

Killings in political violence marked 21pc rise last year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Killings in political violence marked 21 percent rise last year comparing to that of 2005.

In 2006, 374 people were killed in political violence whereas 310 people killed in 2005, revealed a report of human rights watchdog Odhikar which was released yesterday.

The report, prepared on the basis of stories published in 14 national dailies and its own fact-finding reports, said 355 people were killed by the law enforcers across the country in 2006. In 2005, 396 people were killed by law enforcers including 111 by Rab and 258 by police.

Of the 355 victims, 190 were killed by Rab, 147 by police, one by forest guard, four by Detective Branch of Police, four by coastguards, six by BDR and three

by forest and coastguards jointly.

A total of 290 people were killed in so-called 'crossfire' by Rab and police, the report said.

According to the report, 21265 people were injured and 2358 arrested due to political violence last year. Besides, 28651 people were the victims of mass arrest.

Odhikar said political abduction however decreased by 48 percent last year. Forty-eight people were abducted in 2006 while the number of people kidnapped in 2005 was 93.

The report also observed that the percentage of general killing and crossfire killing decreased in 2006 by 10 percent compared to that of 2005.

In 2006, one journalist was killed, 183 were injured, six arrested and 53 others assaulted. Besides, cases were filed against 111 journalists. In 2005, two jour-

nalists were killed, 142 injured, 11 arrested while four abducted.

According to Odhikar, 412 women and 227 children were raped last year. Of them, 126 were killed and 13 committed suicide after violation. Three were raped by the law enforcement agencies. In 2005, 588 women and 319 children were raped.

The report also showed that 320 women were the victims of dowry-related crimes in 2006. Of them, 243 were killed, 64 tortured, five were the victims of acid attacks and eight committed for dowry. The number of dowry victims was 382 in 2005.

Odhikar report also revealed that 161 people were the victims of acid attacks across the country in 2006 while the number of acid victims was 196 in 2005.

From January 1 to December 31 in 2006, around 1043 children were

the victims of human rights violations. Of them 366 were killed, 139 injured, 227 raped, 93 abducted, 12 arrested and 20 were the victims of acid throwing. In 2005, 1139 children were victims of human rights violation.

In Chittagong Hill Tracts, 29 people were killed, 361 injured, 22 kidnapped, three women raped and 42 others arrested in different incidents of human rights violations in 2006. The number of killing was 25 in 2005.

Along the Bangladesh-India border, 147 people were killed in 2006 while 104 people killed in 2005.

"Upon analysing the report it is construed that all violence other than political, border and Chittagong Hill Tracts, decreased comparatively in 2006," said Odhikar.



Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain waves to party leaders and activists who received him at Zia International Airport in the city on his return from the USA yesterday.

Govt schools' admission tests Jan 13

The admission tests of city's top eight government high schools under group-A will be held on January 13 instead of January 7 due to unavoidable circumstances, says a press release.

The schedule of the tests will remain unchanged. The schools are Government Laboratory High School, Mirpur Government High School, Motijheel Government Girls' High School, Khilgaon Government High School, Nababpur Government High School, New Government Girls' School, Islamia Government High School and Mohammadpur Government High School.

Membership of 4 LDP members suspended

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) temporarily suspended the primary membership of four of its party members in charge of violating the party rules and regulations, says a press release.

The suspended members are Nazim Uddin Al Azad, vice president of LDP executive committee, Advocate Mohammad Delwar Hussain Khan, Mokarram Hussain Daradi, secretary of religion related affairs and Sheikh Shahiduzzaman, member secretary of Ganatantrik Jubo Dhara, said the release signed by Additional Office Secretary Wazed Ali Chowdhury Parvez on behalf of party President Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury.

290 bags of urea recovered in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Detective branch (DB) of Khulna police yesterday recovered 290 bags of urea from a rice mill and arrested its owner at Dumuria in the district.

The owner of the mill, identified as Shushil Saha, is a fertilizer hoarder but not a dealer, said SI Obaidul Huq of DB, adding that the rice mill was raided on information.

He further said that Shushil Saha used to purchase urea at the rate of Tk 290 per bag and sell it in the black market at the rate of Tk 400 per bag.

Meanwhile, a large number of farmers staged a demonstration yesterday evening protesting the artificial crisis of urea at Dumuria upazila.

Two killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

At least two people were killed and five others injured in separate road accidents in Dhaka and Chittagong yesterday.

Our Staff Correspondent reports: A vegetable trader was killed and five others were injured when a truck turned upside down on Mohakhali Flyover in the early hours of yesterday.

The dead was identified as Jalal Uddin Sikder, 39, a vegetable trader.

The accident, the first ever fatal accident on the flyover, took place at around 12:10am on Mohakhali over bridge when the driver of a tomato-laden speeding truck from Mymensingh lost control over the steering, police and witnesses said. The truck hit the island and turned upside down.

Jalal fell from the truck and died on the spot while five other traders sustained severe injuries.

The accident occurred due to heavy fog or negligence of the driver, police said.

Police seized the vehicle and sent the injured to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Jalal was taking the tomatoes from Mymensingh to Karwan Bazar market, family sources said.

Both the driver and helper of the truck managed to flee.

A case was filed with Gulshan Police Station in this connection.

Our Correspondent from Chittagong adds: An elderly rickshaw-van puller was killed in a road accident in the port city yesterday.

The victim identified as Abul Hossain, 70, of Comilla was a rickshaw-van puller of Riazuddin Bazar.

The accident occurred when a speedy Rider (human hauler) hit the rickshaw-van loaded with potato in front of Banani Complex Cinema Hall near Agrabad Barik Building intersection at around 11:30am, leaving Abul critically injured.

Abul was rushed to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) where the on-duty doctor declared him dead.

Police arrested the rider driver Mohammad Ullah and seized the vehicle.

No election sans VCs demand increase in allowances

Says Mohiuddin

UNB, Dhaka

Vice-Chancellors of public universities yesterday urged President/Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday to increase allowances.

The Vice-chancellors of 21 universities representing Bangladesh Bishyabidyalaya Parishad placed a number of demands to him.

The demands include increase in allowances, issuance of quick permission to go abroad for attending international seminars and construction of Parishad building on land donated by the government.

Iajuddin, also the chancellor of public universities as head of the caretaker government, assured them of cooperation in this regard.

The President requested the VCs to strictly maintain the quality of education and environment on the campus conducive for acquiring knowledge. He stressed the need for ensuring the quality of world class education.



A wrecker tows a truck that crashed into the railings of Mohakhali flyover in the city in the early hours of yesterday, killing one person.

Strengthen trade ties

Adviser urges Myanmar envoy

Bss, Dhaka

Adviser for Finance, Planning, Commerce, Post and Telecommunications Dr Shoaib Ahmed yesterday emphasised the need for boosting Bangladesh-Myanmar bilateral relations through strengthening natural resource based trade, direct shipping services and organising regular trade fairs in Dhaka and Yangon.

Dr Shoaib said this when outgoing Myanmar ambassador U Thane Myint called on him at his secretariat office.

He also expressed to the envoy about Dhaka's interest to export Bangladesh ready-made garments, knitwear, leather and leather products, pharmaceutical, ceramic and agro-products to Myanmar.

Dr Shoaib drew attention of Myanmar for taking steps to remove hindrances towards expansion of legal border trades.

The adviser also thanked the envoy for playing his significant role during his tenure in Bangladesh and prayed for his long life. He also hoped that ties between the two neighbouring countries would be more cemented in the days ahead.

The ambassador commended the cooperation and support of the government and all concerned during his stay in Bangladesh.

KMC classes begin Jan 10

The classes of 1st-year MBBS (session 2006-07) of Khulna Medical College (KMC) will begin from January 10, says a press release.

The orientation will be held at Lecture Gallery-1 at 10:00am. Students and guardians have been asked to be present in time.

Mascot Plaza Robbery: Guard confesses to crime

COURT CORRESPONDENT

One of the guards at the Mascot Plaza in Uttara yesterday confessed to a magistrate that he along with five others, made the biggest gold mugging worth about Tk 12.80 crore on December 5 last year.

But he was given only Tk 3,000, even though they looted gold ornaments of 8,615 tolas and cash, Bachchu, 36, of Panchthubi in Comilla district told the magistrate.

Metropolitan Magistrate Nani Gopal Biswas recorded the confessional statement of Bachchu, working at a hotel at Nayabazar at Kotwali area in the city and later ordered to send him to the Dhaka Central Jail.

Bachchu, in his statement, said Jasim who led the groups in mugging and looting gold ornaments and other things, had managed his job as a guard at Mascot Plaza two months before committing the robbery.

"I got myself engaged at the gate as a guard to help my accomplices for committing the robbery at about 1:00am on December 5 last year" he said.

Nizam, Kalu, Sohrab, Hassan and Rozina were directly involved in the robbery, he added.

In a major gold heist, burglars made off with stolen ornaments and cash worth about Tk 12.80 crore, breaking into four jewellery shops in Mascot Plaza.

According to local businessmen, the burglars entered the building soon after midnight after sedating with drugs security guard Monjurul Islam in the basement, and guard Salahuddin at the rear entrance on the ground floor.

Pulak Sarker, owner of the Preyoshi Jewellers filed a case with Uttara Police Station in this connection the same day.

CPB, left parties to stage countrywide demonstration tomorrow

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) and five other left political parties will stage countrywide demonstration tomorrow demanding correct voter list, reconstitution of Election Commission (EC) and neutrality of civil administration.

They will hold a rally at Muktangan in the capital on the same day in a bid to resist the BNP-Jamaat alliance that included war criminals and militants, and implementation of their 53-point demand.

To make the programme a success, leaders and activists of CPB held a meeting at its office in the city yesterday.

Speaking at the meeting, CPB General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim criticised the chief adviser to the caretaker government and said he did not even try to hold a meaningful election that would be acceptable to all.

In another meeting in the city, leaders of five left political parties called upon all to resist what they called 'blue-print election' managed by BNP-Jamaat alliance.

Besides, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) led by Khalequzzaman will stage demonstration at Muktangan in the city today demanding resignation of Iajuddin Ahmed from the post of chief adviser to the caretaker government, correction of voter list, reconstitution of the EC and rescheduling of the polls.

In a statement BSD Convener Khalequzzaman also called upon all to make the programme a success.



BCL President Mahmud Hasan Ripon and General Secretary Mahfuzul Haider Roton present a bouquet to Awami League President Sheikh Hasina during a view exchange meeting at the party's Dhanmondi office in the city yesterday, marking the 59th founding anniversary of BCL, student wing of the AL.

Mobile court fines high-rise buildings in Chittagong

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A mobile court here fined a community centre and two under construction high-rise buildings Tk 1.25 lakh on Tuesday for pilfering water through illegal pump from Wasa line and bypassing the meters everyday.

Sources said, the court unearthed the illegal connection at Upahar Community Centre, AA Complex, a 20 storied under construction commercial building, and Keary Masud, a 10 storied under construction apartment complex, in separate drives at CDA Avenue and Nasirabad areas under Panchlaish and Bayezid police stations.

The court disconnected the water supply line and also seized the pumps and some sanitary materials and it found the legal meters were out of order, they added.

Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) Magistrate Md Munir Chowdhury, also acting as Chittagong Wasa magistrate as an additional duty, led the drive.

Any intervention in blockades to be resisted

Say city 14-party leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka city unit of 14-party alliance yesterday warned of stiff resistance to any intervention into their countrywide blockades on January 7 and 8.

"Our blockades will be enforced peacefully, but if anyone interferes and tries to prevent us then we will fight," said Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, general secretary of city Awami League (AL), at a 14-party's preparatory meeting on January 7 and 8 blockades at the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) office.

Maya said the 14-party alliance had made all preparations for going to the polls, but Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed's bias towards the BNP and Jamaat and their failure to draw up a correct voter list forced them to boycott the election.

JSD President Hasanul Haq Inu urged 14-party activists to resist the polls to stop the "Conspiracy by BNP-Jamaat-Iajuddin axis."



Sylhet Division Development Action Council stages a demonstration at Muktangan in the city yesterday condemning the execution of former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein.