

AL leader beaten to death in Bagerhat: 5 arrested

UNB, bagerhat

An Awami League leader was beaten to death by a rival group over a trifle at Chingrakhali village in Morelganj upazila yesterday.

The dead identified as Rajab Ali Sikdar, 61, a member of the advisory committee of Chingrakhali Union AL and former vice- president of the union. He was also former UP chairman.

Police and local sources said an altercation took place between Rajab's son and Khaleque Hawlader over a trifling matter at noon.

"At one stage, when Rajab protested, the rival group swooped on him and beat him to death," police said quoting witnesses.

On information, police rushed to the spot and arrested Khaleque Hawladar, his wife and UP member Rulia Begum, father Aziz Hawladar and uncle Abdul Qader in this connection.

Cop caught red-handed while taking bribes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Sub Inspector Syed Moudud Hossain of Kanaighat Police Station in Sylhet was caught red-handed while taking bribes from an expatriate Bangladeshi on Tuesday night.

He was sent to jail hajat after he was produced before a court yesterday.

Members of the joint force caught SI Moudud at the police station while he was taking Tk 10,000 in bribes from Rupa Miah who wanted to settle a case against him, sources said.

Rupa Miah first offered the amount to Officer-in-charge Abdul Majid Bhuiyan who told Rupa to hand over the money to the sub-inspector who was the investigation officer of the case.

But as the situation took a dramatic turn, OC Abdul Majid managed to get out of the police station.

Earlier, Rupa Miah informed the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) officials that the police have demanded Tk 50,000 from him after he told them that one of his neighbours has filed a false case against him and he wanted to get rid of the case.

The officials then drew up a plan to catch the policeman red-handed.

College teacher stabbed to death in Natore

A CORRESPONDENT, Natore

A college teacher was stabbed to death in Natore on Tuesday.

Police said Mohammad Ali, 60, assistant professor of Political Science of Shaheed Shamsuzzoha Degree College of Gurudaspur upazila was stabbed by Safiqueul Islam, 32, an intellectually challenged person, of the same area, with an axe, when Ali was resting on a wooden platform near his house at Khubgypur.

He was rushed to Natore Sadar Hospital in a critical situation. Later, he died on way to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

Police arrested the killer last night.

The motive of killing could not be ascertained immediately.

A case has been lodged with Gurudaspur Police Station on this regard.

More donation for cancer hospital

BSS, Dhaka

Major General (Retd) M A Latif donated Tk 5 lakh to Ahsania Mission Cancer Hospital (AMCH) in the city on Tuesday.

He handed over a cheque for the amount to Kazi Rafiqueul Alam, president of Dhaka Ahsania Mission in the Mission Bhaban at Dhanmondi.

The donation has been made for dedicating a bed of the hospital in the name of Major General (Retd) M A Latif's late wife Qamrun Naz Siddiqua.

Alam expressed his gratitude to the donor and hoped that other people also would extend their hands of cooperation in this noble venture.

There is a provision of dedicating beds, wards and cabins of the hospital in the name of near and dear ones and in the meantime a good number of people have availed this option.

However, there is still need for a huge amount of money for completion of construction work and making the hospital fully functional.

SHAHEED MINAR Ruet students submit memo

RU CORRESPONDENT

Students of Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology (Ruet) yesterday submitted a memorandum to the vice chancellor to establish a Shaheed Minar on the campus.

General students met with Ruet VC Prof AFM Anwarul Haque at his office and submitted the memorandum.

In the memo, they said Ruet was founded in 1964, but the university has been lacking a full fledged and modern Shaheed Minar to honour the heroes of the country, who sacrificed their lives in 1952 and 1971.

They also mentioned that at least 13 teachers, students, officers and employees of Ruet died in 1971 during the liberation war.

Ruet students Monir, Firoz, Asif, Bioplob, Maruf, Sanjoy, Sonnet and Toufik were present during submission of the memo.

Ruet VC received the memo and assured them to take necessary steps about the matter, campus sources said.

Amar Ekushey observed at RU

RU CORRESPONDENT

Teachers, Students and different organisations of Rajshahi University yesterday observed the Amar Ekushey and International Mother Language Day violating restriction on holding all sorts of cultural programmes on the campus.

Earlier on Monday, university authorities imposed restriction on holding cultural programmes, procession and rallies on the campus.

Campus sources said police intercepted when teachers, different students and cultural organisations gathered on Shaheed Minar premises to place wreaths.

However, they broke through and paid their tribute to the language martyrs.

Meanwhile, Kendrea Sanskriti Jote started their three-day cultural programme on varsity Shaheed Minar premises to mark the day, violating restriction of the authorities.

Awami League-backed Progressive Teachers' Society (PTS) also held a discussion at Jubere building where they criticised university authorities for imposing restriction on holding cultural programmes on the campus.

Proctor Enamul Haque said that they finally allowed only cultural organisations to organise programmes on the campus.



Nurses walk barefoot as they return after placing wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday to pay homage to the martyrs of the Language Movement.

Maoists flee UN camps in Nepal

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal's Maoists who agreed to live at camps across the country monitored by the United Nations as part of a peace deal are leaving in droves because of food shortages, commanders said yesterday.

"Two thousand walked out today seeking employment in nearby villages to feed themselves," said Samthing Budha, a commander at a camp located in the southwest Chitwan region.

Foundation of Shaheed Minar laid at Matin's village

BSS, Dhaka

Language Movement hero Abdul Matin yesterday laid the foundation of a Shaheed Minar at his birthplace at Sailajana village under Chowhali upazila of Sirajganj district at an emotion-choked ceremony.

At the same function, Proshika Chairperson Dr Qazi Faruque Ahmed laid the foundation of "Bhasha Sainik Abdul Matin Pathagar" (library) on the premises of Sailajana Junior High School.

Proshika has decided to build a Shaheed Minar in memory of the martyrs of the historic Language Movement following stories published in the press recently that there is no permanent Shaheed Minar at Chowhali and the local people have been observing the occasion building a memorial every year with banana trees.

Besides laying foundation of the Shaheed Minar and the Abdul Matin Smriti Pathagar, a discussion meeting was also held on the local school premises to commemorate the heroic sons of the soil who laid down their lives on this day in 1952.

School managing committee chairman Golam Hossain presided over the discussion. Abdul Matin, Dr Qazi Faruque, Nargis Jahan Banu, Ashraf Uddin Biswas Kantu, school student Abdur Rashid and local UP member Abdul Hakim took part in it.

Abdul Matin called upon all to give due respects to the other languages and work for materialising the hopes and aspirations of the Language Movement martyrs.

Earlier, scores of people, including men and women and children, thronged the bank of the river to have a glimpse of Abdul Matin, popularly known in the area as "Chhatra Matin", and his wife Gulbadan Nessa Monika.

Budha said more were preparing to leave his and other camps because the government failed to ensure food and shelter were in place as agreed in a peace deal inked in November 2006 to end a decade of war.

Under the peace deal, the government was to fund the camps while the United Nations monitored the registration of Maoist arms and soldiers. At the weekend, the United Nations said the registration process had been completed.

But the Maoists said the 350 million rupees (4.92 million dollars) the government budgeted for the camps has run out.

"The amount provided by the government has already been spent. There is a serious financial crisis in the camps to feed our

comrades," said Nanda Kishor Pun, a deputy commander of the Maoist army.

Ian Martin, the head of the UN monitoring commission in Nepal, said last week he was worried about the state of the seven main camps and 21 satellite sites which house thousands of people.

The Maoists claim to have 35,000 fighters but independent estimates put the figure closer to 12,000.

The former rebels received 83 seats in a new 330-seat interim government's parliament in January, and the arms registration -- if accepted as accurate by the government -- is expected to pave the way for the Maoists to join the cabinet.

Jute products fair begins in city

BSS, Dhaka

A 12-day fair of the diversified jute products (DJP) began yesterday on Bangladesh Jute Research Institute premises at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the city.

Entrepreneurs are now more conscious and less talker about the marketing of their DJPs, said Executive Director of the JDPC Dr ABM Abdullah while talking to BSS here yesterday. "One could feel the change in attitude of the entrepreneurs from 2002, when the Jute Diversification Promotion Centre (JDPC) started functioning", he added.

"They even check themselves on some points like the techniques in exporting products while discussing promotional activities with us though we support them," said Abdullah with an approving smile, adding "Yes, it is the norms of trade where everyone has his own marketing tactics."

According to the JDPC statistics, 360 entrepreneurs are working with the DJPs. Among them 250 are small and micro-organisations.

Meanwhile, JDPC has identified 43 technologies and 220 diversified jute products for the entrepreneurs, a report said.

It includes fiber, yarn and fabric-based products like pulp, paper, cellulose, denim, carpet, blanket, geo-textiles, technical textiles, hammock, sweater, suitcase and brief case.

Farjana Hoque Smrity, owner of Haymokanti Fashion Cottir, said they export dresses of both traditional and western and expensive bed covers made of cotton mixed with jute yarn.

"If you can develop a secured market outside Bangladesh, it would be much easier for the domestic market with supplying products with less cost for the benefit of the local customers," she said.

Because, Smrity said the production cost of the DJPs will be higher if those are sold solely in the domestic market. The selling price can be adjusted if those are being exported, she said.

"We need a permanent exhibition centre," said another exporter. Pointing to the exhibition area, he added this could be an ideal one.

Textiles and Jute Secretary Abdur Rashid Sarker said there are enough indications that the jute market for various kinds of products and raw fiber has been surged at home and abroad. The farmers are getting better prices.

"So, we should take more cautious steps to stabilise it," said the jute secretary.

Secretary General of the International Jute Study Group AFM Sarwar Kamal said with the funds from the European Commission which are given to the DJPs, the government can take more fruitful steps to develop the jute sector.

Scout Day today

150th birth anniversary of Lord Baden Powell today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Scout Day will be observed in the country today, marking the 150th birth anniversary of Lord Baden Powell, father of the Scout Movement.

The day coincides with the centenary of the Scout Movement.

The Bangladesh Scouts has drawn up elaborate programmes to mark the day.

The day's programmes will begin with a colourful rally at 8:00am in the capital. Scouts and Rovers will take part in the rally which will start from Scout Bhaban and terminate at the National Press Club.

Other programmes include blood donation, blood group selection and drawing competition for Cubs on the theme of International Mother Language Day at Scout Bhaban at 10:00am. This will be followed by a discussion.

Similar programmes have been taken up at divisional, district and upazila level.

Obituary

MA Latif

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

MA Latif, a folk song legend, music director and lyricist, passed away yesterday at Monwara hospital in the city at the age of 78, says a press release.

He left behind three sons, seven daughters and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

Sargam Lalitkala Academy, Shonpokuri, Halim Academy and many other cultural organisations expressed deep shock at his death.

His namaz-e-janaza was held on Naton Bazar Eidghah premises and was buried at his family graveyard at his village.

Communication Adviser MA Matin, who is Latif's elder brother, attended the janaza.

2 NGO workers killed in road crash

UNB, Panchagarh

Two NGO workers were crushed under the wheels of a minibus at Balrampur on Atwari-Boda road yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Mohidul, 30, and Romesh, 28, workers of Dudumari Village Development Organisation.

Witnesses said the accident took place when they were going to Boda from Atwari by motorcycle.

On information, police recovered the bodies and sent those to Boda Upazila Health Complex.

Sultan Fair begins in Narail tomorrow

BSS, Narail

An eight-day Sultan Fair will begin at Sultan Mancha tomorrow to mark the 78th birth anniversary of renowned artist SM Sultan.

Divisional Commissioner of Khulna Kabir Mohammad Ashraf Alam is expected to inaugurate the fair.

Fair organising committee sources said about 50 stalls will be set up and several cultural organisations including circus parties will take part in the fair.

Besides, a souvenir on Sultan's biography will also be published on this occasion.

The fair will continue till March 2, sources said.

Heroin worth Tk 2 lakh seized in Jessore: 2 held

BSS, Jessore

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested two miscreants with 290 grams of heroin worth about Tk two lakh near central bus terminal in the town in Tuesday noon.

Police sources said the arrestees were identified as Moniruzzaman, 35, son of Jafar Ali of Dari Joharpur village under Bagharpara upazila and Ebadat Ali, 35, son of late Abdul Hakim of Shankarpur area in the town.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of the elite force conducted a drive near Golden Saloon in bus terminal area and arrested them with the heroin.

Five private clinics sealed in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The authorities sealed off five unregistered private clinics in Rajshahi city during a drive yesterday.

The clinics are Jabal-e Nur Hospital, Barendra Clinic, Bagmara Clinic, Jamuna Clinic of Laxmipur and New Ibne Sina Hospital.

Patients of these clinics were shifted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital after a team of joint forces and representatives of Rajshahi Civil Surgeon's office sealed off the clinics.

In the last three days, three teams raided 20 clinics and asked the authorities of eight clinics, hospitals and diagnostic centers to obtain proper documents and improve their services within 15 days.

The Civil Surgeon's office served notices on private clinics, diagnostic centers and pathological laboratories which are operating without licences and proper facilities.

The notice said the owners of illegal clinics must stop their activities immediately. Otherwise, legal action would be taken against them.

Owners of more than 10 illegal private clinics have reportedly shut down their clinics following the notice.

Shot-gun, 16 cocktails seized, three arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sabujbagh, Shyampur and Jatrabari police yesterday seized 16 cocktails (home-made bomb) and a shot-gun and arrested three people in three separate incidents.

Locals and petrol police caught a robber red-handed while he was fleeing the scene with his gang after committing robbery at the house of one Mujibur Rahman in Manda area at about 1:30am yesterday.

The arrestee was identified as Saad Mia. Police recovered 10 cocktails from him. However, other robbers of the gang managed to escape.

Mujibur Rahman claimed that robbers looted cash, gold ornaments, mobile sets and other valuables from his residence.

In another incident, Shyampur police recovered 5 cocktails and a shot-gun and arrested two people from a house at Alambagh area yesterday morning.

The arrestees were identified

Accordingly, Deputy Director of ACC, Sylhet, Nasir Uddin accompanied Rupa Miah when he went to the police station at 8:00pm on Tuesday and offered Tk 10,000 in part payment.

As soon as SI Moudud received the money, Nasir Uddin showed his identity card and asked the sub-inspector to surrender. Bewildered by such a situation, the SI pointed his revolver at the ACC official who then raised an alarm, prompting the members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), who were nearby, to come to his aid.

The ACC official seized two mobile phone sets of the OC and another belonging to the sub-inspector along with Tk 10,000.

Syed Shah Jamal Raj, deputy inspector general of police, Sylhet Range, told The Daily Star that the sub-inspector has been suspended and the OC Abdul Majid Bhuiyan has been closed to the district police lines yesterday.

A three-member probe committee headed by the Additional SP of Sylhet Anis Jafar has been formed in this connection. The committee was asked to submit its report within three days.

Major General (Retd) M A Latif donated Tk 5 lakh to Ahsania Mission Cancer Hospital (AMCH) in the city on Tuesday.

He handed over a cheque for the amount to Kazi Rafiqueul Alam, president of Dhaka Ahsania Mission in the Mission Bhaban at Dhanmondi.

The donation has been made for dedicating a bed of the hospital in the name of Major General (Retd) M A Latif's late wife Qamrun Naz Siddiqua.

Alam expressed his gratitude to the donor and hoped that other people also would extend their hands of cooperation in this noble venture.

There is a provision of dedicating beds, wards and cabins of the hospital in the name of near and dear ones and in the meantime a good number of people have availed this option.

However, there is still need for a huge amount of money for completion of construction work and making the hospital fully functional.

Sources said the five clinics, which were sealed off yesterday, did not have any proper documents and were conducting their activities in an unhygienic atmosphere. Operation theaters were located in dirty and shady places.

During the raid on Jabal-e Nur Hospital, owned by a RMCH nurse Rokeya Khatun, only a nurse was found attending to patients.

The clinics which have been given 15 days' time to obtain proper documents are Janaseba, Ekota, Mahanagar, Janata clinics, Seba, Cure, Fatema and Chowdhury Nursing Homes, Ma Pathology and Diagnostic, and Uttarbanga Islamia hospital of Laxmipur, Gourhanga, Upashahar, Ghospara, Kadirganj, C&B and Bernali intersections.

Deputy Civil Surgeon Dr Zahur Islam said at least 40 private clinics, hospitals and diagnostic centres are operating in the city without any licence and there are over 42 illegal clinics in 11 upazilas of the district.

He also said 46 clinics have licences and 32 others have applied for licences.

Quake hits eastern Turkey

AFP, Istanbul

An earthquake measuring 5.9 on the open-ended Richter scale shook the town of Sivrice in the eastern Turkish province of Elazig yesterday, the Kandilli Observatory here reported.

"None of the reports from Sivrice so far mention any casualties or damage," Cakir Tan, the Elazig deputy governor, told the NTV news channel.

He said he had spoken to the local sub-governor who confirmed that there were no deaths.

NTV showed footage of buildings whose windows appeared to have been shattered by the tremor that struck at 1:05 p.m. (1105 GMT).