



Mamun still remains missing after two years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two years have elapsed since Enamul Haque Md Al Mamun, 52, a government official, went missing, but his family members could not find out his whereabouts until yesterday.

The family members said they still could not find Mamun because of lack of cooperation from the police.

Mamun, chief assistance of BTB (now BTCL), Mohakhali wireless transmission region, went out of his home at Indira Road in Farmgate on August 10 in 2006 for a morning walk but has not returned home as yet.

In a press release, the family members alleged that although they had filed general diaries with Teigaon Police Station more than once, the police did not take any effective measures to find out Mamun. Indifferent attitude of the police has also disappointed them, they added.

Many people have also tried to cheat the family members during their efforts to search for Mamun, the family members said, adding that they asked for police action against the frauds, but to no avail. Mamun is the eldest son of late Lt AM Ataul Haque, a freedom fighter and acting chief of Bangladesh Navy after independence.

His mother Begum Fazilatunnessa and other family members, who are eagerly waiting for his return, have requested those knowing his whereabouts to call at 9130656 or 01711177609.

JP demands safe return of Monju from abroad

UNB, Dhaka

Jatiya Party (Manju) yesterday demanded the government to clear ways for return from abroad of its chairman Anwar Hossain Monju.

Convicted and sentenced in absentia to jail for five years in liquor case Monju is living in USA.

The JP presidium meeting at its central office reviewed social-political situation prevailing in the country. It demanded that the government should remove all confusions and uncertainty about holding the parliamentary election pledged by the end of the year.

The meeting decided to observe the National Mourning Day on August 15 in a befitting manner.

Sadek Siddiqui, Shah Rafiqul Bari Chowdhury, Mofizul Hoque Bebu and Amena Bari were among those attended the meeting, which was presided over by Abdur Rahim.

Vishnu statue seized in Dinajpur

UNB, Dinajpur

Police yesterday seized a statue of touchstone from Sonapara village of Ghoraghat upazila, about 20km from the border, before it was smuggled out to India.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided the village. Sensing trouble the smugglers threw the statue of Hindu god Vishnu, weighing 9 kgs, into a pond. Police recovered it at 4:00pm.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the first death anniversary of Syed Matiar Rahman, a veteran journalist and a freedom fighter, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at 4:00pm at his residence (89/2/9, RK Mission Road) in the city.

Friends, relatives and admirers are requested to attend the programme.

Alhaj Nehal Uddin

The sixth death anniversary of Alhaj Nehal Uddin Ahmed, a retired deputy finance controller of army finance, was observed yesterday, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa and milad mahfil was arranged at his village home at Tarua in Brahmanbaria.

SPOUSAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Physical healthcare costs 4.1pc of GDP

Says CPD study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cost of physical healthcare related to spousal violence against women alone amounts to 4.1 per cent of the country's GDP (gross domestic product), according to a study report of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD).

The CPD conducted the study among 200 victims of violence in 12 districts.

It said that some 1.81 crore women fall victim to such violence a year, which costs Tk 13,187 crore in terms of healthcare expenditure.

"But the allocation for gender equity in the current fiscal amounts to only 49.8 per cent of the total cost of spousal violence," Fahmida Khatun, a CPD researcher, said at a dialogue on 'Domestic Violence in Bangladesh: Cost Estimates and Measures to Address the Attendant Problems' at Cirdap auditorium in the city.

Women and Children Affairs Adviser Rasheda K Choudhury was present as the chief guest while CPD Chairman Prof Rehman Sobhan presided over the dialogue.

The CPD study calculated the direct cost of treatment, housing and refuge or displacement, social service, civil legal service, criminal justice and lost income of the victims who sought assistance from four rights organisations -- Ain O Salish Kendra, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Service Trust, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad and Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association.

According to the study report, 40 per cent of women in urban areas and 42 per cent in rural areas are physically abused by their husbands and about 19 per cent of them experience severe physical violence.

Out of 200 respondents, 154 women spent Tk 14.61 lakh on physical healthcare, with each victim spending Tk 9,487 on an average, while 13 others received psychological therapy, which cost them Tk 1.35 lakh, with each victim spending Tk 10,453 on an average.

A total of 174 respondents said they had to spend Tk 3.55 lakh for housing and refuge.

Also, 188 of them had to spend Tk 1.98 lakh on shalish or arbitration and Tk 5.85 lakh on food and travel while receiving service in the family courts, the study said.

"Forty-three victims who wanted to take legal action had to pay Tk 2.18 lakh in bribes to the police, with each victim paying Tk 5,084 on an average," Fahmida said.

The study also said 41 victims had to spend Tk 7 lakh in fees for court and lawyers.

Stressing the need to increase the allocation for combating spousal violence, CPD recommended that access to government services, including one-stop service centres, special cells in police stations for domestic violence and temporary shelters, should be encouraged and enhanced.

"Making the people aware of the government services should be an integral part of the government

efforts at the grassroots level," Fahmida said, adding that the government should facilitate easy access to legal aid for the NGOs and other organisations helping victims of spousal violence.

Stressing the need to formulate an anti-domestic violence law, the CPD said such a law would act as a deterrent for violence and also help women receive justice quickly, thereby reducing the cost of spousal violence.

"We are now examining a draft law against domestic violence. Besides, we're also working to include the domestic violence issue in primary textbooks to make the students aware about it," Adviser Rasheda Choudhury said.

The government has also taken an initiative to strengthen the monitoring system and curb domestic violence, she added.

Stressing the need to remove the social acceptance of domestic violence, she asked the media to play a significant role in raising mass awareness about it.

Sultana Kamal, former adviser to the caretaker government, said the people from all strata, including the policymakers, have to change their mindset in order to check domestic violence.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Rehman Sobhan urged the civil society organisations to persuade the politicians to include the issue in their agenda.

Leaders of women and rights organisations and NGOs also took part in the discussion.



Women and Children Affairs Adviser Rasheda K Choudhury speaks at a dialogue on 'Domestic Violence in Bangladesh: Cost Estimates and Measures to Address the Attendant Problems' at Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. On her right are Prof Rehman Sobhan and Sultana Kamal and on her left is Swiss Ambassador Dora Rapold.

12-pt package programme taken for Sylhet dev

Says Iftekhar

BSS, Dhaka

Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday said the government has announced a 12-point package programme for the overall development of the greater Sylhet.

He said the announcement was made at the meeting of the council of advisers held in Sylhet with Chief Adviser Fakhruddin in the chair on July 21 last.

The foreign adviser said this while addressing the annual general meeting-2007 of Jalalabad Association, Dhaka at Biam auditorium as the chief guest.

Primary and Mass Education Adviser Rasheda K Choudhury

addressed the meeting as special guest while president of Jalalabad Association Syed Abdul Muktedir was in the chair.

Former lawmaker Sultan Mohammad Mansur Ahmed, former foreign secretary Syed Muazzem Ali, former finance secretary Siddiqueur Rahman Chowdhury, former commerce secretary Suhel Chowdhury, former president of the Association Abdul Malek, among others, addressed the meeting.

Iftekhar said the package programme included setting up of a special economic zone and taking steps for flourishing tourism industry in the Sylhet region, establishment of Sylhet Development

Authority.

He said works of some of the programmes under the package will be started very soon and rest of the programmes will start step by step.

He said the people of Sylhet, who participated in the War of Liberation in 1971, should be recognised for their sacrifice and contribution in war.

Rasheda K Choudhury said education should be given top priority for Sylhet as people of the region are lagging behind in education.

In this respect, she said, "We have to build social movement to educate to our children to ensure their better future."

Referring to a few social indexes Rasheda said the cases of early marriage, child mortality and maternal mortality are very high in the Sylhet region. She laid stress on the need for taking concerted efforts for removing these problems in the greater interest of people of this region.

Mentioning the rich cultural past of Sylhet she said the government has taken a decision to set up Hasan Raja Academy in Sunamganj.

The other speakers said the Bangladeshi expatriates are keeping significant contribution in the country's economy by sending huge remittances.

They said necessary training including catering and hospitality services is needed to make skilled human resources, which would help explore employment opportunities at home and abroad.

They said Jalalabad Association will provide such training to the interested people.

Siddique Rahman said, "We have to identify the problems of the Sylhet, which are the main hindrances of the socio-economic development of the region."

He said the association could play an important role in identifying the problems of the region and make recommendations to resolve those.

JCD-Shibir clash at Ctg Polytech Instt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

At least five students were injured at Chittagong Polytechnic Institute yesterday in a clash between the activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Islami Chhatra Shibir.

Of the injured, two students loyal to Shibir -- Osman and Saiful -- were admitted to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH).

Sources said the clash ensued when some JCD activists locked into an altercation with some Shibir activists on the campus at around 1:00pm over tearing down of result sheets of the admission test on a notice board.

The institute sources said the results of the admission test in the institute were published yesterday and the three-day admission process also started on the same day.

Later, JCD activists made an attack on some Shibir supporters that resulted in a clash between the two student wings at around 2:00pm.

Kotwali police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

Police said both the organisations were trying to get some loyal applicants admitted to the institute through influencing the admission process.

Assistant Commissioner (AC) of Kotwali zone Babul Akhter said they raided the hostels of the institute in the afternoon in search of the outsiders.

Marina Mahathir due in city tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir, daughter of former prime minister of Malaysia Dr Mahathir Mohammad, is due to arrive in the city tomorrow on a six-day visit to Bangladesh.

A rights activist, media personality, columnist and an influential blogger in policy and rights issues in Malaysia, Marina is coming to the country at the invitation of Bangladesh Centre for Development, Journalism and Communication (BCDJC) to attend a conference on 'Women and media'.

The conference supported by the European Commission is aimed at generating widespread awareness and policy recommendations on the issues related to women and media, says a press release.

Datin Paduka Marina, 49, is best known in Malaysia for her 17-year experience as a columnist in the Star newspaper, Musings and her charity work with an AIDS foundation. She is vocal in her support for women's rights and also expresses her opinions about conservative Muslims.

Her interests in issues affecting Malaysian society are reflected in her work with several non-government organisations (NGOs).

Marina is a member of Women's Aid Organisation, a shelter for battered women and children.

In 2000, Marina helped develop and produce a new TV programme for young women '3R-Respect, Relax and Respond' which deals with issues such as health, career, information technology, relationships and sexuality. The programme won an Asian TV Award for Best Information Programme in 2002.

During her stay here, Datin Paduka Mahathir will lead official meetings, forums and roundtables to raise awareness on HIV/AIDS and women's issues in the country.

She is expected to make courtesy calls with key government functionaries, including the chief adviser and will also have meetings with the home, foreign, women affairs and health advisers and the civil society leaders and activists.

Datin Paduka Mahathir is expected to meet Dr Mohammad Yunus and Fazle Hossain Abed and will visit Grameen Bank and Brac projects.



OCAS executives

METRO DESK

Ex-cadet Kaizer Sohail Ahmed was elected president and ex-cadet Aminul Quader Khalil general secretary of the executive committee of Old Cadets Association of Sylhet (OCAS) says a press release.

Election to the OCAS executive committee for the term 2008-10 was held at its convention and annual general meeting-2008 at a community centre in the city on Friday.

Ex-cadet Rajib Ahsan Kader was elected treasurer for the same term.



A 17-day art exhibition of 19 eminent artists begins at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday. (From left) Museum trustee Rabiul Husain, trustee Asaduzzaman Noor, artist Quayyum Chowdhury, trustee Dr Sarwar Ali and artist Maniruzzaman look at the artworks at the exhibition that will remain open from 10:00am to 7:00pm everyday.

1,000MW loadshedding on holiday

UNB, Dhaka

The country started from around 1,000 megawatt loadshedding in power supply during peak hours yesterday, the weekly holiday, as years of neglect has held down electricity generation.

People's sufferings due to irregular power supply were further stoked up by a hot and humid weather caused by a low over the Bay.

According to Power Development Board (PDB) control room, around 3,548-MW power was generated at 7:30pm against a demand for 4,350MW,

countrywide.

However, industry insiders believed that the gap between demand and supply was far more gaping than the official figures show, because as per Power System Master Plan, the country's electricity demand is supposed to be more than 5,000MW in 2008.

The PDB supplied about 1,400MW against a demand for about 2,000MW in Dhaka city.

For huge power shortages, many areas in the city had to experience 5-6 hours of outages in different spells, leaving people to sweat and productive activities

to slow down.

The frequent interruptions in the power supply also disrupted water supply, Wasa officials said.

A top official of the Wasa told the news agency that many of their water pumps had to remain out of operation when electricity supply stopped.

"This led to a serious scarcity in water supply in different areas in the city," he added.

PDB officials apprehended that the power supply situation might aggravate from today with the start of working days when electricity demand goes high.

3 killed, 60 injured in Jhenidah road crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Three people were killed and 60 others injured in a road accident at Halidani Bazar under Jhenidah Sadar upazila yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Ziaul Haq, 32, son of Nekbar Ali, Zahiruddin, 33, son of Odut Ali of Nathkundo village in Jhenidah and Shajahan Ali of Rai-laxmipur under Chuadanga district.

Locals and police said the accident occurred when a Khulna-bound passenger bus of JR

Paribahan from Meherpur turned upside down and fell into a roadside ditch near Halidani Bazar as tried to give side to a Meherpur-bound pickup van from Jhenidah. Three people died on the spot and 60 got injured. Of the injured, 30 were rushed to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital in a critical condition. Others were released after first aid in the hospital.

Of the critically injured, 14 were identified as Fatema Khatun, 32, Gulsar Ali, 44, Gahar Ali, 40, Naznin, 20, Joshna, 60, Rabeya, 50, Kanon, 10, Arsana, 13, Sarmi, 6, Bhaban, 25, Meherjan, 25, Milon, 25, Nazmun, 33, and Jahid, 25. The identity of others could not be known immediately.

The bodies were sent to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Boy dies in mud house collapse

UNB, Natore

A teenage boy was killed when their mud house collapsed on him during a heavy rainfall at Gut Mohishmari village in Singra upazila yesterday.

The dead was identified as Rashedul, 16, son of Golam Rasul.

Arrested outlaw sent to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

An arrested cadre of Lal Pataka faction of the outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (ML) was sent to jail by a judicial magistrate's court in Meherpur yesterday, court sources said.

Earlier, Sariful Islam, 32, was arrested by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) from the house of his father Mujibur Rahman at Kathuli village in Gangni upazila in Meherpur Friday night, Rab said. On his confessional statement, Rab recovered a light gun (LG) and two bullets from a pile of straw near the house.

Cartoon exhibition to create awareness against graft

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A two-day cartoon exhibition began at Satkhira Press Club auditorium yesterday.

Jointly organised by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) and Satkhira Sachetan Nagarik Committee, the exhibition was organised to create awareness among people against corruption. Satkhira superintendent of police Mirza Abdullah Baqui inaugurated the exhibition as chief guest.

Speakers stressed on building a social movement against corruption. They urged all including the civil society members to come forward to uproot corruption.

Among others, Principal Asit Kumar Majumdar, Advocate Abul Kalam Azad and Manirul Islam addressed.

135 TTC staffs not paid for over 5 yrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 135 trainers and employees of nine old Technical Training Centres (TTCs) have been unpaid for over five years leaving them with their dependents in great hardships amid ongoing price hike of essentials.

At a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium yesterday, the unpaid trainers urged the government to pay their arrears salaries for last 61 months before the Ramadan and bring their jobs under the revenue budget as assured earlier.

They said the duration of the project titled 'Strengthening of old nine TTCs by introducing latest trade courses' ended in June 2003, but the ministry concerned asked them to continue their job assuring them of bringing their jobs under the revenue budget.

Having the assurance of the expatriates' welfare ministry they did not quit their jobs and by this time their age of getting government service is over leaving them with no alternative but to continuing the unpaid job, said the speakers.

They said the ministry in a circular on May 15 last notified that 90 out of total 135 posts would be brought under the revenue budget making payments of all dues and arrears, but no action was taken in this regard.

The speakers said 20000 jobless youths are having training in these nine TTCs at different districts every year with certificates equivalent to SSC on electrical machine maintenance, architectural drafting with auto cad, welding and fabricating and industrial garment trades to become skilled expatriate workers for earning huge foreign exchanges.

They said it is unfortunate that they are the makers of skilled workers contributing to the development of the country but their children cannot go to schools due to financial crisis.

Chief trainer Md Atahia-bin-Khuda of Mymensingh TTC presented the keynote paper at the press conference which was also addressed by trainers Najma Akhter, Shibsankar Hawlader, Kamal Chandra Das and Md Shahidul.



No change in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over all six divisions in the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy rainfalls are also likely at one or two places over the country during the period, MetOffice said in a forecast.

It said that day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Highest temperature 34.8 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 24.6 degrees Celsius at Sandwip.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:35pm today and rises at 5:32am 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	32.8	26.5	73	60
Chittagong	31.5	25.5	78	90
Rajshahi	33.6	26.7	89	74
Khulna	32.5	27.8	76	82
Barisal	31.5	27.3	76	82
Sylhet	34.8	27.4	79	71
Cox's Bazar	31.0	24.9	81	87

DHAKA TODAY

View exchange meeting

Bangladesh Naya Samaj Parity organises a view exchange meeting on recently held elections, honest and competent candidates. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:30am.

Report launching

Board of Investment (BOI) and Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP) will jointly launch a report on 'Special economic zone: Performance, lessons learned and implications for zone development'. Venue: BIP conference room. Time: 2:30pm.

Luncheon meeting

The monthly luncheon meeting of Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) will be held. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 12:30pm.