

# 5 Shibir leaders held from DU hall, sent to jail

## DU CORRESPONDENT

Five Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) leaders, who were arrested by police in the early hours of yesterday from Zahurul Haque Hall of Dhaka University (DU), were produced before the court that sent them to jail hajat.

They are Abdul Kuddus and Shikder Mujib, former hall unit presidents of ICS, Tofazzel Hossain, current president, and Habibullah Mahmud and Shimul.

"Those Shibir men were produced before the court today (yesterday) after the hall provost filed a case against them on charge of beating a student attached to the dormitory," said Shahidul Islam, office-in-charge of Shahbagh Police Station.

Earlier, the hall administration temporarily expelled two Shibir leaders on charge of beating the student on Friday after he had refused to join their "organisational training programme".

The hall administration also formed a three-member committee headed by Dr Delwar Hossain, a

house tutor, to probe the incident. The committee has been asked to submit its report by the next 72 hours.

The situation became tense on Sunday after the attached student submitted a statement to hall provost alleging that the ICS men took him along with 12 other students in a mess at Katabon area on Friday and asked them to join the organisation and tried to encourage them to engage in Islamist militancy.

Md Abrar Ahmed also alleged that as he refused to abide by their directives, they beat him and forced him out of the mess.

After hearing the incident the agitated students beat up five ICS leaders and activists at around 1:00am.

Three of the injured were admitted to a city hospital. They also ransacked two rooms of Shibir-affiliated students.

Police charged batons to bring the situation under control injuring three students.

A number of resident students,

many of whom are activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), alleged that the ICS men are instigating general students to militancy with the assurance of providing them seats at the hall.

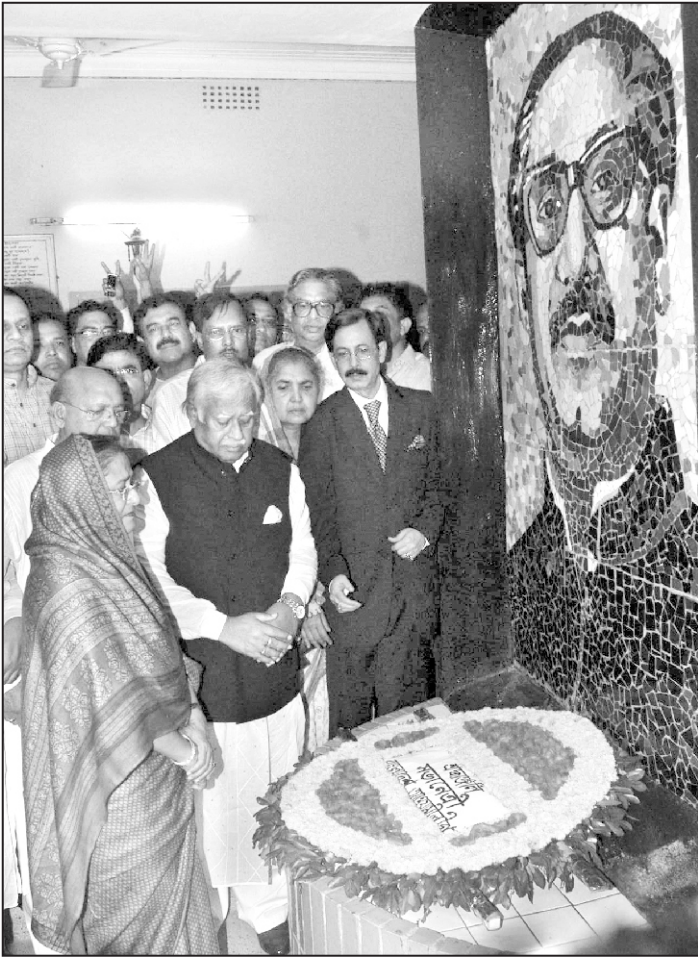
The hall administration and police are also patronising them, they said.

When asked Prof Zahidul Islam said both the feuding groups are their students, so they have the responsibility to protect all of them.

About the Islamic books seized from the two rooms of ICS, he said, "Everyone has the right to keep the books of his own choice."

More over it is not the duty of the provost or the house tutor to keep an eye on what kind of books the students are reading, he added.

Meanwhile, Progotishil Chhatra Jote, an alliance of left-leaning student organisations, yesterday met Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz and alleged that the hall administration is patronising the ICS activities.



Showered with petals, Awami League President Sheikh Hasina arrives at her Sudha Sadan residence from Zia International Airport in the city yesterday. (Left) The AL chief places a wreath at the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in Dhanmondi on her return from abroad.

## BURIGANGA TRAGEDY

# Probe going on at snail's pace

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The investigation into the case filed in connection with the Friday Buriganga tragedy is going on at a snail's pace as the law enforcement agency is still looking for witnesses, who were in the pleasure trip.

As of yesterday, the investigation officer could not find many of the picnic goers to be interrogated and is still in the dark about the incident except for some statements made by Ansars.

Sub-Inspector of Keraniganj Police Station Madhusudan Sarkar, who is assisting detective branch in investigating the case, said, "We are looking for people who went to the picnic. There is no significant development in the case as we did not find many of the picnic-goers."

Sources said the Ansars interrogated denied having any involvement in the Friday night mayhem at Sadarghat.

The case, filed by Sanchita, a relation of one victim, on Saturday

with South Keraniganj PS, was transferred to detective branch on Sunday.

Meanwhile, the four-member probe body, formed by the government with 48-hour time-limit to report on the clash involving two groups of picnickers and Ansars at Sadarghat terminal that left ten people dead, could not submit its report within the stipulated time.

Sources said the probe-body is yet to determine what causes the incident and who were behind it.

## Training workshop on governance issue begins

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-day training workshop on governance issue began in the city yesterday, aiming to improve public services and the efficiency of service providers.

Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), a leading NGO, has organised the workshop titled 'Governance performance monitoring' at the BIAM Auditorium.

Some 20 representatives from different NGOs are taking part in the workshop.

Speaking at the opening session, Shaheen Anam, executive director of MJF, called on the participants to ensure good governance in their organisations first before getting involved in monitoring governance issues.

"No organisations are beyond question. Every organisation has some faults and loopholes in its activities. So, the NGOs should ensure accountability and transparency in their activities before playing the role of a watchdog in society," she said.

She emphasised the coordination and synergy among the NGOs in order to get maximum output in good governance and accountability practices in society.

Shaheen Anam termed the governance performance monitoring a 'cross-cutting' issue, explaining that development organisations have been involved in monitoring governance performance in various ways despite having separate goals.

Farzana Naim and Arif H Khan also spoke at the inaugural session.

## Indo-Bangla joint mountaineering expedition begins on May 12

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A joint expedition of the mountaineers of Bangladesh and India to a mountain in the Himalayan region begins on May 12.

A total of 12 mountaineers from the two Saarc countries will take part in the expedition to 6187-metre-high Rubal Kung.

The expedition titled 'AB Bank Challenge Bangladesh-India Joint Mountaineering Expedition 2007, Mount Rubal Kung' has been sponsored by AB Bank Ltd.

The details of the expedition, first of its kind in Saarc countries, were formally announced at a press conference organised by Kewkadrop Bangladesh at the Bengal Shilpalaya cafe in the city yesterday.

Speaking on the occasion, leader of the team Muntasir Mamun Imran expressed the hope that the expedition will help strengthen peace through promoting regional cooperation.

The other members of the expedition include HM Sirajul Haq, ARK Repon, Saad Bin Hossain and Enam Talukdar.

Besides, seven climbers from Mountaineers' Association of Krishnanagar in West Bengal will join the expedition which will end on June 14, he added.

Speaking as chief guest Riaz Hamidullah, director (Saarc and Bimstec) of the foreign affairs ministry, said the governments has taken the initiative to boost communication among the Saarc countries at private level.

Director General of Bengal Foundation Luvu Nahid Chowdhury and AB Bank Ltd President and Managing Director Kaiser A Chowdhury also spoke.

# 187 more fire stations to be set up

## BSS, Dhaka

Adviser for Food and Disaster Management Tapan Chowdhury yesterday said that the government would set up 187 new fire stations across the country soon to expedite the nationwide fire fighting capability.

"A special allocation would be made in the next budget for importing modern fire equipments and providing higher training to the firefighters," he said while inaugurating the Fire Service and Civil Defence Week-2007 at Fire Service and Civil Defence Training Complex at Mirpur in the city.

The adviser said to turn the firefighters into a modern and skilled force, the present government has taken initiatives to provide modern training to firefighters at home and abroad.

"So far, the number of warehouse inspectors has been increased to 50 from 27 and the government is actively considering to award 40 percent risk allowance to the firefighters so that they could be involved with more enthusiasm in this challenging job," the adviser

said.

Tapan Chowdhury underscored the need to create mass awareness about the origin of fire and the nature of fire to reduce fire incidents.

The owners of the multistoried buildings should set up fire extinguishers and build fire exists in their establishments as part of their social responsibility, he observed.

## Women leaders submit memo to CEC

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Samajik Protirodh Committee, a platform of 38 women and human rights organisations, yesterday submitted a memorandum to the Chief Election Commissioner Dr ATM Shamsul Huda.

With a view to realising their 16-point demand, the Protirodh committee leaders emphasised a free, fair, impartial and timely election.

The leaders termed their step as a part of their ongoing movement for the involvement of women in all spheres of decision-making process

that originates from the right to vote.

The CEC listened to their demands and promised to take necessary steps in this regard. The election commissioners Sohul Hossain and Brig Gen (retd) M Sakawat Hossain were also present.

Mahila Parishad General Secretary Ayesha Khanam, Dr Hamida Hossain of Ain o Salish Kendra, Selina Khaleq of Bangladesh Mahila Samity, Ranjan Karmakar of the Steps and Rokeya Rafiq of Karmojibi Nari were among the representatives who went to submit the memorandum.

## Ex-state minister Salahuddin on 3-day remand

## FROM PAGE 16

Salahuddin before the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM), Dhaka with a seven-day remand prayer.

In the forwarding report, the investigation officer (IO) Sub-Inspector (SI) Faruq Hossain mentioned that Salahuddin and his wife Hasina Ahmed had deprived the government of a large amount of tax understating prices of their three luxurious automobiles. As such, Salahuddin needed to be quizzed so that vital clues about the case could be gathered, the IO said.

The defence submitted a petition seeking cancellation of the remand prayer.

After hearing both the sides, the court rejected the petition for cancelling the remand prayer and placed him on a three-day remand for interrogation.

On April 1, SI Faruq Hossain filed the case against the couple with Gulshan Police Station.

Salahuddin and his wife had three luxurious cars -- each worth Tk 50 lakh. To evade tax, they prepared false documents showing that the vehicles were sold, SI Faruq said.

The couple again prepared documents with forged signatures of

buyers and sellers to show that they purchased the same vehicles for only Tk 1 lakh each, said the IO adding that he found the anomalies while checking the documents of the vehicles.

## Case against Huda

Judge Momin Ullah of the Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court adjourned the proceeding of the arms case against former communications minister Nazmul Huda till May 14 following a time petition by the defence lawyers.

Huda was produced before the court at 11:30am under tight security.

Earlier on April 10, Dhanmondi police pressed charges against Huda for possessing illegal firearms and ammunition after joint forces seized a revolver, 14 bullets, a huge amount of local and foreign currencies, four passports and a mobile phone from his Dhanmondi residence.

The forces had arrested Huda on February 4.

## Case against Salahuddin

The same court yesterday adjourned the charge hearing of the arms case against the detained former BNP lawmaker from Demra till May 14 following a time petition by the defence lawyers.

The joint forces on February 4

seized weapons and foreign currencies along with nine diplomatic passports and eight other Bangladeshi passports, 23 cellphone sets, videocassettes, compact discs and a shotgun licence raiding Salahuddin's residence at Kadamtala in Shyamspur.

## Case against Hafiz Ibrahim

The same court could not frame charges against Hafiz in the arms case as jail authorities could not produce him before the court yesterday.

Gulshan police pressed charges against Hafiz on March 18 in connection with a case filed for possessing illegal firearms.

The joint forces seized a sword and a knife from his Gulshan residence on February 27 and later an arms case was filed against him the same day.

## Case against Nurul Islam Babul

The same court yesterday granted bail to Nurul Islam Babul, chairman of Jamuna Group, in connection with an attempted murder case filed with Khilkhet Police Station on March 19.

The judge granted bail to Babul upon a bond of Tk 50,000 with two guarantors following a criminal appeal filed by the defence lawyers against the rejection order of the lower court on March 25.

## Hold talks before, after budget in absence of JS

## FROM PAGE 16

of Bangladesh (IBFB) organised the pre-budget discussion at Brac Centre Inn at Mohakhali where Canadian High Commissioner Barbara Richardson and Japanese Ambassador Masayuki Inoue also spoke.

IBFB President Mahmudul Islam Chowdhury presided over the meeting.

Dr MA Sattar Mandal of Bangladesh Agricultural University, Dr Hafiz GA Siddiqi of North South University and Sajedur Seraj, vice chairman of AB Bank, took part in the discussion.

Akbar Ali Khan said in absence of Public Accounts Committee at parliament the government should form a committee comprising eminent citizens of the country to scrutinise the budget expenditure.

He pointed out that the rate of inflation is going up and it is mainly responsible for price hike of food items. He said more emphasis should be given on agriculture sector for increasing food production in the country.

The former bureaucrat said it is unpardonable that the previous government could not set up a single power plant in its five-year tenure.

Akbar Ali Khan also stressed the need for action plans of the government for reducing the wastage of resources in the country and

strengthening local government for reaching the services to grassroots levels.

"If I were the finance minister, I would have given emphasis on technical education rather than primary or higher education," Khan said regarding the demand of increasing the allocations on primary and higher education in the budget.

"Despite many challenges, Bangladesh has demonstrated remarkable economic progress in the past decade with sustainable and robust growth rate of six per cent and more in the recent years," said Canadian High Commissioner Barbara Richardson.

This has been a result largely of private sector growth and activity, she said.

The Canadian high commissioner said in spite of some successes there are also serious challenges and concerns in Bangladesh economy in the areas like revenue collections and loss incurring state-owned enterprises.

The caretaker government must reduce expenditures to maintain the equilibrium that can sustain economic growth, she said.

"We would like to see allocations in the budget that would continue to reduce poverty at least by one per cent per year," Barbara said.

She hoped that the next budget

## Army chief presently has no plan to visit India: Army HQs

## UNB, Dhaka

The Army Headquarters yesterday contradicted a report on the army chief's visit to India published in several national dailies.

The Army Headquarters is not aware of such a visit, an ISPR press release said and termed baseless the report regarding the Bangladesh army chief's bilateral talks with the Indian army chief.

"Presently, the Chief of Army Staff has no plan to visit India," the release added.

It said if any such plan is set, the Army Headquarters would inform the newspapers and the mass media timely through proper channel.

## 15 JMB men remanded

## OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A Mymensingh court yesterday granted a five-day remand for 15 Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) militants detained on Sunday.

First Class Magistrate Shefali Begum of cognisance court-2 of the district passed the order after the militants were produced before the court praying for a seven-day remand.

Rapid Action Battalion arrested the militants from Iskhali Bazar of Chatol village under Muktagachha upazila of the district.

Two mobile sets, copies of case filed against Bangla Bhai, newspaper cuttings of the stories published on the hanging of Bangla Bhai and other top militants, some books on Jihad were also seized from them.

## BANGLADESH OBSERVER

## SSKOP urges govt to resolve salary issue

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite a reminder from the information adviser, journalists and employees of The Bangladesh Observer are yet to receive their salary arrears for the last 50 months.

Expressing deep concern over the issue, Sangbadik-Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SSKOP) in a statement yesterday urged the government to resolve it by appointing an administrator.

The signatories to the statement are Oikya Parishad leaders Mozammel Haque, Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul, Fazle Imam, Ruhul Amin Gazi, Md Matiur Rahman Talukdar, Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan, Khairul Islam, Abul Hashem, Altaf Mahmud, Elahi Newaz Khan Shaju, Omor Faruq and Sardar Farid Ahmed.

## Obituary

Principal Nurjahan Begum, mother of Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Presidium member Prof Jahanara Begum, passed away due to kidney and old age complications in the early hours of yesterday at the Apollo Hospitals in the city at the age of 90, says a press release.

She left behind her two daughters to mourn her death. Her only son, Captain Alamgir was martyred during the War of Liberation.

She was laid to rest at the Azimpur graveyard yesterday after namaz-e-janaza after Zohr prayers at the Zindabazar Jame-e-Masjid.

Her kulkhwani will be held at her residence at 25 Zindabazar First Lane after Asr prayers on May 9.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the kulkhwani.

## Cellphone use while driving to be banned

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a view to checking road accidents, the government will soon amend the Motor Vehicle Act to ban use of cellphone while driving.

The Ministry of Law yesterday approved the amendment after the communications ministry sought its opinion on issuing a circular in this regard.

The ban on use of cellphone while driving will soon come into effect.

## Workshop on e-govt held

An 'Awareness creation workshop on e-government and knowledge management' was held at LGED Bhaban in the city yesterday, says a press release.

The main objective of the workshop was to make government employees familiar with the terms e-government and knowledge management.

Miah Abdullah Mamun, national project director, ASICT (Assistance to SICT task force), inaugurated the workshop.

The government formed the SICT (Support to Information and Communication Technology) Task Force to strengthen e-governance. Later, UNDP formed ASICT to facilitate SICT Programme's initiatives to enhance e-governance.

Jafar Ahmed Chowdhury, secretary, Planning Division, Salehuddin M Musa, joint secretary, and Rafiqul Islam, project director, SICT, spoke at the inaugural session.

They all agreed to implement the e-governance in the least possible time to ensure transparency and accountability in the government.

## Prof Nazrul new UGC chairman



Prof Nazrul Islam has joined the University Grants Commission (UGC) as its 10th chairman yesterday, says a press release.

Prior to his joining UGC, he was on LPR as a professor at Geography and Environment department, University of Dhaka.

Prof Islam also taught at Urban Development Planning at the AIT Bangkok, the UK, Sweden, Netherlands, Denmark and India.

He was the founder and honorary chairman of the Centre for Urban Studies and member of the advisory committee on Urban Planning and Architecture at the Ministry of Housing and Public Works.

Before joining UGC, he was also the Chairman of the Board of Dhaka Water and Sewerage Authority (DWASA).

DHAKA

TODAY

Book launch

Bangladesh Institute of Planners will launch 'Urbanisation in Bangladesh'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 4:00pm.

View exchange meeting

Bangladesh Development Partnership Centre (BDPC) organises a view exchange meeting on 'The significance of UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons in curbing militancy and terrorism'. Venue: Dhaka Reporters' Unity. Time: 11:00am.

Photo exhibition

The European Commission organises a photo exhibition titled 'Bangladesh matters: Capturing the EU's development co-operation' beginning from today. Venue: Drik Gallery. Time: 5:30pm. The exhibition will continue till May 12 from 3:00pm to 8:00pm everyday.

WEATHER

TODAY

No change in temperature

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Sylhet, Chittagong and Barisal divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Khulna divisions in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Prevailing mild heat wave over Rajshahi and Khulna divisions may continue, Met Office said.

It also said that day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 37.2 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 22.0 degrees at Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:31pm today and rises at 5:19am tomorrow.

The 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	34.3	24.8	70	90
Chittagong	32.5	23.5	87	68
Rajshahi	36.7	24.7	61	98
Khulna	35.0	25.0	71	81
Barisal	33.0	26.0	77	79
Sylhet	32.5	22.0	95	64
Cox's Bazar	33.2	25.5	86	68