

Private security agency officer found dead in city hotel

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police recovered the body of a security official from a residential hotel in the city yesterday.

The dead identified as Mostafizur Rahman, 35, son of Matiur Rahman, was reportedly an operational executive officer of a private security agency Centry Security Services Limited of Dhanmondi in Dhaka.

He hailed from Nilganj of Kishoreganj district.

Sources said Mostafizur along with two others checked in at Hotel Martin at Station Road on Monday afternoon.

He went to sleep alone at room no 146 of the hotel at around 1:50am and did not come out of his room till late in the morning raising a suspicion.

On information, police rushed to the hotel at around 11:00am and recovered the body of Mostafizur after breaking the door open.

Abu Baker Siddiqui, assistant commissioner of Kotwali police, said nothing unnatural was found on the body.

However, the body has been sent to the morgue and nothing could be said before the autopsy, he added.

MOHAMMADPUR FIRE Girl burnt alive, slum dwellers live under open sky

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 10-year-old girl was burnt alive in Monday's devastating fire at a slum in the city's Mohammadpur area.

Around 250 shanties were also gutted in the fire that broke out at around 9:30pm.

Local people found the body of Helena Akhter, a student of class two, while digging through

rubble in the slum in the morning.

Delwar Hawlader, father of the victim, said he along with his three children was sleeping in his house when the blaze broke out.

"I woke them up and we rushed out of the shanty," added Delwar, a rickshawpuller.

"But I suddenly found Helena missing," he cried out in a tear-

choked voice.

The slum dwellers said several groups are in dispute over the ownership of the slum. A shootout also took place in the area two months back in this connection.

The blaze left around 1200 people, mostly rickshawpullers, hotel employees and domestic helps, homeless. They are now passing their days under open sky.

'Resolve fertiliser crisis, oust Asia Energy'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five Left Party yesterday demanded immediate withdrawal of the state of emergency and restoration of the people's right to freedom of expression and political activities.

At an emergency meeting at its office, the party leaders also called on the caretaker government to resolve fertiliser crisis immediately and take stern action against those creating such crisis by hoarding fertilisers.

They also expressed concern over the move by the Asia Energy to take up a lease on Phulbari coal-mine again.

They said the Asia Energy has changed its name to Global Coal Management (GCM) in order to take up the lease.

The leaders called for immediate implementation of the demands signed between the government and the people of Phulbari and the ousting of Asia Energy.

Demanding an end to the

eviction drive against hawkers, the leaders said it is inhuman to evict hawkers from the footpath without taking alternative measures for their livelihood.

They also protested the killing by Indian Border Security Force (BSF) in border areas.

Presided over by Moshrefa Mishu, the meeting was also addressed by Tipu Biswas, Jonayed Saki, Abdul Matin Talukder, Advocate Abdus Salam and Mosharraf Hossain.



Covering their noses with scarves, two girls walk past a dustbin that overflows waste at Satmasjid Road near Abahani playground in the city yesterday.

Hearing on Rokeya assault case on Jan 29

A Tangail court has fixed the next date for hearing on Rokeya assault case on January 29, says a press release.

The last hearing on the case took place about four years ago.

Rokeya, a staff of CARE Bangladesh, was manhandled and injured at Sonatala in Bogra on February 10 in 2002 after she reportedly parked a motorcycle by the road. The incident prompted CARE to suspend all its operations in Sonatala upazila on the grounds of insecurity.

After the incident, Rokeya lodged a general diary with the local police station against Ahsanul Huq Taiyab Zakir, municipal administrator of Sonatala upazila, Bogra. As the police refused to categorise the case under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, 2000, the case was transferred to the detective branch of police where the report was produced in favour of Zakir. It prompted Rokeya to lodge a 'no-objection petition' with the local court.

As the case remained idle in Bogra court, Rokeya further lodged a petition with the High Court. The HC ordered the authorities to transfer the case to Tangail court. The court issued an arrest warrant against Zakir.

Zakir was nominated municipal administrator after BNP-led alliance government took over power in 2001.

Concern over crossfire under CG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Institute of Human Rights (BIHR) yesterday expressed concern over continuation of crossfire incidents under the caretaker government (CG) as such incidents of extra-judicial killing are violations of human rights and against the spirit of democracy.

In a statement, BIHR General Secretary Akram Hossain Chowdhury urged the authorities concerned to take effective measures to stop extra-judicial killings and be watchful so that nobody dies in army custody.

He however hailed the chief adviser's vows to uphold human rights in his recent address to the nation.



A devotee seeks blessing of Saraswati, goddess of learning and speech, during the puja at Jagannath Hall on the Dhaka University campus yesterday.

Quader protests Bhuiyan's remarks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League acting general secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday protested the statement of BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, saying that the BNP leaders are now criticising the AL as they have become upset following their failure to hold a farcical election.

Mannan Bhuiyan blasted the AL in a statement that came in response to the speech delivered by the chief adviser to the caretaker government on Sunday.

In a statement, Quader said the BNP tarnished the image of the country abroad through plunder,

corruption, misrule and terrorism during its five-year tenure.

"To protect their illegal wealth, they [BNP] needed to regain state power through a farcical election. Having failed to hold such elections, they are now speaking nonsense and blasting the Awami League," Quader said.

He said the BNP knows very well that it has no chance to come back to power if a free, fair and credible election is held.

The AL leader also said the BNP leaderships have become upset over the sudden changes in the political arena, which foiled their design to hold a farcical election.

EVICION DRIVE Commissioner Deepti gets bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to a woman ward commissioner of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) and Awami League (AL) leader, who was arrested on Monday during eviction drive in the city's Pallabi area.

Shahida Tarek Deepti, commissioner in the reserved seat for Ward no 6, 7 & 8, was arrested on charges of "assault on police and preventing government officials from discharging their duties".

Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Rafiqul Islam granted her bail upon a bond of Tk 5,000 with two guarantors after Pallabi police produced her before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court with forwarding report where police appealed to detain Deepti until the investigation of the case completes.

According to the prosecution, a police team led by Rajuk officials, went to Pallabi for demolishing illegal structures when the ward commissioner, also general secretary Dhaka north AL, led a violent protest against the eviction drive on Monday.

Police lobbed teargas shells to disperse the agitating people. Additional police went to the area and arrested Deepti and a case was filed against her and five others in this connection.

Felling of trees condemned

Save the Environment Movement yesterday condemned the incident of felling about 15 trees at Dhanmondi in the city, says a press release.

They said though afforestation has become a social movement, a vested quarter continues to fell trees, which is a threat for the environment.

They demanded proper investigation of the incident and exemplary punishment to the culprits.

4 shop owners fined for producing, marketing polybags

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court yesterday fined four shop owners Tk 40,000 on charges of producing and marketing polythene shopping bags, says a press release.

Sources said the Department of Environment and Dhaka Metropolitan Police jointly conducted raids at different shops in Moulavibazar and Begum Bazar areas of Lalbagh in the city and recovered huge amount of polythene shopping bags.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Rokan-ud-Doula led the team while Dhaka Divisional Director of environment department was also present.