



AS Mahmud's 4th anniversary of death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 4th anniversary of death of AS Mahmud, the founding managing director of Mediaworld Ltd., the owning company of The Daily Star, and the founder chairman of Ekushey Television (ETV).

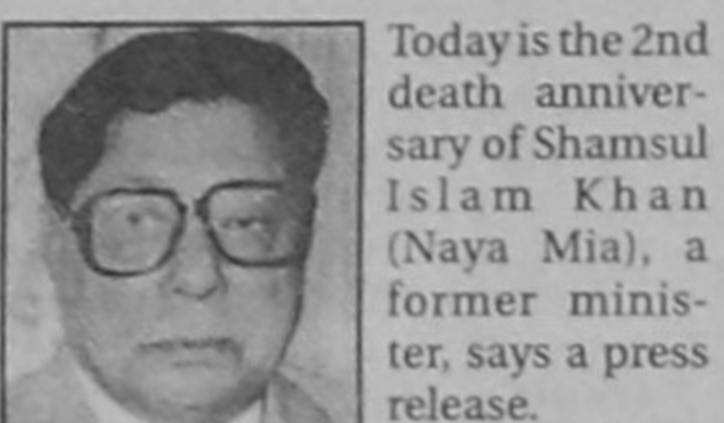
AS Mahmud, also one of the leading businessmen of the country, passed away on this day in London.

AS Mahmud was born into an illustrious family in Sylhet on July 10, 1933. He graduated in economics from Dhaka University in 1954 and started his career as an oil company executive in Burma Shell.

He was also the chairman of Reliance Insurance Company Ltd., a director of Infrastructure Development Company Ltd., jointly financed by the government and the World Bank, and chairman of Unidev Ltd.

AS Mahmud paved a new path in the electronic and print media in Bangladesh. Not only was he the founder chairman of the country's first private terrestrial television channel, ETV, he was also the founding managing director of Mediaworld Ltd. and the publisher of The Daily Star, the country's most successful English-language newspaper.

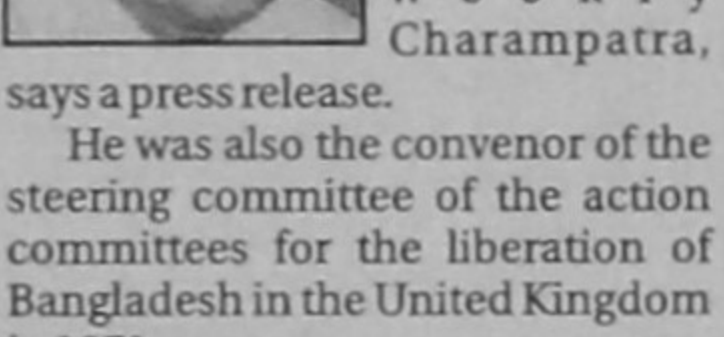
Shamsul Islam Khan



Today is the 2nd death anniversary of Shamsul Islam Khan (Naya Mia), a former minister, says a press release.

Shamsul Islam, also an industrialist, was elected a member of parliament four times from Manikganj constituency. He was also the president of Abahani club.

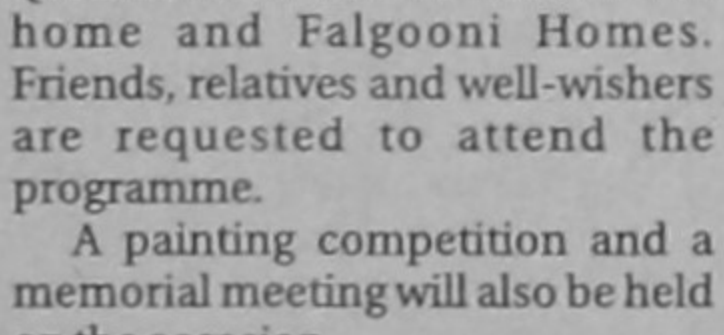
Azizul Hoque Bhuia



Today is the 2nd death anniversary of Azizul Hoque Bhuia, former editor of the daily Sukhabor and weekly Charampatra, says a press release.

He was also the convenor of the steering committee of the action committees for the liberation of Bangladesh in the United Kingdom in 1971.

Jahera Khatoon Choudhury



Today is the third death anniversary of Jahera Khatoon Choudhury, founder of Falgounkara Charity Order in Comilla, says a press release.

A milad mahfil and Quran khawani will be held at her home and Falgoun Homes. Friends, relatives and well-wishers are requested to attend the programme.

A painting competition and a memorial meeting will also be held on the occasion.

Obituary

CU CORRESPONDENT Dr MA Saleh, a professor of chemistry at Chittagong University, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at Chittagong Metropolitan Hospital on Sunday at the age of 63.

He left behind his wife, two sons and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

He was a researcher, scientist and Islamic thinker.

The university authorities suspended all classes yesterday to mourn his death.

They also distributed Tk 2 lakh among 1,000 Sidr victims on behalf of Dhaka City AL at Borobaria and Kolatola Upazila in Bagerhat.

Enact law to protect consumers' rights

Dr Akbar urges CG

UNB, Dhaka

Chairman of Bangladesh Regulatory Reforms Commission Dr Akbar Ali Khan said law should be enacted to protect the consumers' right.

"The caretaker government should enact rule immediately that will play an important role to protect the rights of consumers as they are subjected to cheating in many ways," Dr Akbar said this while he was speaking at the National Conference on Consumers Movement-2008.

Consumer Association of Bangladesh (CAB) organised the conference at Biam auditorium in the city with CAB President Borhan Ahmed in the chair.

Dr Akbar viewed that law is not enough to solve the problem. "If we really want to restore consumers' rights, they must unite and put up resistance to protect their own right."

He said most of the countries in the world have law to protect the consumers. But in Bangladesh, political governments in the past had ignored its importance.

Borhan said the government could not check spiraling price of essentials even with deployment of the paramilitary BDR and joint forces.

"It's very tough to bring prices of essentials under people's purchasing capacity by giving free hand to the market manipulators.

Law protecting the consumers' interest is essential that may prove the main weapon to tackle the problem," said the CAB president.

He also demanded a separate ministry to look after the interest of the consumers.



Dhaka University teachers observe a token hunger strike on the campus yesterday demanding release of detained colleagues and students.

Hold elections by Dec B Chowdhury asks CG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Bikalpa Dhara President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury said the caretaker government should hold elections by December as per the electoral roadmap if it wants to maintain its popularity.

During the last one year, the present caretaker government has achieved successes in many fields such as curbing crimes and terrorist activities, checking corruption, reforms of the Election Commission and the separation of judiciary, he said, but they should do more to check price hike of essentials, which has affected people of low-income and middle-income groups badly.

Badruddoza was talking to reporters at the Sylhet Circuit House on Sunday night. He came here on Sunday on a two-day tour to attend medical camps at

Beanibazar and Golapganj. He said terrorism and corruption must be stamped out to ensure a free and fair election.

"We want a congenial atmosphere for clean politics in the future. Corrupt people, whoever they may be, should keep off politics," he asserted.

National leaders like Maulana Bhashani, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Ziaur Rahman and MAG Osmani should be given due respect, he said.

On Sunday, Badruddoza joined a medical team from the capital and treated about 300 poor patients at Deulgram High School in Beanibazar. He also joined them in other medical camp at Ranaping High School in Golapganj yesterday.

Husband throws acid on wife in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A welding mechanic threw acid on his estranged wife in broad daylight at Mirpur in the city yesterday, injuring her and a boy who was accompanying her.

The victims, Ruma Begum, 22, with burns on both sides of her face, body and a hand, and her nephew Rabiul, 9, with burns in his both hands were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The mechanic, Zakir Hossain, 30, along with two others threw acid on them at Mirpur 7 near the bus stand at around 9:30am when they were going to Suhrawardi Hospital for her treatment. The attackers fled the scene immediately.

Ruma, who had sent a divorce letter to Zakir in October, along with her 3-year-old daughter has been staying with her cousin at a slum at Pallabi in Rupnagar since December and looking for a job.

Ruma and Zakir had been living in Khulna before she deserted her husband in October and went to her village home at Bagerhat.

"I sent the divorce letter as Zakir used to torture me for dowry and also married two other women without taking my permission," Ruma said at the hospital.

Few days ago, Zakir met her at the slum and wanted to take her back, but she refused. "As I refused to go with him, he threw acid on me," she added.

WEATHER TODAY Dry weather likely UNB, Dhaka Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country having chances of light rain or drizzle at one or two places over Sylhet division and the regions of Mymensingh and Comilla in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Contribute more to people's welfare

President tells banks

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday called upon the banks to come forward in aid of the distressed people in a greater way.

"I urge the banks to contribute more imbued with the spirit of humanity to welfare of the distressed people alongside their own banking business," he told an award distribution ceremony.

The Central Shariah Board of Bangladesh Islami Bank organised the function at the Osmani Auditorium in Dhaka.

Iajuddin lauded the Islami Bank for its contributions to the country's socioeconomic development. He hoped Islami Bank would be able to play a more significant role in the country's socioeconomic development by improving the standard of their services in the days to come.

The president said the awards would expand the scope for research on Islamic economy and banking, attracting many to work in this regard.

The president expressed his satisfaction at the activities of Islami Bank for creating skilled manpower in Islamic banking and hoped that their such activities would be expanded in the future.

"Coordinated initiatives will have to be taken on national basis for nurturing the talents of meritorious people so that they can further contribute to the nation-building activities," Iajuddin said.

He called for carrying out research in every field of knowledge, including the banking sector. "We know rich findings come out from research works which play a significant role in overall development and progress."

The president also called upon the educational institutions to undertake more research programmes.

CASES AGAINST JANAKANTHA EDITOR HC stays all proceedings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday stayed all the proceedings related to two tax evasion cases filed against Janakantha Editor Md Atiqullah Khan Masud.

The HC also issued notices to the government, the National Board of Revenue (NBR) and others concerned asking to show causes why the cases would not be declared illegal.

A bench of Justice Md Abdur Rashid and Justice Md Miftah Uddin Chowdhury passed the order following two separate writs filed by Atiqullah's brother M Mizanur Rahman.

Advocate Khandaker Mahub Hossain, lawyer of Atiqullah, told the court that the cases were filed without maintaining legal procedure.

Atiqullah was arrested by joint forces in March last year and the NBR filed two cases against him, his wife Shamima A Khan and two sons Mishaal Atiqullah and Zishal Atiqullah on January 6.

Following the cases, Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court issued order to seize all their moveable and immovable properties and on January 20, police sealed several floors of Janakantha Bhaban and seized various materials from there.

Qulkhwani of Taiyeba held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Qulkhwani of Taiyeba Majumdar, mother of BNP Chairperson Khaleida Zia, was held at her residence yesterday afternoon, family sources said.

She was buried at her Faridpur Family Graveyard beside her husband Mohammad Eskandar Majumdar and elder daughter former minister Khurshid Jahan Haque after a namaz-e-janaza at Dinajpur Gore-e-Shaheed Maidan on Sunday.

BDR-BSF MEETING BSF agrees not to fire on innocent Bangladeshis

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Border Security Force (BSF) of India yesterday reached an agreement on five issues, including not firing on innocent Bangladeshi people in border areas and sharing information about terrorists, on the first day of a three-day border meeting.

They also agreed to work jointly against smuggling of ammunition, fake currency and drugs.

Brig Gen MA Bari is leading the 12-member BDR delegation at the meeting at Hotel Naz Garden in Bogra while the 16-member BSF team is headed by North Bengal Frontier Inspector General Shree RATewaree.

Other members of the BDR delegation are Col Md Iqbal, Col Syed Yusuf Mahub Ali, Col AKM Waheduzzaman, Col Noor Mohammad Noor Islam, Col Mohammad Abdul Halim, Col Rezaul Kabir, Lt Col Naser Ahmed, Major RMM Ashad Ud-Doula, Major Mahmudul Hasan, Assistant Secretary to Foreign Ministry Preeti Rahman and Deputy Director of Land Records and Survey Department ABM Fazlur Rahman.



Appeal for help

Badhan Roy Joy, a student of electrical and electronics department of Buet, is suffering from a disease called Ankylosing Spondylitis, says a press release.

According to doctors, an operation is required immediately to transplant his hip, otherwise the lower half of his body will become paralyzed.

The operation will cost nearly Tk 10,00,000 which is almost impossible for his family to arrange.

Fellow students and Buet authorities have started a campaign to raise fund for him. But as the money is needed within 10 to 12 days, a quick response from people of affluent section is needed.

Contributions can be sent to Account No 34223635 of Sonali Bank, Buet Branch, Dhaka.

FOWA donates Tk 20 lakh to AMCH

Foreign Office Wives' Association (FOWA) has donated Tk 20 lakh to Ahsania Mission Cancer Hospital (AMCH) recently, says a press release.

Mme Nicole S Chowdhury, chief patron of FOWA and the wife of Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, handed over a cheque for the amount to Dhaka Ahsania Mission President Kazi Rafiqul Alam at a ceremony at the State Guest House Padma to this end.

Of this amount, Tk 10 lakh will be spent to build a two-bed cabin while the income from the rest Tk 10 lakh, which will be kept as fixed deposit in a bank, will be spent for the treatment of poor cancer patients.

This cabin and money will be mainly used for the treatment of female and child cancer patients. FOWA President Jahan Ara Siddiqui and Dhaka Ahsania Mission President Kazi Rafiqul Alam signed an agreement in this regard.

The foreign adviser and FOWA General Secretary Nuzhat Amin Mannan also spoke at the ceremony that was also attended by Foreign Secretary Md Towhid Hossain, AMCH Managing Director Muhammad Fazlur Rahman and other members of FOWA and Mission officials.

Annual picnic

Annual picnic of NGFF School Alumni Association will be held at Zia Film City at Andarmanik in Gazipur on February 1, says a press release.

Members of the association have been requested to contact soon to convenor (01711-591517) or member secretary (01715-607474).

Siddheswari School

The annual picnic of Siddheswari High School Ex-students Association (1967 batch) will be held at Shineeupur Bhuia Bari in Munshiganj on February 1, says a press release.

Interested members of the association have been requested to contact Member Secretary Nasir Uddin (7212971; 01715-150552).



The launch of a book titled "The Ishtiaq Papers" was held at Shaheed Zia auditorium at the National Museum in the city yesterday. (From left) Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed, Justice Mustafa Kamal, Sufia Ahmed, Taslima and Barrister Nihad Kabir hold copies of the book at the launching ceremony. Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed Smriti Parishad organised the event to mark the 76th birth anniversary of Barrister Ishtiaq.

Literacy for all a must for good governance

Experts from Asian countries tell regional meet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education experts from nine Asian countries at a meeting yesterday said different programmes considering the realities of respective countries should be planned for eliminating illiteracy.

At a regional meeting of the Asia and Pacific Literacy Initiative For Empowerment (LIFE) in the city, they said same plan will not be perfect for all countries and education programmes should be prepared from bottom to top.

"Education programmes are usually taken centrally. For this reason many programmes have failed to reach the target. We should plan all programmes from bottom to top, not from top to bottom. Ways of implementing the programmes might be different considering the country's reality," said MA Hameed Hakeem, education adviser and co-ordinator of APPEAL, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Bangkok.

The four-day-long regional meeting from January 21 to 24 was organ-

ised jointly by UNESCO Dhaka office, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) and UNESCO Regional Bureau in Bangkok at Brac Inn.

Around 35 education experts from nine Asia and Pacific LIFE countries Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan, and Papua New Guinea are taking part in the meeting.

Addressing as chief guest at the inaugural session, Primary and Mass Education Secretary Mosharrar Hossain Bhuiyan said democracy and good governance cannot be sustained in the country without ensuring literacy for all.

"Now a days democracy and good governance are quite popular, but I strongly feel that the first priority should be education for all. We cannot sustain either democracy or good governance without ensuring literacy for all," he said.

Mentioning different programmes including Universal Primary Education Programmes of 1980-81 and The Compulsory

Primary Education Act 1990 undertaken by the government, Bhuiyan pointed out that Bangladesh's commitment for education for all was very much ingrained in those efforts.

Describing the overall goal of LIFE regarding empowering of people, especially women and girls who have inadequate literacy skills and competencies, Malama Meleisea, director and representative of UNESCO Dhaka as well as chair of the inaugural session, put stress on re-energising the LIFE initiatives.

LIFE was initiated by UNESCO as a ten-year-long key operational mechanism (2006-2015) within the United Nations Literacy Decade, to accelerate literacy efforts in 35 countries that have a literacy rate of less than 50 percent and/or an adult population of more than 10 million people without literacy competencies.

Ulrike Hanemann, senior programme specialist of UIL, also spoke at the inaugural session, while Hassan A Keynan, programme specialist of UNESCO Dhaka moderated different sessions.

Pay all arrears within a month

Demand small jute traders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Small Jute Traders and Cultivators' Association yesterday gave Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) one-month's ultimatum to pay their arrears or else they will go for tougher agitations, including hunger strike.

Small jute traders also vowed to stop selling jute to BJMC if their arrears are not paid within the deadline.

They alleged that the BJMC chairman is responsible for destroying the jute industry and for their untold sufferings.

They also demanded immediate resignation of the BJMC chairman.

About hundred small jute traders and cultivators from across the country placed the demands before the government at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

The jute traders and cultivators said they are living a miserable life, as BJMC are not paying their arrears.

Some of the jute traders claimed that they are on the run, as they are unable to repay the bank loans.

BJMC owes about 7000 jute traders and cultivators Tk 150 crore, the association leaders said.

It also demanded a coordinated jute policy to save this industry.

"I cannot stay in my village home as the respective bank has filed a 'certificate case' against me since I was unable to pay back the loans," said Abul Hossain of Khulna.

JMB man held

A CORRESPONDENT, Cnawabganj

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested a member of outlawed Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) at a village in Gomostapur upazila in Chapainawabganj.

Acting on a tip-off, Rab raided Kadamtil village of the upazila and arrested Rabiul Islam, 30, son of Lal Mohammad of the village.

DU teachers, students continue demo

FROM PAGE 1

and students threatened more demonstrations.

Demonstrating DU teachers, who staged a three-hour sit-in in front of the Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) yesterday, said they would continue their protest until the detainees were freed and the cases were withdrawn. They claimed the students and the teachers did not commit any crime so they cannot be punished and there cannot be any question of mercy from anyone.

Classes were suspended during the sit-in.

Today a Dhaka court is scheduled to deliver a verdict in another case filed against the teachers and students in connection with violating the EPR in August.

Security measures on campus were beefed up yesterday morning. Police set up checkpoints at different entrances to campus while some entrances were closed altogether for the entire day.

Former president of Duta Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique said, "Teachers have respect for the law... We do not want to comment on the verdict." He, however, reiterated their demand.

The verdict proved that the teachers did not commit any crime and if they were innocent then why were they detained for five months, he questioned.

While the demonstrating teachers, mainly belonging to pro-Awami League Blue Panel and left-leaning Pink Panel, claimed that the acquittal of the teachers was the outcome of their demonstration, the acting president and general secretary of Duta claimed that it was the outcome

of their negotiations.

Duta acting President Prof Tazmeri SA Islam and acting General Secretary Dr Mamun Ahmed belong to the pro-BNP-Jamaat White Panel.

RU CONVICTS RELEASED The government yesterday freed 10 Rajshahi University (RU) students and an employee convicted in a case for torching a DGI vehicle, reports our staff correspondent in Rajshahi.

The Rajshahi Central Jail authorities said they released the convicts following President Prof Iajuddin Ahmed's clemency to the convicts.

Earlier, the family members of the convicts urged the government to release them.

The freed students were given a warm reception at the jail gate by hundreds of their fellow students and relatives at 6:20pm.

They went to the RU campus and paid homage to the country's first martyred intellectual Dr Shamsuzzoha.

The released students are -- Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) RU unit Secretary Ayen Uddin, Joint Secretary Aziz Bin Kamal Uzzal, Udichi RU unit General Secretary Abu Sayem, BCL and Udichi activists Dipayan Sarkar Dwip, Mizanur Rahman Mithu, Sardar Ayaz, SM Fakrul Islam Raihan, Shamim Ahmed, Kazi Abdul Latif and Shakhawat Hossain.

Ataur Rahman, a driver and employee of the university, was also released.

Ataur was arrested in August last year while the students surrendered before court on January 20 and 21 after they were convicted in the case.

the 10 students and the employee to three years of rigorous imprisonment and fined them Tk 5,000 each.

The court acquitted two teachers -- Prof Sarwar Jahon Sajal and Golam Sabbir Sattar Tapu and RU Deputy Chief Information Officer Sadekul Islam.

Rajshahi DGI Assistant Director Shawkat Ali filed the case.

The clemency to the convicted RU students and an employee came in the wake of continuous student demonstration on the RU campus.

Earlier, RU students held an array of programmes including bringing out procession, laying siege to the administrative building, organising token hunger strike, human chain, and cultural function on the campus for the release of the convicts.

They boycotted classes from 11:00am to 1:00pm demanding withdrawal of the case filed by the RU authorities against the students for causing violence on the campus on August 23 last year.

Several hundred students and family member of the convicted students brought out a black flag procession carrying a coffin on the campus.

They laid siege to the administrative building for half an hour and staged a demonstration carrying banners and placards.

Hundreds of students formed a human-chain in front of the central library at about 1:00pm.

Students under the banner of Students Against Repression wearing black ribbons observed a two-hour token hunger strike in front of the central library and held a cultural function.

DHAKA TODAY Discussion Workers Party of Bangladesh organised a discussion on Shaheed Asad and mass upsurge in '69. Venue: Shaheed Asad Auditorium. Time: 4:00pm. Roundtable Shushashoner Janna Nagorik organises a roundtable on EC's road map to election and its implementation. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:00am. Seminar Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum organises a seminar on early childhood development. Venue: Biam Foundation. Time: 10:00am. Discussion Bhashani Smriti Sangshad organises a discussion to mark the home coming day of Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani. Venue: Bhashani Bhaban, 51 Santi Nagar. Time: 10:00am. Rotary Dhaka The regular meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka will be held. Venue: Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 5:30pm.