

CG urged to prepare fresh list of criminals

BNP-Jamaat behind August 21 grenade attack: AL

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) Joint General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said the previous BNP-Jamaat four-party alliance government was the mastermind behind the August 21 grenade attack on an AL rally that killed 24 leaders and activists of the party.

"If the former prime minister Khaleda Zia, her son Tarique Rahman, former state minister for home Lutfuluzzaman Babar and former ministers Moudud Ahmed and Nazmul Huda are interrogated, everything will come out in the light," Quader said at a press briefing at AL's Dhammondi office last night.

The AL leader also demanded that the newly formed caretaker government prepare a fresh list of criminals and their godfathers, corrupt people and black money

holders through a proper investigation in every area of the country and arrest them.

Quader, a close aide to Hasina, also said the present list that the law enforcers are now using was prepared by the previous government and a number of people have been included in the list over political consideration.

He alleged that the previous government filed thousands of false cases against thousands of their 'innocent' leaders and activists during the period 2001-2006. He also alleged that the previous government withdrew some 70,000 cases of killing, terrorism and arson filed against the criminals.

"It would be wrong and unwise if the drive is conducted on the basis of these false cases," he said, adding that the people would appreciate this caretaker government if it takes initiatives against

the true culprits.

AL leaders Tofail Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Matia Chowdhury, Mukul Bose, Abdur Rahman, Abdul Mannan and Mostofa Jalal Mohiuddin, among others, were present at the briefing.

Quader briefed the journalists on behalf of Sheikh Hasina when family members of Patuakhali district Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leader Mizanur Rahman Tuhin, who was killed allegedly by the 'BNP' carders on January 7, came to meet the AL chief at her Dhanmondi office in the city.

Following the meeting with Tuhin's family, Hasina held a meeting with the leaders of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) led by its president Hasanul Haque Inu at the same venue but detail could not be known immediately.

People foil Rab attempt to arrest ward commissioner in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Local people foiled an attempt of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) to arrest a BNP-backed ward commissioner in Barisal town yesterday.

The incident took place in Balurmath slum area at 3:30pm when Rab members, acting on a tip-off, arrested Jainal Abedin, an alleged listed extortionist of the area, for his alleged involvement in various criminal activities.

As news of Jainal's arrest spread in the locality, hundreds of slum-dwellers encircled the law enforcers and forcibly freed him from them.

After the release, Jainal immediately went into hiding.

Later, Jainal contacted a newspaper office over mobile phone denying all allegations against him and claimed that Rab members tried to arrest him violating a court order.

RU women's hall named after Rahmatunnesa

RU CORRESPONDENT

The newly constructed fifth women's dormitory of Rajshahi University (RU) has been named Rahmatunnesa Hall.

The name was finalised at a university syndicate meeting on January 10.

Earlier, the left-leaning student organisations and teachers of the university have been demanding for long for naming the hall after Ila Mitra, a legend of Nachol Tebhaga Movement.

Many students and teachers have expressed their angry reaction over the naming of the hall.

Talking to newsmen Vice-chancellor Prof Altaf Hossain said as the syndicate found the name of Ila Mitra as controversial, it was avoided.

He also spoke about the reasons for naming the hall after Rahmatunnesa.

"She was one of the pioneer of women movement in Rajshahi and the first women lawyer at the local bar. She was a founding member of Rajshahi University, life-long member of Red Crescent Society and a lawmaker between 1979 and 1982.

Rahmatunnesa was born in the city in 1930 and died in 2002, " he added.

Prof Abdus Sobhan, convener of RU Progressive Teacher's Society backed by Awami League, said the image of the university would have increased if the hall was named after Ila Mitra.

Bangladesh Chhatra League of RU unit has demanded the renaming of the hall after Sheikh Fazilatunnesa.

The syndicate meeting also decided to name the fourth arts building after Ismail Hossain Siraji.

Born in Siraganj in 1880, Siraji was a leader of anti-British movement and fought for establishing the rights of Muslim.

He was the member of All India National Congress, Muslim League and Krishak Samity, and author of several books.

Many students however demanded the building to be named after Palli Kobi Jasim Uddin.

Obituary

Md. Shahed, son of late Alhaj Anwarullah of 28 Gaur Sundar Roy Lane, Lalbagh, Dhaka, passed away due to a cardiac arrest recently, says a press release.


A social worker of Lalbagh, Shahed left behind his wife, daughter, mother and brother and a host of relatives and friends to mourn his death.

Dr Enamul Haq
BSS, Jamalpur

Dr Enamul Haq, a valiant freedom fighter, passed away due to brain tumour at Dhaka Medical College Hospital on Friday at the age of 52.

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

He was buried at his family graveyard at Boira in Sarishabari upazila of the district with state honour.



BELTA workshop

BELTA will hold a workshop on English Language Teaching and Developing Reading Skills in English. Venue: British Council Auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.



PHOTO: STAR

Participants at a roundtable styled 'State of the Country: State of Emergency and Imperatives' held at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel yesterday. Sitting from left are Brig Gen (Retd) Shahedul Anam Khan, Maj Gen (Retd) Amin Ahmed Chowdhury, Lt Gen (retd) M Harun-Ar-Rashid, Lt Gen (Retd) Muhammad Mahbubur Rahman, Lt Gen (Retd) Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury, Maj Gen (Retd) Golam Qader, Maj Gen (Retd) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim, Brig Gen (Retd) Sakawat Husain and Joint Editor of Prothom Alo Abdul Qaiyum. Prothom Alo organised the roundtable.

11-yr-old self-proclaimed pir arrested

Disciples block Dhaka-Mymensingh highway

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shahabagh police yesterday arrested the 11-year-old self-proclaimed pir (spiritual leader) Khorshed who ordered his disciples to attack a Reuters photographer on Friday.

Police also arrested two others accompanying him at the National Press Club premises -- his father Aminul Haq and a disciple, Parvez.

Soon after the news of Khorshed's arrest broke out, around four thousand of his enraged disciples, mostly women, marched toward Uttara Police station to get him out of police custody.

At around 11:30am, a joint force of the army, Rapid Action Battalion and police intercepted and dispersed the mob on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway adjacent to Jasimuddin Road at Uttara in the capital, witnesses said.

Police picked up at least six disciples from the spot.

The disciples blockaded the highway for half an hour before the joint forces reached the scene and chased them away.

The retreating mob then took position on the Baunia dam by the river Turag and continued their agitation. The joint forces again dispersed the crowd from the area at around 1:30pm.

Earlier in the morning, the joint forces took position at Khorshed's house at Badaldi under Turag police station in the capital anticipating four of his followers' arrests the day before (Friday) might erupt violence in the area.

On Friday, Turag police arrested Joydul Abedin, Kamruzzaman, Noor Mohammad and Nurul Amin from the area for beating the Reuters photographers and snatching three cameras including two video cameras from them on Thursday.

On Thursday, Reuters photographer Rafiqur Rahman and his unit came under attack as Khorshed ordered his disciples to snatch the cameras from the photographers as they were taking snaps of him during his performance of blowing blessings on water that his disciples brought.

A mob of around 50 to 60 people then snatched away cameras from

the journalists and injured them by beating them up.

His followers claim that the water blessed by the young 'pir' can save people from many incurable diseases.

"People started believing that he was a pir after his sudden recovery from rheumatic fever that had paralysed him impaired his speech," Khorshed's father, Aminul, told The Daily Star.

Khorshed had been suffering from rheumatic fever for over one and a half years. He was cured after he started meditation following tips he got in dreams after visiting Hazrat Shah Ali shrine in Mirpur, claimed Aminul.

For the last three months, Khorshed had been performing the act of blowing blessings being ridden on a motorbike by one of his staff while his believers used to line up with containers of water to be blessed with his blow on both sides of the five-kilometre stretch of road near his house at Badaldi. Another two followed him on a second bike and announced instructions to the disciples.

2 vessels collide slightly on Ctg port channel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two vessels collided slightly on the Chittagong port channel at Guptakhal area yesterday.

Port sources said the 'minor' accident occurred at around 11.45am when the vessel MT Victory Prima loaded with palm oil was heading towards the port jetty for berthing while another ship MT Kaderia-2 with Naphtha was leaving the port.

None was injured in the incident which could lead to a disaster as both the vessels were loaded with flammable substances, they said.

The port authority has formed a two-member committee headed by Harbour Master Captain Jafar Ullah to probe the mater.

UN provides aid to cold-hit people

UNB, Dhaka

United Nations agencies have provided aid to Bangladesh to help the cold-stricken people of poorer sections as cold waves have been sweeping different parts of the country.

"The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) last week released a cash grant of 50,000 dollars to the UN resident coordinator in Bangladesh to provide warm clothes to the people living in affected areas," said a UN source in Dhaka.

The homeless have been among the hardest hit during the current cold wave, which has damaged crops, disrupted communications and transport and spread diseases, especially among children and the old.

Meteorological forecasts have predicted that there could be two more moderate-to-severe cold spells during the next two weeks.

Three districts in the north have already recorded temperatures of 5 degrees Celsius, the lowest level in 38 years.

Six robbers arrested in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police arrested six robbers from Labonchora area under Khulna Sadar Police Station yesterday morning.

The arrestees were identified as Tuku Mallick, Feroze Hossain, Halim Shaikh, Faruque Hossain, Kabir Hossain and Moksed Ali.

Police also recovered a motorcycle and a trowler recently stolen from Molla Automatic Rice Mill at Labonchora.

The robbers are now undergoing treatment at the prison cell of Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) since they were severely injured in a mob beating before being handed over to police.

In another incident, Joint Forces arrested two extortionists from Digholia upazila on Friday midnight.

They were identified as Basudev Das and Abu Saeed.

Meanwhile, BNP leader and UP chairman Gafur Molla of Batiaghata upazila of Khulna district was sent to court yesterday being shown arrested under Section 54.

An accused of 35 criminal cases, including six for murders, the UP chairman was arrested from his house at Batiaghata upazila on Friday morning.

2 schoolboys injured in blast in Chandpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Two schoolboys were injured when an abandoned bomb went off on the bank of a pond near TB Clinic in Chandpur yesterday morning.

The injured are identified as Zahir Bhuiyan, son of Shahjahan Bhuiyan, and Sahed, son of Mizanur Rahman. Both of them are students of class III of Hasan Ali Government Primary School.

They were playing on the bank of the pond when they spotted an object wrapped in red tape, which looked like a tennis ball.

As Zahir picked it up and tried to remove the tape, the bomb exploded. He received serious injuries in his right hand while Shahed received minor injuries.

Zahir was rushed to Sadar Hospital.

Cop dies under wheels of train

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A police Nayek died under the wheels of an inter-city train in Tejgaon area in the city yesterday.

Abdul Gani, 50, of Mirpur 14 Riot division was hit by a Dhaka bound Tista Express while crossing the rail lines at Nakhapara at 9:45am and died on the spot.

Government Railway Police (GRP) sent the body to Dhaka Medical College Morgue.

Police however is not sure whether it was an accident or a suicide.

RISE IN SEAT RENT RU students stage demonstration

RU CORRESPONDENT

Students of different dormitories of Rajshahi University (RU) staged a demonstration on the campus on Friday night protesting increase in seat rent of their dormitories.

Campus sources said agitating students of Modar Bux halls brought out a protest procession that paraded different halls and held a rally.

At the rally, they said they would go for a tougher movement against the university authorities and resist the attempt of the authorities to increase seat rent at any cost.

Police however did not arrest anyone.

The students too avoided any destructive activities during the demonstration, sources said.

Earlier, RU authorities have decided to increase seat rent in the 16 halls, which will be effective from January this year.



Temperature may rise

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country with chances of light rain or drizzle at one or two places over Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Tangail and Mymensingh in the next 24 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may also occur over the river basins during late night till morning. The prevailing cold wave may abate during the next 15 hours, Met Office said.

Night temperature may rise by 1-2 degree Celsius, it added.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 27.8 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 7.2 degrees at Srirongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:37pm today and rises at 6:43am tomorrow.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature		Humidity in in celsius	
	percentage			
Dhaka	Max 25.6	Min 11.2	Morning 70	Evening 51
Chittagong	26.0	12.4	79	76
Rajshahi	25.5	08.9	88	56
Khulna	26.5	11.5	93	56
Barisal	26.0	10.0	91	69
Sylhet	24.0	11.1	81	64
Cox's Bazar	27.0	13.6	73	--



PHOTO: STAR

Shahabagh Police arrested two muggers and recovered 50 cellphone sets yesterday. The cellphones were snatched from a businessman in front of the Eastern Plaza on Friday.