

N'GANJ DOUBLE MURDER

Four to die, five others
get life

UNB, Narayanganj

Four people, including two brothers, were sentenced to death yesterday for killing a woman and her daughter in Deobhog area under Fatulla Police Station.

Five others were also jailed for life for the sensational murders over family feuds.

Those who will walk to the gallows are Kamal Hossain, 34, son of Nurul Huq, his brother Mohiuddin Ahmad Chanchal, 30, their brother-in-law Anwar Hossain Anu, 46, and hired killer Aatur Rahman alias Ata, 45.

The lifers are Nurul Huq, 70, his daughter Nurunnahar Runa, 35, and hired killers Joj Mia, 32, Mukter Hossain, 35, and Afjal Hossain, 36.

District and Sessions Judge Abdul Kuddus Mia delivered the verdict in a crowded court in the

sensational murder case of Monwara Begum and her daughter Rajia Sultana Munn.

"All the nine convicts were in the dock and they broke down in tears when the judge pronounced the sentences," says a spot account of the scene.

Examining the records and 25 witnesses the judge acquitted Nurul Huq's wife Lutfia Begum, 60, of the charge.

According to the prosecution, Nurul Huq hired Aatur Rahman, Mukter Hossain and Afjal Hossain in February 2006 for Tk 2 lakh to kill his brother's wife Monwara, daughter Munn and son Shantu to grab the property of his late brother Abdur Razzak Bepari.

Later, as per their plan, Runa knocked the door of the widow's house on June 27. Kamal, Chanchal and Anwar along with three other

assassins stormed into the room as Monwara opened the door. The miscreants slaughtered Monwara and Munn.

Shantu, however, was saved as he had gone to visit his aunt's house in the morning.

Police recovered the bodies the following morning as local people called them, sensing something wrong.

The cunning Nurul Huq filed a robbery case with the local police station on the day accusing six local youths to conceal the fact.

Police at one stage of the investigation handed over the charge of the case to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID).

Later, the plainclothes policemen arrested Aatur Rahman. According to his confessional statement, the CID men broke the case and arrested the others.

Unite against fanatics

Say women's rights activists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The religious fanatics have violated the constitution by opposing the National Women Development Policy, which calls for equal rights of women as enshrined in the constitution, women's rights activists said at a discussion yesterday.

They urged all progressive and pro-liberation forces to unite against the fanatical groups who are speaking out against women's progress and equal rights.

Forum for Secular Bangladesh organised the discussion titled 'Fanaticism in Bangladesh and the rights of woman' at Bilia auditorium in the city, with Prof Kabir Chowdhury in the chair.

The equal rights of women are recognised worldwide, but only the fanatics are against them, Prof Chowdhury said.

He also urged the government to turn the National Women Development Policy into laws.

Woman leader Hena Das said religious fanatics are the greatest enemies of women's progress. They always try to hold back the empowerment of women in society, she added.

Shahriar Kabir, acting president of Forum for Secular Bangladesh, said, "We fought in the liberation war to establish a country where man and woman will enjoy equal rights and freedom."

Justice Ghulam Rabbani, Ayesha Khanam of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Mahfuza Begum of Peshajibi Nari Samaj, Afroza Haq Rina of Jatiya Nari Jote, Dr Dipu Moni of Awami League, Hazera Sultana of Nari Mukti Sangha and Rokeya Kabir of Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha also spoke at the discussion.

Edn exhibition begins tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Sixth International Education Exhibition-2008 will begin at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel tomorrow.

Some 15 local and foreign universities will take part in the three-day exhibition organised by the SSBCL Group.

They will provide students and their parents with all kinds of information about courses, career and employment opportunities, the organisers said at a press conference in the city yesterday.

The exhibition will be inaugurated at 10:00am at the Ball Room of the Sheraton Hotel. The Daily Star, ETV, Radio Today, Amar Desh, SNN Media Ltd and the Janakantha are the media partners of the exhibition.

SSBCL Group Chairman S Talukder and SNN Media Ltd Representative Dr Utpal Kumar Sarker spoke at the press conference.

'Implement Nat'l Women Dev Policy soon'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) yesterday called on the council of advisers to take necessary steps to implement the National Women Development Policy 2008 immediately.

In a statement, Executive Director of the association Salma Ali hailed the chief adviser and the women affairs adviser for formulating the policy.

But any delay in taking necessary steps to implement the policy might create obstacles to achieving the main objectives of the policy, she said.

The association expressed its hope that the policy would greatly help the elected government implement programmes for the development and empowerment of women.

200 new ASPs get postings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Police Headquarters has given postings to 200 newly recruited assistant superintendents of police (ASP) at various districts across the country.

The posting order signed by Inspector General of Police Nur Mohammad was issued on March 11, sources said.

The new ASPs were recruited through the 25th Bangladesh Civil Service examinations.

New BTB chairman takes charge



Md Ashraf Alim took over the charge of Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTB) chairman yesterday, says a press release.

Hew was serving as a member (maintenance) of BTB before this new assignment. He joined BTB in 1978 as an assistant divisional engineer.

Alim obtained his bachelor degree in electrical engineering in 1976 and masters degree in 1980 from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet).



The publication ceremony of a book titled 'Kakababur Toy House' by Dinu Billah was held at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday. From left are Nasiruddin Yusuf, Prof Abdul Halim, Prof Shawkat Ali, author Dinu Billah, Ramendu Majumder and Mafidul Haque. Sahitya Prakash published the book.

Develop tools to combat extremism

Says Dr Rohan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Rohan Gunaratna, an international counter-terrorism expert, yesterday called on the government to develop counter-terrorism tools immediately to combat extremism in the country in a proper way.

He warned that the threat of terrorism and extremism would remain in Bangladesh for a long time as the country is surrounded by extremist groups and the extremism-prone countries such as Pakistan and Afghanistan are not far away from here.

He also called on the government to work with academicians and intellectuals, clerics and religious organisations to develop counter-terrorism tools to discourage people from becoming extremists.

Dr Rohan, head of International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVT) at S Rajaratnam School of International Studies under Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, was speaking at a discussion organised by the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) at its auditorium in the city.

BISS Director General Maj Gen Jiban Kanai Das delivered a welcome address while Chairman of the board of governors of BISS Ambassador Mufleh R Osmani chaired the discussion attended by security experts and university professors.

Dr Rohan said the security issue of Bangladesh is not only important for its own people, but also for the region and international community

because of its geographical position.

He said the terrorist outfits, including the Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami (HuJI) Bangladesh and Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), are potential threats to the national security.

Lauding the government's action against JMB, he said fighting response is more important than the operation response in tackling terrorism.

Dr Rohan said educational institutions, media, and religious clerics could play a vibrant role in tackling extremism in Bangladesh.

So, the government should build a strategic relationship with the religious organisations, he said.

He also called on the government to keep a close eye on Internet/cyber system to stop the spread of terrorism.

Bangladeshis in S Arabia face serious image crisis

Expats tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over 15 lakh Bangladeshis living in Saudi Arabia are undergoing serious image crisis, as some vested quarters have magnified a few petty crimes of Bangladeshis in local media and identified Rohingya engaged in criminal activities as Bangladeshis, said the expatriates yesterday.

They said such a crisis has led to the arbitrary arrests and harassments of Bangladeshi expatriates living legally in Saudi Arabia, the largest labour market for Bangladeshis.

The expatriates were speaking at a roundtable organised by the Bhorer Kagoj at the National Press Club in the city.

They said if this situation continues for next few months and the government takes no effective measures to address the issue, one-fourth of the workers will be forced to return home, reducing the amount of foreign remittance significantly.

To overcome the crisis, a high-powered committee comprising experienced people having good ties with the Saudi Royal Family should be sent to the kingdom immediately for negotiation, they added.

"We are facing severe image crisis in Saudi Arabia. Since January this year, some Arabic language newspapers have been continuously publishing news items exaggerating the crimes of a few Bangladeshis," said MY Alauddin, a Bangladeshi businessman in the Saudi Kingdom.

He said such propaganda against Bangladeshis is on by some vested quarters who have become jealous at the possibility of recruiting several lakh Bangladeshi workers by Saudi Arabia for constructing four mega cities shortly.

Bangladeshis are now without guardians, said Alauddin, adding that panicked by police harassment, the Bangladeshi workers: most of the time now stay in their rooms.

"You will hardly see the Bangladeshi workers in the roads. If such situation continues for next two to three months, most of the Bangladeshis will return home," he said, adding that there are around three lakh Rohingyas holding Bangladeshi passports in Saudi Arabia who are basically involved in criminal activities.

Shafiqul Bashir Patwari, president of Bangladeshi Business Community in Dammam of Saudi Arabia, said an Indian committed a crime there, but the media reported that a Bangladeshi had done it.

Accordingly, the Bangladeshi who was not involved in the crime, was arrested, he said, adding that Saudi police are even destroying

Riyadh and strengthening the mission to improve relations between Saudi media and Bangladeshis communities.

They said the Anti-Corruption Commission should probe how the Rohingyas were issued Bangladeshi passports and punish the persons responsible for it.

The government should also seize the passports issued to Rohingyas, they added.

Speaking as chief guest, Lt Gen (ret) Shaikat Ali said there might be some sorts of sabotage by other labour sending countries regarding Bangladeshi workers in Saudi Arabia, but "We should also respond accordingly."

Jatiya Party leader GM Quader, former foreign secretary Moazzem Ali and Mohammad Zamir, recruiting agent Gulam Mostafa, trade union leaders Roy Ramesh and Nurul Islam also spoke at the roundtable moderated by Bhorer Kagoj Editor Shyamal Dutta.

No step taken to change Sharia law

Says law Adviser

UNB, Comilla

Law Adviser AF Hassan Ariff yesterday said the ministry has not taken any step to change the Sharia law and there are no chances of changing it.

"It's simply a rumour and confusion has been created for it. But there is no room for confusion in this regard," he said while inaugurating the extended multi-storey building of Comilla Bar Association.

The adviser said their main task is to hold a fair election and to provide overall cooperation to the Election Commission for the election.

Comilla Bar Association President Adv Majib Rahman presided over the inaugural meeting which was also addressed by Deputy Commissioner Manjurul Islam, senior lawyer M Ismail, Syed Abdullah Pintu, Shankar Kumar Saha, Kazi Nazmul Sadat, Quamrul Hayat Khan and Abul Bashar.

The lawyers placed a set of demands to the adviser, including the setting up of a labour court and another court of women and children repression protection tribunal.

INDO-BANGLA TALKS

Border forces agree to maintain peace

UNB, Chapainawabganj

Border security forces of Bangladesh and India at a sector commander level meeting yesterday agreed to maintain peace along the border.

The meeting held at Mohdpur opposite Sonamasjid in Shibganj upazila discussed push-in of Bengali speaking Indian nationals, women and children trafficking, smuggling of drug, arms and explosives and unprovoked firing by BSF killing innocent people.

BDR official Syed Abu Hasan told UNB that BSF team led by DIG Dipak Singh Sidhu pledged for restraining his force from shooting down innocent people. He also assured strict measures against smuggling into Bangladesh of drug, arms and explosives.

Rajshahi sector commander Major Mohammad Iqbal led the 21-member BDR delegation at the meeting.

Microsoft official meets Akbar Ali

BSS, Dhaka

Chief of Microsoft Asia-Pacific Chris Etkinson and Senior Vice President of Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS) Shoyeb Chowdhury called on Regulatory Reforms Commission (RCC) Chairman Dr Akbar Ali Khan at this office here on Tuesday.

During the meeting, they discussed various important issues related to Intellectual Property Rights Act and ways to stop software piracy. Khan assured of possible cooperation in this regard, a Basis press release said.

Microsoft's Bangladesh Country Manager Firoze Mahmud was also present during the meeting. Etkinson is in Bangladesh on a two-day visit, it said.

Homoeopathy Fed executives

A 47-member executive committee of the Bangladesh chapter of World Federation of Homoeopathy was formed recently by Dr Md Mosharraf Hossain, Dr Md Mannan Kabir and Dr Md Abul Qusem Bhuiyan as its president, secretary general and treasurer for 2008-10, says a press release.

The new committee was formed at a general meeting of the organisation held at its office at Bangla Motor in Dhaka.

Five homoeopaths were also awarded Homoeo Ratna Padak at the meeting for their contribution to homoeopathy medical science. The awardees are Dr Prakash Mallik, a noted homoeopath from India and the president of World Federation of Homoeopathy, Dr Nikomol Barman, Prof Dr MA Mannan Kabir, Dr Md Jamal Uddin Ahmed and Dr Md Anwarul Azim.

Prof Dr MA Raqib Fazle and Dr Alamgir Matin were selected as members of the advisory council for the Bangladesh chapter of the federation.

Death anniversary



Today is the 7th death anniversary of Rawshan Ara Begum, wife of former customs official late Ahmed Fazlul Karim, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held after Zohr prayers at her residence.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the doa mahfil and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Call for effective laws to curb domestic violence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday called for effective laws to curb domestic violence against women.

They said domestic violence usually occurs as most people do not consider it a crime.

The speakers also called for changes in the mindset to prevent the social menace.

They urged people and organisations concerned to be vocal against the widespread but least recognised human rights abuses.

The roundtable titled 'We want effective laws to resist domestic violence against women' was organised by Jatiya Nari Nirjatan Pratirodh Forum (a national forum to resist violence against women) in cooperation with the Action Aid at Chhayanaut auditorium in the city to mark the International Women's Day.

Ranjana Karimaker, executive director of Steps Towards Development, said though women are making immense contribution to national economy, they are still facing discrimination and torture in the family.

"Domestic violence is a violation of human rights and we have to raise awareness in this regard," he added.

Journalist Shanta Maria said domestic violence against women takes place due to subordinate status of women in the society.

She said enacting effective laws to resist domestic violence against women is a must as most people consider it as a personal matter.

At the same time, awareness about the law should also be built up, she said, adding that it is possible to stamp out domestic violence if the discrimination between men and women could be eliminated.

Advocate Maksuda Akter Laily of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad said all kinds of torture including physical, mental and psychological should be regarded as domestic violence.

She said not only women and children but also aged persons and male children can also be the victims of domestic violence.

Maksuda said when a victim goes to police station for help, members of the law enforcement agencies refuse to take any action terming it a family or personal matter.

"Formulation of specific laws curbing domestic violence is a must to wipe out the menace," she added.

Mitali Jahan of Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) said Bangladesh Law Commission has taken an initiative to draft a bill on domestic violence and organisations concerned are working to make the draft more effective.

Forum President Anwar Hossain presided over the roundtable.

It is high time to bring reforms to police

Says IGP Nur Mohammad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad yesterday said it is high time to bring radical reforms to the police force to make it a service-oriented institution.

Most previous governments had used the police for their own interests, but the law enforcement agency has become more transparent and disciplined after 1/11, he said while exchanging views with NGO leaders at the Police Headquarters in the city.

The IGP also said that no policeman would be spared if found involved in crimes.

The Police Headquarters organised the meeting to exchange views on the draft of Bangladesh Police Ordinance 2007.

IGP Nur Mohammad said, "In the past, every government had spoken of the need to bring about radical reforms in the police but did not take steps to this end."

He also said some vested quarters had earlier collected some Tk 100 crore to Tk 150 crore in the name of recruitment in the police force. However, the recruitment process was halted during this government, he added.

The police have now greater power, he said, adding that they now need proper training and incentives.

Explaining various activities of the police, Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Naim Ahmed said the reforms are aimed at turning the police forces into a service-oriented institution.

Director General of Rapid Action Battalion Hasan Mahmud, Khandakar, chiefs of Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Special Branch (SB) and Detective Branch (DB), and several senior police officials were present at the meeting.

Representatives from Grameen Bank, ActionAid, Caritas, Proshika, Acid Survivors' Foundation, Ain O Shalish Kendra, Bangladesh Manabadhikar Samannaya Parishad, Democracy Watch, Shishu Odhikar Foundation and Blind Education took part in the discussion.

The NGO leaders said the law enforcement agencies are violating human rights through extra-judicial killings, crossfire and illegal arrest.

They also sought cooperation from the police in carrying out their activities.

Rab nabs 16 for cheating

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in the last two days arrested 16 people for trying to cheat a man in the guise of executives of a cellphone company.

Rab said a number of frauds claiming themselves as executives of a cellphone company called one Monindra Kumar Das recently and said he needs to pay Tk 1 lakh as VAT (Value Added Tax) and tax through flexi-load to claim a prize of Tk 22 lakh that he won in a lottery of the company.

After giving away Tk 60,000 through flexi-load, Monindra realised that he has been fooled and informed the matter to Rab.

A joint team of Rab intelligence wing and Rab-8 conducted a drive from Tuesday night and arrested the 16 alleged frauds from Dhaka and different places at Bhanga upazila in Faridpur.

The arrestees are identified as Mehedi, Nasir, Kamal, Riak, Ali Hossain, Sujon, Rezaul, Azizul, Khair Khandkar, Saddam Hossain, Syed Ali, Asad, Rafiq, Rubel, Shaheen and Shamim.

INT'L ELOCUTION CONTEST Bangladesh secures 2nd position

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh secured second position in the elocution competition under the Commonwealth Youth Programme in the Maldives capital Male yesterday.

The theme of the competition was "The environment-our future." The Bangladesh team secured the position on the basis of team performance.

Nazm-Us-Saddat of Bangladesh team has got third position on individual presentation and performance, said a press release of Bangladesh High Commission in Male.

The Bangladesh team members are: M Zahurul Islam Rohel, Nazm-Us-Saddat, Nazia Tajrian Amin, Talukder Shudarshan Mashrukh, Puspita Dewan, Ashiqul Alam, Nafis Alam and Sifat bint Islam.

The programme began on March 9 and will close today.



Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

There has chances of rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Jessore, Kushtia and Comilla during the period, Met Office said predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 33.6 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 17.6 degrees Celsius at Sayedpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:07pm today and rises at 6:08am tomorrow.

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	32.9	22.0	68	47
Chittagong	30.5	21.8	95	64
Rajshahi	33.0	17.8	67	45
Khulna	32.5	21.5	82	69
Barisal	33.3	20.8	73	46
Sylhet	31.8	20.8	73	50
Cox's Bazar	31.8	21.7	91	56