

Formulate common code of conduct for journos

Kathmandu seminar urges Saarc Info Centre

JASIM UDDIN KHAN, back from Kathmandu, Nepal

A three-day seminar on Saarc development goals ended in Kathmandu on July 27 with a call to formulate a common code of conduct for media persons, including verification of information on cross-border issues.

The Saarc Information Centre (SIC) in coordination with the Saarc Secretariat should take steps to formulate the code of conduct with a view to checking ghost and imaginary reports on cross-border issues, media persons from the Saarc countries told the seminar.

They also suggested that the SIC should facilitate broadcasting and publishing reports related to Saarc development goals/Millennium Development Goals in the South Asian media, reflecting the best practices in each member

state.

These recommendations were adopted at the seminar for media people, organised by the Saarc (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) Information Centre.

Nepal's Minister for Information and Communications Krishna Bahadur Mahara inaugurated the seminar titled 'Saarc Development Goals (SDGs) in Relation to Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)' on July 25.

Mukunda Prasad Acharya, director general of SIC, conducted the seminar while Krishna R Khadka, director of Nepal Administrative Staff College, was the resource person.

The seminar also stressed the need to give special attention to the empowerment of women as part of the SDGs.

The SIC should regularly organ-

ise seminars/capacity building training for journalists on development issues, the participants said.

They also suggested that the SIC in cooperation with the Saarc Secretariat should facilitate the travel of journalists within the Saarc region.

They recommended that the SIC should play the role of the facilitator for promoting free flow of information through collaboration among the media houses and increasing intra-regional investment in the media sector.

The participants suggested that an 'SDG Journalists' Forum' should be formed to campaign for the achievement of the SDGs in the region.

They also urged the SIC to compile news reports and articles on SDGs and post them on the SIC website regularly and bring out a quarterly bulletin.

Wife, grandma meet Tarique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tarique Rahman's wife Dr Zobaida Rahman, his maternal grandmother Tahira Majumdar and sister-in-law Shahina Khan Zaman met him at the Dhaka Central Jail yesterday.

Tarique's wife and relatives entered the jail gate at 6:05 pm and stayed there for about 40 minutes. Tarique's grandmother and sister-in-law visited him at the jail for the first time.

They talked to him in a room, adjacent to the jail superintendent's office.

Sources said that Tarique inquired about his mother's health and also other family members.

Tarique's octogenarian grandma brought cake and chocolate, sources said.

They talked in presence of jail officials and an official of the Special Branch of Police.

Tarique Rahman, eldest son of former premier and BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia, is facing several criminal charges against him. He was arrested from his mother's cantonment residence on March 7.

Meanwhile, a four-member team of the anti-graft national taskforce went Tarique's in-law's house at Dhanmondi last night to quiz his wife and mother-in-law about his wealth statement submitted to the Anti-Corruption Commission.

The task force team however could not quiz them, as Tarique's wife was not available while her mother was ill, sources said adding the team members will go there again today.

Schoolgirl commits suicide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A schoolgirl committed suicide at Dhanmondi in the city on Sunday night after her parents refused to let her get admitted in a coaching centre.

Debo Mita Sarker, a class IX student of Kakoli High School in Dhanmondi, died in the spot after she jumped from the rooftop of a six-story building at around 8:30pm.

Mita insisted her parents to get her admitted to the Dhanmondi branch of E Haq Coaching Centre and became enraged when her parents denied, police said quoting Dulal Sarker, father of Mita.

"Then she went upstairs and jumped down from the rooftop," Dulal added.

In the inquest report police also mentioned the same reason as the cause behind the suicide.

Mita's body was taken to their village home in Barisal for cremation after an autopsy at Dhaka Medical College morgue.

4 car lifters, 16 Molom Party members held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective Branch (DB) of Police arrested on Sunday four members of an organised gang of car lifters who divulged a new tactic to the law enforcers about how they snatched microbuses, taxicabs and private cars after drugging the drivers.

The arrestees Harun-ur-Rashid alias Kamal, Porimal alias Sagar, Ansar Ali and Zakir told the police that they first build up a good relation with their target and then want to learn driving from him.

At one stage they took their target to a secluded place. There they make the driver unconscious by offering food or juice mixed with sedatives. Then they made their way with the vehicles leaving the driver on the spot.

The new tactics came to light when a DB team led by Additional Deputy Commissioner Masudur Rahman arrested the four car lifters from different places in the city and following their information they recovered a snatched microbus worth Tk 18.50 lakh from Sonaimuri upazila in Noakhali.

Meanwhile, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel in series of raids from Sunday afternoon to early yesterday at different places in the city arrested 16 members of organised gangs who snatched belongings from people putting ointment into their eyes.

The elite force seized a yellow taxicab, some containers of ointment, a mobile phone set and Tk 900 from their possessions.

Tipped-off, a team of Rab-3 arrested a gang known as 'Molom Party' raiding Green Model Town at Sabujbagh area in the city on Sunday afternoon.

The Rab members interrogated them intensively and following information divulged by them the crime busters raided Technical crossing in Mirpur, Kakoli crossing in Banani and Rajmoni crossing in Kakrail and arrested the rest of the thugs.



PHOTO: PID

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed presides over a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Public Administration Reform and Good Governance at his office in the city yesterday.

90 more students fall victim to mass psychogenic illness

STAR REPORT

Over 90 students, mostly female, fell sick in different parts of the country in the last two days with symptoms of Mass Psychogenic Illness (MPI), also known as mass hysteria.

Of them, 37 female and three

BDR, BSF trade fire

UNB, Sylhet

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) exchanged fire along Madra border point in Kolaroa Police Station yesterday morning.

BDR sources said BSF troops from Darkanda camp of India fired one shot across the border at about 4:00am without any provocation. In retaliation, BDR jawans fired two shots.

Earlier on Sunday, BSF jawans from Amudia camp of North Chittagong district fired three shots along Talaigacha at about 11:30pm.

Debo Mita Sarker, a class IX student of Kakoli High School in Dhanmondi, died in the spot after she jumped from the rooftop of a six-story building at around 8:30pm.

Mita insisted her parents to get her admitted to the Dhanmondi branch of E Haq Coaching Centre and became enraged when her parents denied, police said quoting Dulal Sarker, father of Mita.

"Then she went upstairs and jumped down from the rooftop," Dulal added.

In the inquest report police also mentioned the same reason as the cause behind the suicide.

Mita's body was taken to their village home in Barisal for cremation after an autopsy at Dhaka Medical College morgue.

Modernisation of early warning dissemination system stressed

Speakers at a workshop yesterday emphasised modernisation of early warning dissemination system and strengthening information service on disaster management, says a press release.

National Institute of Mass Communication (NIMCO) and Disaster Management Bureau (DMB) are jointly organising the two-day workshop on 'Disaster risk reduction and early warning' with the assistance of Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP) under the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management.

Director General of NIMCO Syed Mahbubur Rahman inaugurated the workshop.

Director General of Disaster Management Bureau KH Masud Siddiqui said the vision of the government on disaster management is to reduce the vulnerability of people, especially the poor to the effects of natural, environmental and human induced hazards to a manageable and acceptable humanitarian level.

He emphasised strengthening institutional arrangement for effective disaster management. Deputy Director of Bangladesh Meteorological Department Sujit Kumar Debsarma presented different aspects of early warning for cyclone preparedness and weather forecasting.

The inaugural session was also addressed by DMB Director Abu Sadeque and NIMCO Director Rafiqul Islam Sarker, while the session was moderated by CDMP Advocacy Expert SM Morshed. A total of 30 journalists from print and electronic media are participating in the workshop.

"We have detained the five teachers after the slain teacher's wife told us that Faruq and the teachers might have hands in the killing," said the Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Dhanmondi Police Station Monwar Hossain while talking to The Daily Star.

The OC said they have also launched a drive to arrest Faruq, but could not nab him.

Unidentified criminals gunned

UNB adds: Twenty-six students of three schools in Jhalkati Sadar upazila fell sick in the last two days.

Three students of Harchandra Girls' School fell sick seeing another student vomiting yesterday morning. They are Eti, Sumaiya, Faria and Dristi, students of class six.

In another incident, six students of Nekathi Girls' School fell sick as they came to the aid of Mitu, a student of class six, when she fainted at 10:00am.

Earlier on Sunday, 12 girl students and one male student of Boidaripur High School fell sick. They were admitted to Sadar Hospital.

Citizens' body to observe death anniversary of Shamsur Rahman

A 101-member Nagorik Committee was set up at a meeting yesterday with National Professor Kabir Chowdhury as chairman and Mohammad Samad as member-secretary, to observe the first death anniversary of poet Shamsur Rahman on August 17, says a press release.

The other members of the committee include Abul Hossain, Khan Sarwar Murshid, Foyez Ahmed, Jilur Rahman Siddiqi, Anisuzzaman, Syed Shamsul Haq, Borhanuddin Khan Jahangir, Belal Chowdhury, Aminul Islam, Quayum Chowdhury, Murtaza Bashir, Said Ahmed, Rashid Karim, Shamsuzzaman Khan, Rafikunnabi, Hashem Khan, Kaisul Haq, Ramendu Majumdar, Rafiq Azad, Mahadev Saha, Nirmalendu Goon, Syed Manjul Islam, Kaiser Haq, Asad Chowdhury, Rabiu Hussain, Mafidul Haq, Ruby Rahman, Nasir Uddin Yusuf, Muntasir Mamun, Selina Hossain, Anwara Syed Haq, Abul Hasnat, Sazzad Kadir, Habibullah Siraj, Muhammad Nurul Huda, Samudra Gupta, Golam Kuddus and Aslam Sani.



Dhaka Samity executives

M Sirajul Islam has been reelected president of Dhaka Mahanagar Samity (Dhaka Samity) for July 2007-June 2009, says a press release.

M Abu Horairah has also been reelected general secretary while Sarder Faisal Bashir (Fuad) has been elected treasurer of the 50-member executive committee for the same tenure.

BSU invites applications for scholarship

The Bangladesh Scholarship Council (BSC) invites applications from university students for its 13th scholarship programme for the year 2007-2008, says a press release.

This year a total of 300 scholarships are available worth Tk 12000 each.

The major fields of study include medicine, engineering, agriculture, science and technology, commerce and humanities (specified fields only).

Candidates must complete the application form provided on the BSC website with two attested passport size photos, attested copies of previous and current academic reports, a recommendation letter from the head of the department and parents' yearly income statement through proper authority.

Applicants receiving other scholarship or any financial grant are not eligible to apply. A new application is required for renewal of scholarship and "Renewal" must be indicated. Application forms can be downloaded from www.bsccbd.org

Prospective applications should be sent to Secretary, Bangladesh Scholarship Council (BSC), 288, MM Ali Road (2nd Floor), Wasa Intersection, Chittagong-4000 by or before September 02, 2007 by postal mail.

Obituary

Muhammad Sikander Ali, former Chief Engineer of Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB), passed away in the city on Sunday at the age of 57, says a press release.

He has been suffering from paralysis. Sikander joined PDB as an engineer in 1974.

His Namaz-e-Janaza was held in front of the Wapda building yesterday. Later, Sikander was buried at his family graveyard in Comilla.

Sikander left behind his wife, one son, one daughter and many admirers to mourn his death.

Three killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

At least three people were killed in separate road accidents in Magura and Chandpur yesterday.

OUR CORRESPONDENT from Magura reports: Two people were killed in a road accident in Laxmikandar area on Magura-Faridpur highway in Magura Sadar upazila yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Golam Mustafa, 48, and Shahidullah, 45, drivers.

Police quoting locals said the accident occurred at around 9:00am as two trucks loaded with rice and fertiliser collided head-on, leaving Mustafa dead on the spot and Shahidullah injured critically.

Shahidullah succumbed to his injuries on the way to Faridpur Medical College Hospital.

Our correspondent from Chandpur adds: A five-year-old girl was killed and two others were injured in a road accident on Chandpur-Comilla regional highway near Chandpur Dokan area in Ashikati under Sadar upazila yesterday.

Police and witnesses said the girl was identified as Sabrina, daughter of Bakhtiar Gazi of Ashikati village in Sadar upazila.

A Kochua-bound bus from Chandpur hit Sabrina from behind as she was going to her maternal uncle's home with her grandmother Tafura Begum and another baby, leaving her dead on the spot. Tafura was rushed to Sadar hospital in critical condition.

Ziaul Karim made editor of ICE Today, Jamini

Ziaul Karim has been made editor of the ICE Today, monthly lifestyle magazine, and Jamini, the first international arts quarterly in the country, says a press release.

Prior to his new assignment, he was executive editor of both the magazines.

He began his career in 1990 with now-defunct The Morning Sun. The following year he joined The Daily Star and continued with Star till 2001 before joining The News Today as feature editor. The same year he took up the assignment of ICE Today and Jamini. He also served as associate editor of the regional news website www.southasianmedia.net between 2002 and 2007.

NEW DU SOCIAL SCIENCE FACULTY BLDG A dream come true Says VC

DU CORRESPONDENT

The construction work of 12-storyed Social Science Faculty Building of Dhaka University (DU) was formally inaugurated yesterday.

DU Vice-Chancellor (VC) Prof SMA Faiz unveiled the foundation stone of the building situated between Modhu's Canteen and DU Central Mosque in the morning.

Earlier, an inaugural ceremony was held at Teacher-Student Centre (TSC).

Prof Faiz said the building will be a long-dreamed of the students and teachers of social science faculty and now the dream has come true.

The classroom crisis of social science and arts faculties will come to an end once the construction work of the building finishes, said the VC.

Dean of Social Science Faculty Prof Harun-Or-Rashid said, "The plan is to complete two floors first to overcome the acute classroom

shortages and then finish the rest of the work. It will take at best one and a half year to complete the building."