana, joint convener of the Parishad, told this correspondent that RU authorities took much time to confirm our jobs but we cannot give more time.

Abdur Rahim, an employee, said that university authorities would be held responsible if any untoward incident occurs on the campus after December 15.

Help build safe Bangladesh

Hasina tells professionals, intellectuals

UNB, Dhaka

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina yesterday sought all-out cooperation of patriotic citizens, including the professionals and intellectuals, in building a safe Bangladesh for the prosperity by uprooting militancy and all evil designs against the country.

"There is no alternative to the unity of all citizens against extremist communal forces and their patrons and plunderers. Everyone should come up alongside the politicians to motivate the nation," she told leaders of Peshajibi Samonaya Parishad when they met her at her Sudha Sadan residence.

Hasina said the country and the nation are now passing through a critical time and the country's independence and sovereignty are at

stake.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Hasina yesterday strongly denounced the attempt on the life of Sylhet City Mayor Badruddin Ahmed Qumran saying the extremist communal outfits patronised by the government carried out the attack.

In a statement, she said these communal outfits had also tried to kill the popular leader in the past but the government protected them instead of taking action.

"Where is the safety of the country's common people when the government fails to ensure the security of a person of State Minister's status?" she asked.

Expressing grave concern at the growing militancy, Hasina said the government wants to push the country into a dark tunnel. "This is an undeclared war against the

country's people although it took oath to protect them," she observed.

"Now there is no doubt in public mind that the government is the mastermind and the patron of the militants. Ouster of this alliance regime is the only way to rid the country and the nation of these evil forces," the AL president said in her statement.

She said the government, even of late, has recognised the presence of militants in the country, even then it continues to protect the extremists.

The AL chief urged the people irrespective of their political affiliations to come up to save the country and the nation.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Law Student Parishad forms a human chain in front of the Supreme Court in the city yesterday to protest the killing of two judges and bomb attacks across the country.

‘Healthy debate can end crisis over unified edn system’

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country is facing a crisis over the 'unified education system' to be introduced at the secondary level from January, said the speakers at the inaugural session of a debate competition in the city yesterday.

They said a healthy debate on the issue can help show the right way to overcome the crisis.

The debate competition was organised by Bangladesh Debate Federation (BDF) at the German Cultural Centre in the city.

The BDF organised the debate titled 'Inter-University Human Rights Debate Championship

2005' ahead of the International Human Rights Day on December 10.

Speaking as chief guest at the inaugural session, Prof Serajul Islam said a topic like human rights is rarely picked up for a debate competition.

"I appreciate the organiser for choosing this kind of issue for a debate competition," he added.

Prof Islam said, "We have to understand the human rights issue from the core of our heart."

Speaking at the concluding session, Prof Md Jafar Iqbal said, "Though the country had achieved first position in corruption for five

times, we must always keep in mind that there are 98 percent good people in our country."

"We shall have to disseminate the information that the power of 98 percent people is more stronger than two percent corrupt people, and this initiative will have to be taken by the young debaters," he added.

Eight universities took part in the debate championship.

These are Dhaka University, Jahangirnagar University, Chittagong University, Khulna University, Rajshahi University, Bangladesh Agricultural University, Barisal Medical College and Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Sylhet.

Of them, Dhaka University and Shahjalal University of Science and Technology have been selected for the final round which will be held at the Chittagong centre of the Institutions of Engineers, Bangladesh on December 10.

Susan Ward of the Academy for Educational Development (AED) and Bangladesh Human Rights Advocacy Programme (BHRAP) also spoke at the inaugural session presided over by BDF President Bulbul Hasan.

AL not eager to resist bombers: Bhuiyan

UNB, Shibpur

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday criticised Awami League for its rejection of offer for dialogue on terrorism, saying it proves that they are not willing to resist bombers and terrorists.

"Rather, they (AL) want to fish in the troubled water," he told a public meeting at Lakhpur Road crossing in Dupailpur union under Shibpur upazila.

Bhuiyan, also LGRD and Cooperatives Minister, said the

bombers and terrorists are enemies of the country and development. He said it is the responsibility of all irrespective of party politics and opinion to eliminate the terrorists from the society.

He called on the people to get united against terrorism and bomb attacks to ensure the development.

"BNP believes in politics of production. Whenever BNP came to power, the country achieved massive development while during the Awami League rule, development process was hampered," he said.

Bhuiyan, Khoka condemn grenade attack on Sylhet mayor

Bss, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday strongly condemned and protested the grenade attack on Sylhet Mayor Badruddin Ahmed Kamran on Friday night.

In a statement, Bhuiyan described the incident as heinous, cowardly and regrettable and said those who carried out the attack are the enemies of the country, democracy and humanity.

He said the government is determined to take stern action against the culprits involved in the attack.

Bhuiyan sought cooperation from all irrespective of party affiliation to track down the criminals.

He also urged the opposition political parties to cooperate with the government to arrest the attackers shunning the path of hartal and anarchy.

Mayor of Dhaka City Sadeque Hossain Khoka also condemned the attempt to kill innocent people, including Kamran by hurling a grenade at a function in Sylhet.

BOMB THREATS

Ctg cops evict hawkers from footpaths

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

As part of precaution against bomb threats, Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) started evicting hawkers from the port city's footpaths on Friday.

In last two days, police evicted over 5,000 hawkers from different footpaths of Kotwali intersection, New Market, Reazuddin Bazar, Jamal Khan, Laldighirpar, KC Dey Road, Momin Road, Agrabad Sheikh Mujib Road, Airport Road and Chittagong Port area.

They also removed all illegal structures, shops, and construction materials piled up on footpaths, much to the relief of pedestrians.

Mobile vendors from in front of different city schools and colleges were also driven away.

"It's indeed a great relief for us to find such clean footpaths," said Dr Matiu Rahman Khan of Chittagong Medical College and Hospital.

The drive will continue until the footpaths are fully free from illegal structures, mobile vendors and makeshift shops, CMP sources said.

‘Ban poisonous pesticides’

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Narigrantha Prabartana demanded that the government impose a ban on using poisonous pesticides to mark the 'No Pesticide Use Day'.

On the occasion, it organised a discussion and a protest programme in the city.

On this day in 1984 an explosion in a pesticides company named Union Carbide claimed the lives of eight thousand people at once at Bhopal in India. It also made the city a living gas chamber and millions of people are still suffering from different kinds of diseases.

The company is yet to stop its operation and did not compensate the victims. Rander Doe Company has become its new owner; speakers said demanding ban on the poisonous pesticides including Parquet, Endusulfan and others.

Later a protest was held with lighting lamps in hands joined by people irrespective of all professions.

9 injured in CU clash

CU CORRESPONDENT

Disruption of shuttle train service caused by Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) triggered a clash between the general students and the Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) men that reportedly left nine people injured here at Chittagong University (CU) yesterday.

The clash occurred when the activists of ICS CU unit intercepted a procession brought out by the agitated students to protest against police action on an earlier student demonstration.

As the procession reached near Social Science faculty, a group of ICS activists attacked the procession.

The injured included Kanchan, Ripa, Probab, Sajju, Nurul Islam Shyamal, Jahid, Zia, and Shaikat Ali. BCL is trying in vain to enforce an indefinite strike by creating obstacles to disrupt shuttle trains service at different points and detaining the loco-masters almost every day since November 23.

It called the strike demanding arrest and punishment to those involved in ransacking the teachers' rooms of Islamic History and Culture department.

Death anniversary



Today is the 34th death anniversary of Abdullahi Baki Bir Pratik, says a press release.

He embraced martyrdom in a face-to-face battle with the Pakistani force during the Liberation War on this day in 1971. He was the commander of Baki Unit (North Dhaka).

Baki was also a student of political science in Dhaka University.

Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at his house at 'Baki Bhaban' in Dhaka after Asr prayers today.

Abdul Hai Mashreki



Today is the 17th death anniversary of poet Abdul Hai Mashreki, says a press release.

A discussion and milad mahfil will be held at his village home at Ishwarganj, Mymensingh.

Poet Abdul Hai Mashreki Smriti Sangsad has also organised different programmes on the occasion.

Farida Rahman

Today is the fourth death anniversary of Farida Rahman of Kuliara in Chaudagram, Comilla, says a press release.

Her family has requested all relatives and admirers to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Take strong measures to offset climate change impacts

Bapa urges world leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environmentalists yesterday called on the world leaders and the government of Bangladesh to take strong measures to offset the impacts of climate change.

With a major international conference on climate change being held in Montreal, the Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) organised a rally and formed a human chain at Shahbagh in the city to press for their 15-point demand.

The demands include implementation of Kyoto Protocol to curb greenhouse gas emissions, end to indiscriminate felling of trees, more use of renewable energy, protection of river and canals from encroachment, restriction on use of fertiliser and pesticides and plan for sustainable disaster management.

Bapa General Secretary Mahidul Haque Khan presided over the rally. Among others, Bapa Joint Secretary Mihir Biswas, Sirajul Islam Molla, architect Iqbal Habib, Saifuddin Mahbub, Jahedur Rahman and Dr Abdul Hye Majumder spoke at the rally.

The speakers said although Bangladesh is not largely responsible for the climate change, the country will be affected most by global warming and natural catastrophe.

They urged the government to take effective measures to tackle the climate change as Bangladesh is a signatory to the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC).

The speakers also said that human activities are mainly respon-



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon forms a human chain at Shahbagh in the city yesterday demanding effective measures to offset the impacts of climate change.

sible for the climate change.

They also said that the United Nations took the initiative to enforce Kyoto Protocol in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but many signatory countries, specially the western world, are unwilling to comply.

Representatives from about 30 organisations, including Work for a Better Bangladesh, Coalition for the

Urban Poor, Nagarik Udyog, Nagarik Sanghati, SOS Samity, Seba, Green Voice, Peace, The Hunger Project, Save the Buriganga Movement and Sylhet Division Development Action Council, joined the rally and human chain programme.

Hartal today in tense Sylhet

FROM PAGE 1

Battalion (Rab) yesterday detonated the sophisticated Arges model grenade used in Friday night's attack on Kamran.

Three persons have been arrested in this connection and three others picked up as suspected activists of the banned Islamist militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB).

The Rab officials took the unexploded grenade to the MC College playground and detonated it in presence of police and intelligence officials.

The grenade is similar to those used in the August 21 carnage at an AL rally in the capital last year. Had it exploded, it would have caused a big tragedy, a Rab official said.

He however could not explain why the grenade did not explode. Only the army has this type of grenades, he said.

Deputy Inspector General of Police, Sylhet Range, Syed Shah Jamal Raj also said the grenade used in Friday's attack is similar to that used in the Habiganj incident that left AL senior leader and former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria killed, and those used in August the 21 incident last year. Outlawed extremist outfits

used such grenades, he added.

Kamran, also the chief of AL city unit, lodged a general diary (GD) with the Kotwali Police Station last night without accusing anyone. The police also filed a case under the Explosive Substances Act.

In his GD, Kamran mentioned that he was also attacked the same way last year. Office Secretary of the city AL Mohammad Ibrahim was killed in the attack.

"I do not know who are making such attacks on me and my partymen. But I believe certain organised militant groups are involved in the incidents," he said, asking for adequate security for him.

"Only two gunmen were with me. The arrangement was made after last year's attack. I have been deprived of the security due to a mayor like me, enjoying the status of a state minister. The matter was brought to the notice of the home minister last year but no step has been taken as yet," he told The Daily Star.

The three arrested in connection with the grenade attack are Md Badal Miah, 30, of Sadequepur village in Bhairab upazila of Kishoreganj, Kabir Hossain, 32, of Shahnaipur village of Pirojpur, and Abdul Quaiyum, 30, of

Biroja village of Netrakona.

Besides, the police picked up Hafez Mohammad Khurshed Alam of Doulatpur under Baniachang upazila of Habiganj, Tajul Islam and Abdus Sobhan of Nayagram under Kanaighat upazila of Sylhet as suspected JMB activists from Asia Hotel in the city.

Meanwhile, security in the city has been tightened with additional check posts at important points and stepped-up Rab and armed police patrol.

AL RALLY

The rally called upon the people to join the opposition's agitation to compel the BNP-Jamaat coalition government to quit immediately.

Sylhet district AL President ANM Shafige, General Secretary Iftekhar Hossain Shamim, city AL General Secretary Misbahuddin Siraj and city Ward Commissioner Abdul Khaliq spoke at the rally, among others.

After the rally, a procession was brought out, parading the streets to the Central Shaheed Minar.

Businessmen meet PM today

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FBCCI) on Thursday decided to meet the prime minister and the opposition leader to persuade them to sit in dialogues to find ways to end bomb terrorism.

The FBCCI then sent letters to the two top leaders seeking appointments with them.

"Militant activities must be stopped by any means. A national consensus is a must for this," President of the apex trade body Mir Nasir Hossain told The Daily Star yesterday.

At the meeting with the prime minister, the leaders of the business community will submit a set of proposals to put an end to the present situation. The FBCCI last night finalised the proposals, sources said.

"We will also meet the leader of the opposition soon. We have sought an appointment with her. We hope to get an appointment," the FBCCI president said.

Shahadat Hossain Chowdhury, vice-president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and

Exporters Association, expressed grave concern over the prevailing situation. "We are in a deep crisis and a panicky situation," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

"If this situation continues, our export will fall drastically," he said, suggesting enactment of an anti-terrorist law to eliminate all types of terrorist activities.

The prime minister on Wednesday called upon all political parties and eminent personalities of the country to sit across the table to find ways to stop bomb terrorism.

The Awami League (AL)-led 14-party opposition combine at a meeting on Thursday termed the prime minister's call for dialogues a farce, saying the government is making a mockery instead of hunting down the militants while the state, administration, judiciary and politics are at stake due to repeated bomb attacks.

BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan however said on Friday the government will officially invite the AL-led opposition combine to a dialogue.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil said the government is yet to contact them.

Sources said in the light of the prime minister's call, political parties and professional groups, including that of engineers, physicians, agriculturists and journalists, and academics and vice-chancellors of universities, might be invited to take part in discussions.

The next phase of discussions would take place after the PM's visit to Makkah to attend the December 7-8 extraordinary OIC Summit, viewed as a crucial meet of the leaders of the Muslim world at a trying time. She is scheduled to leave on December 6 and return home on December 9.

Meanwhile, the 14-party combine will hold an exchange of views with different professional groups on December 7 on gearing up anti-militancy movement.

Catfish threatens local species

FROM PAGE 16

"Bangladesh Fisheries". If this catfish becomes successfully establishes itself in nature, the existence of small fishes are endangered, he added.

Ironically, officials of the Fisheries Department brought the African catfish to Bangladesh waters. It was one of 14 fish varieties introduced by authorities since 1953.

"Now we are not encouraging them. It was banned a few years ago by a notice of the department of fisheries but the government can not take any legal steps if someone cultivates it," said Mohammed Shahidul Islam, deputy director of the Aquaculture section of the department of fisheries.

In a shocking incident in 2003, African catfish killed the three-year old son of a farmer in Mymensingh, 120 kilometres from Dhaka, when the toddler was playing in the shallow

waters of a pond, several newspapers reported.

"We have heard the African catfish has cut off the private parts of some children around the country as they were taking a bath in the pond where the catfishes were cultivating," said Mohammed Shahidul Islam.

As Bangladesh is a flood prone country, the government should have taken a clear-cut policy before introducing such carnivorous species, experts say, adding that the catfish will eat out all other fish species if it spreads to rivers or other wetlands.

Some experts disagree, however. Shahidul Islam thinks if the African catfish spread out in the natural water bodies, other carnivorous species like Boval, known as fresh water shark, will wipe them out.

In the low-lying outskirts of Dhaka, African catfish are being cultivated in specially constructed tubs or sub-

merged bamboo cages in ponds. According to cultivators, they supply up to 3,500 kilos of catfish to the capital and its suburbs from 200 such farms.

During floods, the fish spread out from the farms and rehabilitate in the sewerage system and different ditches in the city.

"They multiply fast, are possible to cultivate even in the most contaminated water and will feed on whatever you give them," said Abdur Razzak, the caretaker of one of the biggest African catfish cultivators, Kalam Mia's firm.

The African catfish can rapidly multiply within just two months, which makes them popular among catfish cultivators.

WEATHER TODAY

Light to moderate fog likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may also occur over the river basins of the country during the early morning, Met office said, predicting slight fall in night temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 29.9 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chittagong and lowest 12.1 degree Celsius at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:11pm today and rises at 6:27am 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	28.5	16.6	73	58
Chittagong	29.9	16.8	75	86
Rajshahi	27.8	14.0	90	72
Khulna	28.0	16.5	90	68
Barisal	29.0	15.5	86	90
Sylhet	29.5	16.1	76	70
Cox's Bazar	29.3	19.4	76	77