

Salman Khan faces jail over poaching gazelle

AFP, Jodhpur

Top Bollywood actor Salman Khan is facing five years in jail after an Indian court yesterday rejected his appeal against the sentence for killing a rare gazelle.

Prosecutors said an arrest warrant would be issued for the brawny movie star known for his tough guy roles in Hindi movies.

"The sessions court has rejected his appeal," Khan's lawyer Hastimal Sarswat told reporters in the western city of Jodhpur.

The 41-year-old heart-throb who enjoys a massive fan following was not present in court.

"He calls himself a celebrity but he doesn't have respect for judicial authorities," prosecution lawyer Mahipal Bisnoi told reporters.

Khan's lawyer said his client would appeal to a higher court.

The actor was accused of poaching the protected species of gazelle in September 1998 when he was shooting a film.

The actor was also found guilty in February under India's Wildlife Protection Act of poaching other gazelles.

Activists welcomed the court ruling.

"Someone of his stature, who is so popular, has to set an example. What message are we sending to poachers if someone like him is not convicted?" said Belinda Wright, executive director of the Wildlife Protection Society of India.

Former Indian environment minister Maneka Gandhi, an animal rights activist, hailed the ruling as "an extremely important judgment."

"The court has given him a punishment that it would give to a normal human being," Gandhi told Times Now television network.

Khan also faces charges of manslaughter after a road accident in 2002 left one person dead and four injured.

The actor denies allegations that he was at the wheel, drunk and had no licence when his car ran over people sleeping on a sidewalk in western Mumbai, home to the country's film industry.

The setback for Khan came a day after embattled Bollywood actor, Sanjay Dutt, was freed on bail after being sentenced to six years for arms possession in connection with the nation's worst-ever bombings in Mumbai in 1993.

Outlaw held in Bagmara

RU CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested a leader of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-Janajuddho red flag) from Taherpur Bridge area yesterday.

The criminal, Nawsad Ali of village Ramrama under Bagmara upazila of Rajshahi, was arrested from Taherpur Bazar, Bagmara police said, adding that he was a regional leader of the killing squad of PBCP red flag.

Nawsad was the planner of the murder of Goalkandi UP chairman Jahangir, Bagmara Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Mirza Golam Sarwar said.

PBCP men killed Jahangir, also an Awami League leader, when he was watching television at a local club on December 10, 2006.

Nawsad will be produced before the court tomorrow, the OC said.

BFUJ urges

FROM PAGE 1 Mahamud and General Secretary Omar Faruq, Chittagong Union of Journalists (CUJ) President Shahid-ul-Alam and General Secretary Reaz Haider, Rajshahi Union of Journalists (RUJ) President Akbarul Hasan Millat and General Secretary Jahangir Alam Akash, Khulna Union of Journalists (KUJ) President Mamun Reaz and General Secretary Anwarul Islam Kajoil, Bogra Union of Journalists (BUJ) President Akhtaruzzaman and General Secretary Mahmudur Rahman Mona, Dinajpur Union of Journalists President Swarup Kumar Bakshi and General Secretary Ekram Hossain Talukdar, Jessore Union of Journalists (JUJ) President Sajedur Rahman and General Secretary Touhidur Rahman, and Mymensingh Union of Journalists (MUJ) President Kazi Yasin and General Secretary AtaulKarim.

The union leaders also voiced their resentment that the government is not declaring the sixth wage board award for the journalists even after making assurances on several occasions.

Second phase

FROM PAGE 12 joint forces and the district administration and technical support of Warid Telecom.

But curfew made it impossible to begin the second phase of voter registration work from Thursday as per schedule, said the DEO.

The first phase of work gained momentum in the city as a large number of people responded spontaneously to voter registration with photograph.

HSC results

FROM PAGE 1 Education Board will get their results by visiting the website <http://result.bteb.gov.bd>, the hand-out added.

Besides, examinees having GrameenPhone, Banglalink, Aktel, CityCell and TeleTalk connections will get the results this year through short message service (SMS) immediately after publication of the results. For getting the results, one has to type the first three letters of the respective board (like Dhaka=DHA), give a space, type the roll number and then send to 2777 or 3333 or 2323 or 4929.

Candidates having GrameenPhone and Aktel connections can register their names earlier to get results automatically just after publication of the results by the board authorities.

To register, candidates have to type RES+space+first three letters of their respective boards+space+roll number and then send to 2777.

Undocumented

FROM PAGE 12 Airports in the UAE allow foreign undocumented workers to leave the country only when they hold the departure passes issued by the missions of respective countries.

Bangladesh mission also collected nearly 20,000 passports of Bangladeshis undocumented workers from various government agencies in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, which had been held by the UAE government for various reasons.

Foreign ministry officials said the number of Bangladeshis undocumented workers in the UAE is not more than 25,000 to 30,000, but manpower export experts however estimate the number to be more than that.

Official records of the UAE show 2,15,718 Bangladeshis are residing in Abu Dhabi, 1,23,514 in Dubai, and 1,63,610 in the Northern Emirates.

According to the UAE labour ministry, there are 3.5 lakh undocumented immigrants with 2.5 lakh of them already leaving their jobs claiming that their employers had exploited them and breached their contracts, while the others are tourists who are remaining in that country illegally.

Foreigners in the UAE become undocumented when their visas expire, or if they leave their contracted jobs, or if tourists start working illegally. The UAE needs many more workers for its huge construction industries, but at the same time its decision not to keep foreign workers undocumented, prompted its government to declare the amnesty, foreign ministry officials said.

The UAE signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) recently with many manpower exporting countries including Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan, in a bid to ensure rights of foreign workers.

5 university teachers

FROM PAGE 1 Chhatra Union (BCU) and Colonel Taher Sangsad yesterday deplored the arrests and demanded immediate release of the educators.

Family members of the detained teachers remained worried as they did not know as of filing this report at 10:00pm where their dear ones have been taken to.

Talking to The Daily Star, Anwar's wife Ayesha Akhter said some 12 men in plainclothes arrived at their flat on the Teachers' Tower at about 12:20am and kept ringing the door bell without a pause.

"As I opened the door, they identified themselves as members of the joint forces and asked, 'where is sir?'. When I said he was sleeping, they asked me to wake him up," said Ayesha.

Woken up, Prof Anwar asked them what brought them there so late at night. The security personnel replied that he would have to go to the Shahbagh Police Station as they have orders from the high-ups, she added.

"They said, 'Sir, you are a patriot and so are we. We are not the Pakistani army. We are Bangladeshi.' Then they asked him to get ready sharp," Ayesha said.

She said she could only manage to slip some medicine, food and clothes in her husband's bag.

Before stepping out, Anwar, brother of Colonel Taher, a gallant freedom fighter who was executed by a military tribunal in 1976, said this was not the first time he was being taken away by the security personnel. The same thing happened to him in 1975.

"I asked them [security men] when we could meet him [Anwar], they said they don't know," said Ayesha adding that the joint forces men however told her not to worry.

The family members were waiting at the Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court yesterday evening in hopes that Anwar, a bio-chemistry professor, might be taken there, family sources said.

Talking to The Daily Star at around 2:00pm, Prof Harun's son Ishtiaque Rashid said, "We are still in the dark about my father's whereabouts."

The only son of the social science dean said they hope wherever he is he is safe and would return home shortly and unscathed.

The DU acting VC had phoned him and gave assurance of taking necessary measures. But nothing was done yet, he added.

Duta President Prof Sadrul Amin told The Daily Star that they are closely observing the situation but currently they have no plans for a meeting or a press statement demanding release of the arrestees. He said he does not even know the details about the developments as he was not home Thursday night.

Our Rajshahi staff correspondent reports: Director of Rab-5 Lt Col Shamsuzzaman Khan yesterday told The Daily Star that Prof Saidur, Prof Sobhan and Prof Maloy have been detained for their alleged role in the student violence on the campus.

"They are being questioned, and we are yet to be sure of their involvement," he said.

Prof Sobhan's wife Monwara Sobhan said the Rab personnel came to their flat at the RU teachers' quarters at around 2:45am and rang the bell repeatedly.

They asked Sobhan to come out at once, said Monwara adding that they had no contact with him since he was taken away.

Talking to the newsmen, Prof Saidur's wife Qamrun Rahman said that Rab members in plain-clothes rapped on their door at Bihars Residential Area at around 3:00am. As Rahman opened the window, they asked him to come down for some talk.

Sharif vows

FROM PAGE 12 "In any democracy you can find such menaces, but if a democracy fights terrorism, ultimately it will win the battle," he said. "But if one individual is fighting the battle (he) cannot win."

Sharif with a full head of dark hair appeared more vigorous during his interview than when he was forced from his homeland into exile in Saudi Arabia and London, when he looked frail, gray and nearly bald.

He said he would return to Pakistan soon, but gave no date. A committee from his party, the Pakistan Muslim League, will meet in London in the next few days to decide on plans.

The charismatic 57-year-old conservative secularist served twice as prime minister and is known internationally for authorizing Pakistan's first nuclear bomb test in 1998.

He was arrested when the army seized power a year later and eventually sentenced to life imprisonment on hijacking and terrorism charges. He was released from jail after signing a pledge not to return to Pakistan for at least 10 years.

On Thursday, the Supreme Court ruled Sharif has "an inalienable right to enter and remain in the country," said Chief Justice Iftikhar Mohammed Chaudhry the judge Musharraf tried to fire.

"As he asked if they had any government order for his arrest, they replied they only wanted to talk to him," she said adding, "When he opened the door, they asked him to go with them. Then I asked where exactly they were taking him to, they said he would be back within half an hour."

The security personnel also raided several other teachers' Friday night.

Meanwhile, Rahman and Sobhan were among those who under the banner of RU Progotishil Shikkhok Samaj issued a statement on Wednesday afternoon, blaming the daylong violence on Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing. They also demanded immediate removal of the incumbent RU administration for failing to ward off the incidents.

REACTIONS

In a statement yesterday, Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon and General Secretary Binol Biswas called on the caretaker government to release the arrested teachers immediately.

JSD President Hasanul Haque Inu and General Secretary Syed Zafar Sajjad expressed deep concern at the arrest of the senior academics.

Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal Convener Khalequzzaman also demanded release of the teachers.

Colonel Taher Sangsad and Bangladesh Chhatra Union, the student wing of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), also protested the arrests.

Taher Sangsad President Kamal Lohani and General Secretary Advocate Ruhul Kuddus Babu in a statement said taking the DU professors to unknown places instead of a nearby police station was a breach of the law and their fundamental rights.

Tangail weavers

FROM PAGE 1 materials needed to produce them.

Many weavers of different villages in Kalihati upazila told The Daily Star that they were considering the shutdown of their business, as it is not profitable enough to sustain. Most of the looms in the region would be closed within a few years if this situation prevailed for long, they said.

The price of a bale of yarn saw an increase of at least Tk 10,000 in just one year, yarn traders said. The price of a bell of Gulshan-82 yarn was Tk 54,000 a year ago but now it is Tk 67,200. A bell of Nahid-82 increased by Tk 12,000, Nahid-74 by Tk 14,000, Setu-82 by Tk 15,000, Saiham-82 by Tk 13,000, and Delta-82 by Tk 14,000 in just one year.

While talking to The Daily Star many weavers of Balla at Kalihati upazila said an organised syndicate of merchants is to blame for the increase of the prices of yarn, dye and other materials. The weavers claimed the price of cotton did not increase that much but the price of yarn skyrocketed in just one year. Opportunist yarn merchants stockpiled yarn and increased its prices, they claimed.

Admitting the presence of a yarn-merchant syndicate, Mostofa Ashrafi, president of Yarn Traders Association of Balla, told The Daily Star that they could import yarn from India before but now they cannot and this has also played a role in the increase of yarn prices.

"Better days will return if the government permits the import of yarn from outside the country," he added.

Jhenidah outlaws threaten to kill 5 journalists

A CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (ML-Janajuddho) has pasted posters at different places of Shaikupa upazila on Thursday night, threatening to kill five journalists.

The journalists who have been threatened with death are Bimal Kumar Saha, Jhenidah correspondent of daily Ittefaq, Akmal Hossain, Shaikupa correspondent of Manabzamin, Abdur Rahman Milton, Jhenidah correspondent of Bhorer Kagoj, Sohag Kumar Biswas, Shaikupa correspondent of Amar Dosh, and Zahidul Islam Mohon, Shaikupa correspondent of Purbanchal and president of Shaikupa Press Club.

In the posters, the outlaws said they will start their mission in the upazila by killing the journalists, but they did not cite the reasons for the planned mission.

Being informed by local people, police removed the posters and took them to the police station.

When contacted, the district police superintendent said the law enforcers have taken necessary steps to ensure security of the newsmen.

Prices of fishes

FROM PAGE 12 different kitchen markets rushed there to buy produces at an unusual hour.

Prices of vegetables shot up as the stock of vegetables was not enough to meet the demand, said the wholesalers adding that the suppliers usually bring vegetables to Karwan Bazar at night.

Then the prices of vegetables started to fall in Karwan Bazar between Wednesday night and Thursday morning as most of the retailers could not go there because of the curfew although there was no shortage of supply during the time.

Sensing the falling prices of vegetables and fishes, some retailers and grocery shoppers however took the opportunity to purchase the produce for comparatively lower prices.

After 4:00pm on Thursday, when the curfew was relaxed and people were allowed to shop, the prices started to spiral upward again.

Hearing the news of relaxing the curfew for 14 hours yesterday, the prices of vegetables and fishes started to fluctuate again within a short span of time.

Supply of vegetables and fishes and the presence of buyers became normal yesterday but the prices kept varying from shop to shop.

Retailers said they purchased vegetables and fishes at different prices and one who purchased them for a lower price sold his for a lower price also.

Price differences of vegetables ranged from Tk 2 to Tk 12 per kilogram (kg) among different markets.

Preferring anonymity, a trader of Karwan Bazar said he purchased a kg of green chilli for Tk 80 and he sold the item for Tk 100 a kg.

While another trader of the same market who had bought a kg of green chilli for Tk 140 said, "How could I sell it for Tk 100?"

Meanwhile, prices of fishes were also seen fluctuating on different kitchen markets. Fishes were selling for higher prices than the last week's.

Some vegetables and fishes were seen being thrown away, as they had rotten.

Steps for safety

FROM PAGE 1 government does not take confidence-building measures among the migrant workers' community and ensure their security.

In a country of only 300,000, Bangladeshis immigrants provide essential cheap manual labour in the tourism and construction industries.

Personal accounts from Bangladeshis workers in Maldives suggest they have been targeted for theft and violence in Male, with a recent trend of mobs attacking Bangladeshis in their own homes as they are incapable of voicing their concerns to authorities.

Hundreds of Bangladeshis workers have called the High Commission in Male over the past week fearing for their lives and safety. Sources said the disproportionate suffering of the migrant workers and the failure of the local police to ensure their safety has angered Dhaka.

The Bangladesh High Commission asked for round-the-clock police surveillance of the Bangladeshis workers' dormitories in Male, after they were attacked on four successive nights from August 1, leaving three injured and one hospitalized.

Sources said, the police surveillance and protection has been inadequate as a mob of 50 Maldivians attacked the dormitories with rods, sticks and glass bottles on August 18. Four people were seriously injured from the incident, sources said.

The incident came a week after a Bangladeshis worker was found tied to a tree by his employer for nine days in Male. Another Bangladeshis worker was castrated and murdered on August 14 on the northern island of Kulhudhufushi.

13 killed as US troops

FROM PAGE 12 city of Najaf for burial, the photographer said.

Beating their chests and chanting anti-American slogans, the mourners loaded the coffins draped in Iraqi flags on taxis and vans and proceeded to Najaf.

In the past few weeks the US military has killed or captured dozens of Shia militants from splinter groups who it says have broken away from the main Mahdi Army and indulged in attacks on coalition and Iraqi forces.

The clashes came a day after suspected al-Qaeda fighters battled police and members of a rival Sunni insurgent group in a town northeast of Baghdad.

The battle in the town of Kanan in the restive Diyala province left at least 23 people dead, including a Sunni sheikh who had recently turned his support to the police to fight al-Qaeda in Iraq group, police said.

The US military claims that a number of Sunni tribal chiefs and representatives have started supporting coalition and Iraqi forces to fight al-Qaeda in Iraq militants, blamed for much of violence besetting the country.

Iraqi forces were meanwhile stepping up security in the central holy city of Karbala ahead of the

expected arrival of hundreds of thousands of Shia pilgrims to mark the anniversary on Tuesday of the birth of Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi, Shia Islam's 12th imam and one of the most revered.

Shia Muslims believe the imam disappeared centuries ago from the northern Iraqi town of Samarra and will return one day to save the world.

Police Brigadier General Raed Shawkat of Karbala province said checkpoints were being installed across the Shia region, which has the restive Sunni province of Anbar to the west.

"We have set up checkpoints to ensure gunmen do not enter the province," he said, adding a vehicle curfew would be imposed from Saturday.

Over the past few years Sunni extremists have regularly attacked Shia pilgrims during various festivals in Iraq.

The US military announced one more American soldier had died and four were wounded in an explosion in the northern Iraq province of Salaheddin on Friday.

His death brought the military's losses in Iraq since the March 2003 invasion to 3,722, according to an AFP count based on Pentagon figures.

Floodwater recedes

FROMPAGE 12 flooding that forced them to take refuge in different flood shelters, high roads, and embankments. About 35 percent looms in the district are still submerged in floodwater.

Our correspondent reported from Tangail that rail communication on Sarishabari-Tarakandi-Jagannathganj Ghat route in Jamalpur have been suspended for the last 26 days due to the damage done by the flood, causing immense sufferings for commuters of Kazipur, Gopalpur, and Sarishabari.

The railway authorities suspended the train service on the route on July 30 as floodwater had inundated many parts of the rail tracks.

Assistant Engineer of Jamalpur Railway Abdur Rahman said the flood damaged rail tracks on the route, causing a loss of an estimated Tk 2 crore.

"Trains cannot run on the route unless the damage is repaired," he added.

Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) meanwhile reported that the River Padma rose by 3cm at

Pankha, 2cm at Rajshahi, and by 5cm at Hardinge Bridge, while it receded by 2cm at Goolundo, and by 3cm at Bhagyakul.

The Padma at Pankha was flowing 15cm above the danger level yesterday morning, while it was flowing 30cm above the danger level at Goolundo and 19cm above it at Bhagyakul.

The Padma is likely to continue rising at a slower rate in the next two days, FFWC reported.

The Karotoa River at Panchagarh rose by 6cm, while the Gorai at Gorai Railway Bridge rose by 4 cm. The Kobadak at Jhikargacha fell by 2cm, which had been flowing 43cm above the danger level yesterday morning.

The flood situation in Manikganj, Munshiganj, Fariapur, Rajbari, Madaripur, Shariatpur, Gopalganj, and Chandpur districts, and in Dohar and Nawabganj upazilas of Dhaka is likely to improve slowly with a chance of significant improvement within the next one week.

Cases filed

FROM PAGE 1 police stations are Dhanmondi, Ramna, Shahbagh, Mohammadpur, New Market, Sutrapur, and Kotwali.

Police sources said the drives to capture the demonstrators are being conducted based on the information gleaned by different intelligence agencies from news clippings and different statements issued by the protesters against the incidents on the DU campus.

The law enforcers are also examining video footage and photographs to identify the persons involved in the clashes, the sources added.

Five of the cases were filed with Shahbagh police station accusing 12,000 people including students. A group of six to seven people is accused in a case filed with the police station for setting a military vehicle on fire. Three more cases were under the process of being filed yesterday at the police station.

About 3,000 to 4,000 unidentified students of Jagannath University were sued in a case filed with Kotwali police station for vandalising vehicles in front of the university and for creating disorder at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court.

The people arrested in the capital include Abul Kalam, ANM Danisul Islam, Zakir, Jashim, Anwar, Makbul and Imran.

"Our teams are out to capture people whom we have already identified, while two separate cases were filed since August 22 accusing 7,000 to 9,000 people," said an on-duty officer of Kotwali police station, seeking anonymity.

"We will live in uncertainty and fear of arrest indefinitely from now on. I don't know what is waiting for

Floating people

FROM PAGE 1 was relaxed till 10:00pm," an employee of Greenland Enterprise told The Daily Star.

Meanwhile, 30 trains yesterday left the Kamalapur station for 19 destinations, railway sources said.

"Extra compartments have been added to accommodate the swarm of passengers," said Nargis Alam, one of the station masters.

Scenes were no better at Sadarghat as thousands of people flocked there to have a little room on the launches bound for the southern districts.

Some 300 launches left the terminal with passengers beyond their capacity. This was happening. The government warning against overloading appeared irrelevant as the mad rush of people was the order of the day.

US bomb kills 3 British soldiers

2 US-led troops killed in Afghan accident

AP, AFP, London/Kabul

A bomb dropped by a US fighter jet was believed to have killed three British soldiers in southern Afghanistan, the Ministry of Defence said yesterday. Two other soldiers were injured.

The ministry said the troops, from 1st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment, were patrolling northwest of Kajaki in Helmand province on Thursday evening when they were attacked by Taliban insurgents.

The ministry said that "during the intense engagement that ensued, close air support was called in from two US F15 aircraft to repel the enemy. One bomb was dropped and it is believed the explosion killed the three soldiers."

The military did not identify the soldiers but said next of kin had been informed.

It said an investigation into the incident would be held.

The incident, near Kajaki in southern Helmand province, occurred late Thursday when two United States warplanes were called to provide support after an attack by the rebels, the Ministry of Defence in London said.

"Their patrol was attacked by Taliban insurgents and during the intense engagement that ensued, close air support was called in from two US F15 aircraft to repel the enemy," a ministry statement said.

"A single bomb was dropped and it is believed the explosion killed all three soldiers who were declared dead at the scene."

The British army has now launched an investigation into the incident.

Meanwhile, two US-led coalition soldiers were killed and two more were injured Friday when their vehicle overturned in western Afghanistan, the force said in a statement.

The soldiers died when their vehicle rolled on a road in the western province of Herat near the

border with Iran, the statement said.

It was the second fatal traffic accident in two days involving international troops in Afghanistan. A soldier from a separate Nato-led force was killed near the capital Kabul on Thursday.

The deaths took the number of international soldiers killed in Afghanistan this year, most of them in combat, to 144.