

AL to observe Aug 15 on a limited scale

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL) will observe the 32nd death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman tomorrow on a limited scale in line with the caretaker government's directives.

It has drawn up programmes to commemorate August 15, the day Bangabandhu and most of his family members were killed in 1975.

President Iajuddin Ahmed and Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed will visit Tunjipara to offer special prayers at the grave of Bangabandhu on the day.

The AL will keep the national and party flags at half-mast at its offices across the country. Besides, it will hoist black flags everywhere in observance of the day that used to be the national mourning day.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Ex-BNP MP's wife jailed for extortion

A CORRESPONDENT, Ch'awabganj

A court here yesterday sentenced two people, including wife of former BNP lawmaker Harunur Rashid Harun, to five years' rigorous imprisonment each in an extortion case.

The convicts are Advocate Ashifa Ashrafi Papiya, also the president of BNP Chapainawabganj Sadar upazila unit, and Baroghario Union Parishad (UP) member Al-Amin.

District and Sessions Judge Hrishikesh Saha also fined the convicts, Papiya and Al Amin, Tk 50,000 and 20,000 in default they are to suffer another six months in jail. Al Amin was in the dock during the pronouncement of the judgment while Papiya tried in absentia.

The case was filed by Baroghoria UP Chairman Harunur Rashid with Sadar Police Station on April 12 this year. In the case, he alleged that Papiya and Amin demanded Tk 5 lakh in toll from him in 2004, but he paid Tk 3.8 lakh to the former MP's wife at their residence at the district town on December the same year.

9 Taliban killed in Afghan clash

AP, Kandahar

Afghan security forces clashed with Taliban militants in southern Afghanistan, leaving nine militants dead, while a subsequent roadside blast targeting a police vehicle killed five officers, an official said yesterday.

Afghan police and army soldiers battled militants Sunday in Kandahar province's Shohrawak district, said provincial police chief Sayed Agha Saqib.

The joint Afghan forces thwarted a planned militant ambush at the district chief's compound, and the ensuing clash left nine militants dead, Saqib said. Authorities recovered the militants' bodies and weapons, he said.

During a cleanup operation after the battle, a roadside bomb hit a police vehicle in the same district, killing five officers and wounding two others, Saqib said.

Violence in Afghanistan has

SEE PAGE 15 COL

Arrest warrant of Abbas' wife to be put up near her house

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday directed the authorities concerned to hang up an arrest warrant in tax evasion cases against Afroza Abbas, wife of detained former housing and public works minister Mirza Abbas, with a post near her Shahjahanpur residence in the city.

Meanwhile, hearing on charge framing against Dhaka City Corporation Ward Commissioner

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Mir Nasir's wealth increased 16 folds, son's 40 times

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former state minister Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin's money in banks increased over 16 folds in four years and his son Mir Helaluddin's swelled over 40 times in the last three years.

According to the income tax assessments, Mir Nasir's actual deposited money in bank accounts was Tk 40.36 lakh in 2001-02 fiscal year (FY) and it went up to Tk 6.5 crore in FY 2006-07. Helaluddin had Tk 25.50 lakh in FY2002-03 and it

rose to Tk 10.41 crore in 2006-07.

Nasir's money in bank accounts increased to Tk 1.88 crore in FY 2002-03, Tk 2.76 crore in FY 2003-04, Tk 4.04 crore in 2004-05 and Tk 6.53 crore in 2005-06.

National Board of Revenue (NBR) sources claimed Nasir always concealed deposited sums in his income tax returns and his son never submitted any income tax returns.

Nasir in his income tax return submitted to the Income Tax Circle-2, Chittagong Zone, showed his

bank balance as Tk 69.44 lakh in FY 2006-07 but in reality had Tk 6.5 crore.

He showed he had Tk 70.44 lakh deposited in 2005-06 fiscal year against the actual Tk 6.5 crore, Tk 5.9 lakh against the actual Tk 4.04 crore in 2004-05, Tk 11.77 lakh against the actual Tk 2.76 crore in 2003-04 and Tk 7.37 lakh against the actual bank deposit of Tk 1.88 crore in 2002-03.

Nasir also hid his actual income from renting out a five-storied

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



PHOTO: STAR

Roads and highways department tears down illegal structures on the bank of Kutubkhali canal near Kajla of Shanir Akhra in the capital yesterday.

Only half an hour needed to vanish a stolen motorbike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An organised gang of motorcycle thieves takes only half an hour after stealing a motorbike to prepare fake documents for it and to change its registration number plates.

After a successful operation, the thieves send short text messages from their mobile phones to their boss, who then readies the necessary documents within half an hour to dodge the eyes of law enforcers, a member of such an organised gang, who is now on a five-day remand in custody of detective police, divulged the information.

The arrested gang member, Rajib, also disclosed that motorbikes stolen from the capital are sent to gang operatives in other districts within a day or two, and then the district gang members sell those at prices ranging from Tk

25,000 to Tk 35,000. He said they sell a Bajaj Pulsar 150cc motorbike for Tk 35,000, although its market price is now around Tk 1.5 lakh.

Rajib said he gets Tk 4,000 to Tk 5,000 in each successful operation.

Following up on the information from Rajib, a team of the Detective Branch (DB) of police led by Additional Deputy Commissioner Masudur Rahman recovered 12 stolen motorbikes in a raid at Faridganj in Chandpur between Sunday evening and early yesterday.

The team so far recovered 63 different types of stolen vehicles in the last four months, 17 of which are private cars, four minibuses, one pick-up van, 16 CNG run three-wheelers, and 25 motorbikes.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Taliban free 2 South Korean hostages

AP, Ghazni

Two women among 23 South Koreans kidnapped by the Taliban in mid-July were freed yesterday on a rural Afghan roadside, the first significant breakthrough in a hostage drama now more than three weeks old.

The two women, who broke into tears after seeing the international Red Cross officials there to take custody of them, got out of a dark gray Toyota Corolla driven by an Afghan elder and into one of two waiting Red Cross SUVs. The women said nothing to reporters alerted to the handoff location by a Taliban spokesman.

The women, who the Taliban have said are ill, were among church group volunteers kidnapped by militants on July 19.

The release is the first breakthrough in the hostage drama, which took a downturn in late July when two male captives were

executed by gunfire.

The two women were brought to the side of a road in rural Ghazni province by an Afghan named Haji Zahir, who also got into the Red Cross vehicle with the freed hostages.

The Taliban spokesman, Qari Yousef Ahmadi, said on Sunday that the two women were released in part because they were sick and because face-to-face negotiations that began on Friday were going well.

Two Taliban leaders and four South Korean officials met Friday and Saturday to discuss the fate of the hostages. Taliban leaders have demanded that 21 militant prisoners be released in exchange for the Koreans' lives; the government has said it will not release any prisoners.

The local governor has suggested in the past that the hostage standoff could be solved with a ransom payment.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

\$50m Saudi relief for the flood-hit

UNB, Dhaka

Saudi Arabia is sending five cargo planes loaded with relief supplies worth \$50 million for the flood-stricken Bangladesh at the instruction of King Abdullah.

Saudi Ambassador Abdullah Al-Obaid Al-Namia apprised reporters of the plane loads of emergency relief goods from his country after a meeting with Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday.

An 11-member relief team from Saudi Arabia has arrived here to coordinate distribution of relief materials in cooperation with the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management.

King Abdullah on Thursday ordered the Ministry of Finance to provide immediate assistance amounting to \$ 50 million for the flood victims in Bangladesh.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7



PHOTO: STAR

Bricks underneath the Dhaka-Narayanganj highway surfaced at Jurain in the capital as lack of maintenance leave the road in appalling state. The photo was taken yesterday.

Shamim Osman's immovable property to be attached

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

A Narayanganj court yesterday ordered attachment of the immovable property of former Awami League (AL) lawmaker Shamim Osman by Thursday for evading income tax and concealing information about his wealth.

Special Judge Abdul Quddus Mia passed the order in connection with a case filed by the NBR.

Assistant Tax Commissioner Mihir Lal Sarker filed the case with the Narayanganj Special Judge's Court on August 8 against Shamim Osman on charges of evading

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

7 killed as bus rams autorickshaw

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Seven people including four school students were killed and another two students sustained injuries in a road accident yesterday in Kumira area of Sitakundo upazila.

The accident occurred at around 7:30am near Kumira Masjid High School when a Ramgoti (Noakhali)-bound bus collided head-on with a CNG-run autorickshaw crammed with eight passengers including six students of the high school. There were five passengers in the back of the auto rickshaw and three in the front.

The dead students are Ainul

Karim and Sohel of class X, and Ainul Kamal Ronny and Shimul of class VI.

The others killed in the accident are Rubel, the CNG auto rickshaw driver, Samar Dey, a fruit vendor, Adhir Sarker, customs employee and a former student of the school, said police.

Six on board the three-wheeler died on the spot while Ronny died on way to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH), said police and eyewitnesses.

The two injured students -- Irfan and Noman of class VI -- were also sent to CMCH.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Ziaul Haq Zia's SUV seized from Gazipur

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

A Lexus sport utility vehicle (SUV) belonging to former BNP leader and state minister for LGRD and cooperatives Ziaul Haq Zia was seized yesterday by anti-corruption taskforce.

Members of taskforce 1 (Dhaka-Savar) discovered the SUV in the parking area of a garment factory named Arch Limited in Bhogra of Gazipur. The factory is owned by Nabila Haq Chowdhury, former Jatiya Party lawmaker from reserved women seat of Madaripur.

The task force members said

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

| Prayer Timing | | |
|---------------|-------|--------|
| August 14 | | |
| | Azan | Jamaat |
| Fajr | 4-25 | 5-00 |
| Zohr | 12-45 | 1-15 |
| Asr | 4-45 | 5-00 |
| Maghrib | 6-41 | 6-44 |
| Esha | 8-00 | 8-30 |

Source: Islamic Foundation