



Mahbub Anam's eighth death anniversary today

METRO DESK

Today is the eighth death anniversary of eminent journalist and author Mahbub Anam, former editor of the now-defunct Bangladesh Times, says a press release.

In a distinguished career as a journalist, he also served as a senior executive of the then Pakistan Observer and senior vice-president of the Bangladesh Editors' Council and was actively involved with Bangladesh Sangbadpatra Parishad, Bangladesh Press Council and Bangladesh Sangbad Sanchalana Board.

For his contribution to journalism, he received Swadhinata Padak, Sher-e-Bangla Gold Medal, Moulana Akram Khan Gold Medal, Kalodhahi Padak and Tribhuj Gold Medal.

Besides, during his long and successful professional career, Mahbub Anam also served as the general manager of Jamuna Oil Company and director of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation.

He was actively involved in politics from his student life. In addition to being the general secretary of Salimullah Muslim Hall of Dhaka University in 1954-55, he was appointed acting publication secretary of the Jukta Front on behalf of the Awami League in 1954.

Mahbub Anam actively took part in the language movement in 1952. He was jailed several times for his role in the movement as general secretary of Tamaddun Majlish, Mymensingh unit, joint secretary of the Rashtrabhasha Sangram Parishad and general secretary of Salimullah Muslim Hall.

In recognition of his contribution to the language movement, he was awarded 'Bhasha Andoloner Bir Sainik Padak' by President Ziaur Rahman and the Matribhasha Padak (posthumously) by Tamaddun Majlish.

Mahbub Anam authored a number of books on the cultural and political identity of Bangladesh, including 'Amra Bangladesh Amra Bangali' and 'Itihashe Shikriti Bonam Bikriti'. He also served as the president of the Nattayamancha Bangladesh and the Bangladesh Sahitya Sangkriti Kendro and was actively involved with Bangladesh Film Censor Board and Bangladesh Public Library Special Committee.

He was the second son of eminent litterateur, journalist and politician late Abul Mansur Ahmad and elder brother of Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star.

AKM Abdullah

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the first death anniversary of AKM Abdullah, a freedom fighter and former official of Jibon Bima Corporation, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil and Qurankhwani will be held at his village home at Nandigram in Laxmipur after Asr prayers.

Friends, relatives and admirers are requested to attend the programme and pray for peace of the departed soul.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Peoples Party, passed away at LabAid hospital in the city early yesterday at the age of 82, says a press release.

She left behind her five sons, four daughters, and a host of relatives to mourn her death.

She was buried at her family graveyard at Gimadanga village in Gopalganj.

Leaders of different political parties expressed shock at her death.

WARRANT OF PRECEDENCE

Lawmakers for upgrade in their status

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League-led ruling alliance lawmakers yesterday overwhelmingly backed a demand for restoration of the warrant of precedence promulgated in 1973 in order to upgrade their status.

As per the warrant of precedence of '73, the rank of MPs was higher than any unelected persons.

Moyeen Uddin Khan Badal, a lawmaker from Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), a component of AL-led alliance, placed the demand in parliament and requested the Speaker to direct the authorities to change the existing warrant of precedence.

The lawmakers spontaneously supported the demand by thumping their desks. After the speech of Badal, AL president Sengupta said the matter should be settled once and for all.

"Let the issue be settled once and for all. MPs will get privileges over everybody," Suranjit, also chairman of the parliamentary standing com-

mittee on the law ministry, said while taking part in the unscheduled brief discussion that began following a remark of the health minister, which provoked a sharp reaction from the JSD lawmaker.

Badal said that according to the existing warrant of precedence, which was made during the military regime in 1986, the status of MPs is lower than the cabinet secretary, principal secretary and chiefs of three services.

But it was Bangabandhu who properly recognised the dignity of lawmakers and upheld their status and there was a little gap between the ministers and the MPs, he added.

"But the existing warrant of precedence has widened the gap between the ministers and MPs," he said. According to the warrant of precedence, the ministers rank fifth in order of precedence while the MPs 13th.

Badal alleged that ministers do not respond to lawmakers' queries with respect due to the wide gap in the status in order of precedence.

The JSD lawmaker also demanded that the Speaker expunge a remark made by Health Minister AFM Ruhul Haque while answering to a query from Badal during the question-answer session.

In reply to a query, the health minister said he who raised the issue of the practice of going abroad for treatment will also go abroad for treatment if he gets such an opportunity.

Taking floor to give his personal clarification, Badal strongly protested the minister's remark and said he never took any kind of opportunities during his political career.

Deputy Speaker Shawkat Ali, who was presiding the sitting at that time, assured the lawmaker of examining the remark of the health minister and taking necessary steps.

"The minister's remark will be expunged, if necessary," he said.

About the demand for amendment to the warrant of precedence, the deputy speaker said necessary action would be taken on receiving notice on the matter.



Sammita Sangskritik Jote members observe one minute's silence in memory of language movement veteran Gaziul Haque at a citizens' condolence meeting on the Central Shaheed Minar premises in the city yesterday.

FM to hold talks with Indian ministers today

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni will hold high-level consultation with top Indian ministers during her transit halt in New Delhi today, highly placed sources said.

The foreign minister will meet her Indian counterpart SM Krishna and Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee this afternoon to discuss bilateral ties.

Later, she will leave for the Sri Lankan capital to attend the fourth Saarc ministerial conference on children.

Our New Delhi Correspondent Pallab Bhattacharya adds: Dipu Moni will be carrying a letter from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, but since he (Manmohan) is in Italy to attend the G-8 summit, she will hand over the letter to SM Krishna.

This will be the first visit by a Bangladeshi minister to India since the Awami League government headed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina came to power with an overwhelming mandate in January this

year.

Dipu Moni's visit will be followed by a trip to Delhi with a ten-member delegation of Bangladeshi lawmakers led by veteran AL leader and former water resources minister Abdur Razzak to discuss with some Indian leaders, including the water resources minister, the Tipaimukh project.

Later, the delegation will fly to Manipur for a spot visit to the project site.

Meanwhile, the inauguration of the two-day fourth Saarc senior officials' conference on children will be held from 9:30am to 10:40am today at Hotel Hilton in Colombo -- a significant event for the region going to be held after a period of 13 years.

The fourth Saarc ministerial conference on children to be inaugurated tomorrow at 9:15am under the patronage of Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickramanayake.

The conference will focus on several important issues such as poverty, income anomalies, natural disasters, regional conflicts and several other issues, which have a direct impact on the region's children.

One missing rifle from BDR HQ recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members recovered one more rifle with two bullets hidden underground at a place of Enayetganj lane in the city's Hazaribagh area on Tuesday night.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Rab-2 recovered the firearm and ammunition at around 8:00pm, said Rab officials.

Police and Rab men suspect that the firearm and the bullets are the part of looted arms and ammunition from the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) during the mutiny on February 25-26.

Earlier on Monday, another team of Rab members recovered 76 bullets of SMG rifle from Baddanagar of Hazaribagh.

The bullets were found underground at an abandoned place near the house of Rowshan Ali of Baddanagar Lane.

These were also taken away from the BDR headquarters during the mutiny, sources added.

After the mutiny, about 100 firearms and innumerable number of bullets went missing from Pilkhana. Later, a number of firearms and several hundred bullets were found in and around the mutiny spot.



Prof Muzafer Ahmad speaks at a roundtable on movement against Tipaimukh dam at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right is ANM Isa and on his left is Justice Abdur Rouf. (Story on Page 1)

JS committee chairmen receive flags for use in cars

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chairmen of parliamentary standing committees yesterday received flags inscribed with the monogram of the Jatiya Sangsad to use them in their cars.

Speaker Advocate Abdul Hamid handed over flags to the chairmen of some committees. The remaining chairmen were asked to collect the flags from the parliament secretariat.

"We are trying to make parliament the focal point of all political activities so that lawmakers can work towards building a prosperous nation," the speaker said, adding that the chiefs of the parliamentary committees will also be provided with some other facilities.

The entertainment allowance for the office of the committee chairman was raised to Tk 6,000 from Tk 2,502 and each of them will have a gunman for their security, he said.

The committee chairman will also have a personal assistant and a peon, the Speaker added.

According to an earlier decision of the parliament secretariat, lawmakers will be provided with vehicles instead of the opportunity to import duty-free cars.

Emphasising the need to strengthen the committees, the speaker said main functions of parliament are carried out by these committees.

Deputy Speaker Shawkat Ali, Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister GM Quader and opposition chief whip Zainul Abidin Faroque were present at the ceremony held at the Ministers' Hostel on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban premises.

BOU HSC results published

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Results of the final examinations of Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) programme under Bangladesh Open University (BOU) were announced yesterday, says a press release.

A total of 90,723 students appeared in the 1st and 2nd year examinations of them 42,051 students appeared in the final examinations. The pass percentage is 51.59.

Of the successful candidates 44 achieved A, 472 got A(-), 2609 got B, 13,150 got C and 5,419 students passed in D grades.

The total successful candidates are 21,694, of which 11,071 are male and 10,623 are female students.

Urumqi situation now under control

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The violent situation that occurred in Urumqi under Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, has now been brought under control, and public order has returned to normal, said a news bulletin of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Dhaka yesterday.

According to the news bulletin, highly violent crimes involving beating, smashing, looting and arson took place in Urumqi on July 5.

A large number of innocent civilians and armed policemen were killed and many others were injured.

However, the CPC Committee and the government of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region paid great attention to the situation.

Police were speedily deployed to protect people's life and property, maintain social stability and restore public order.

Facts have fully shown that these were premeditated crimes of violence instigated by separatists abroad and organised and carried out by separatists inside the country.

The World Uyghur Congress headed by the ethnic separatist Rebiya Kadeer made an issue of an incident in Shaoguan, Guangdong Province and directly instigated and staged these highly violent crimes.

On June 26, a brawl broke out between workers from Xinjiang and local workers in Shaoguan, Guangdong Province. It was an ordinary case of public order and was properly handled.

But the World Uyghur Congress, an overseas East Turkistan organisation, used

that incident to vilify China's ethnic and religious policies in an attempt to create publicity and stir up trouble.

Some people with ulterior motives inside China acted in collusion with the World Uyghur Congress. They played up the Shaoguan incident and made a lot of noise on the Internet.

The bulletin also said the violent crimes involving beating, smashing, looting and arson had inflicted heavy losses of life and property. At 220 sites, the rioters set fire to buildings, smashed or burned vehicles and killed people.

The cruelty of their deeds was abhorrent. According to initial figures so far, 1080 people were injured and 156 killed including 57 who were beaten to death right on roads or alleys.

The ethnicity and gender of those killed are being identified by medical experts.

The death toll is still rising, about 260 vehicles were destroyed, around 203 shops damaged, 14 private residences ruined and buildings of various types with a total floor space of 56,850 square meters burned by the rioters.

However, transport and public order in Urumqi have now returned to normal. Xinjiang today enjoys development and prosperity.

The news bulletin further said, "We are unequivocally against ethnic separatism, violence and terrorism. Unity among people of all ethnic groups, social harmony and stability represent the highest interests of the Chinese nation including 21 million people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang."

Listed criminal, cop injured in gunfight

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gunfight between police and muggers injured a listed criminal and a policeman early yesterday in the city's Kalsi area under Pallabi Police Station.

Bullet-hit mugger Aminul Islam Mithu, 22, was caught and admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital under police custody, while injured Constable Jalal Uddin to Rajarbagh Police Hospital.

Mithu received three bullets at his two legs.

Sources said the gunfight began as police chased the muggers while snatching a pedestrian at around 2:00am on Kalsi Road.

Both police and criminals exchanged around 10 gunshots that left them injured. However, other members of the gang fled the spot, leaving Mithu, a knife and two bullets.

Sub-Inspector Tofazzal Hossain of Pallabi Police Station said Mithu is a listed criminal in the area, adding that several cases were filed against him on charges of mugging and other criminal activities.

Talking to The Daily Star, the injured criminal admitted to his various criminal activities, adding that he left the path of mugging and was trying to manage a job.

He claimed that police shot him pointing guns at his legs.

Hearing on writ petitions by Shah Alam today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday adjourned until today hearing of the writ petitions filed by Bashundhara Group Chairman Ahmed Akbar Sobhan alias Shah Alam, his wife and their two sons challenging their convictions handed down by the trial court in a tax evasion case.

The HC bench of Justice Mirza Hussain Haider and Justice Borhan Uddin also fixed Thursday (today) for further hearing on the petitions.

Meanwhile, the tenure of HC orders staying the conviction and sentence of Shah Alam, his wife and their two sons in this case expired yesterday.

Following a government's time prayer, the court on June 22 extended till July 8 its earlier orders staying their conviction and sentence.

Their lawyer Barrister Fida M Kamal told newsmen that the HC's stay orders will continue as the HC has been holding hearing on the matters.

He made submission yesterday before the HC on the question of maintainability of the writ petitions when the court asked him about it.

He said writ petitions are maintainable in the High Court, as those were filed challenging the legality of the 'illegal verdict' of the trial court.

Additional Attorney General MK Rahman appeared for the government.

The trial court on September 30, 2007 convicted and sentenced Shah Alam and three of his family members to eight years' imprisonment each in absentia in the case filed by the National Board of Revenue (NBR).

The convicts filed separate two writ petitions with the HC challenging the legality of the verdict.

Chehlum

METRO DESK



Chehlum of Zia U Abdin, a senior research fellow of AQ Chowdhury Science & Synergy Pvt Ltd, will be held at his residence at 1350, East Shewrapara, Mirpur in the city after Asr prayers tomorrow (Friday), says a press release.

Friends, relatives and admirers are requested to attend the chehlum and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Zia U Abdin passed away on June 2.

Razia Khatun

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chehlum of Razia Khatun, daughter of former chairman Satarul union, will be held at her residence at Nikunja in the city after Maghrib prayers today, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at her father's residence in the city after Juma prayers tomorrow.

Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to attend the programme.

Over 50 canals near death

FROM PAGE 1

It was evident from onsite visits that the last remaining canals are still under threat of encroachment. The canals, which are kept open and being maintained by Wasa, are also being narrowed down at different places.

Locals say the demolished concrete structures have been raised again on the canal.

Wasa put a warning notice against encroachment and garbage dumping into the canal to no avail, as a one-storey workshop was constructed on the canal just 15 feet away from the notice plaque.

One multi-storey building, which was dismantled last year near Ibrahimpur Poolpar, has recently been rebuilt.

The demolished structures are being rebuilt right after holding of the last general elections, says a local resident.

Baisteki Khal. One-thirds of Baisteki canal in Mirpur-11 could be saved from the clutches of encroachers thanks to demarcation and protection of its banks, but the rest is still occupied at different places.

The width of the canal is narrowed down to one-thirds of what it was a few years ago, recalls Abdul Awal, a resident of Palash Nagar.

Clean water used to flow

through the canal around 12 years ago, but now it has turned into a canal of effluent, says Md Siraj, a resident of Lalmatia under section-11.

Jirani Khal. Around 11 roads from Mugda to Madartek Nandipara crossed this canal narrowing it down to a shrinking water channel, say residents of Madartek.

Of the roads, only three have culverts on the crossing points, while the rest were constructed right over the canals keeping pipes underneath for water flow.

Jalil, a Wasa worker tasked with cleaning the canal passages, says the 18-inch pipe which was set up at the crossing points of the roads should be replaced by culverts to maintain water flow as the existing pipes are not sufficient.

The pipes become clogged within a week of cleaning, hindering normal water flow of the canal, which has a link with the Balu river, says Md Monir, a resident of Hindupara in Madartek.

Shajahanpur Khal. Once Shajahanpur canal had a link with Hatirjheel-Begunbari canal and Ramna lake, says Jamil, a resident of Gulbagh.

The links were blocked in Gulbagh and near Khidma Hospital in Khilgaon, he adds.

The canal has still a link with the Balu, which now carries only wastewater, he says, adding rampant encroachment narrowed down the channel.

Baunia Khal. Once the name of the Baunia canal was "Kahor Doriya" (huge waterway), as it was wide like a river. But now it has been reduced and falling prey to illegal grabbing.

Around 50 signboards, claiming ownership of canal land, can be seen on the water in Palash Nagar in Mirpur-11 and earth-filling is going on at many points.

Mohakhali Khal. Mohakhali canal, flowing from Shahinbagh Railway culvert to Begunbari canal through Niketan project, also has been encroached at different places.

A Wasa drainage circle official says they have already started canal recovery drive and will gradually bring all the 26 canals under it.



Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at many places over all the six divisions with moderately heavy to heavy falls at places over Chittagong and Barisal divisions in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 7:50pm today and rises at 6:18am tomorrow. Country's highest temperature 34.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 24.7 degrees Celsius at Chittagong.

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	32.3	26.4	76	75
Chittagong	28.8	24.7	85	87
Rajshahi	33.6	26.2	81	77
Khulna	33.0	25.6	77	78
Barisal	32.0	25.6	80	76
Sylhet	34.0	26.5	67	92
Cox's Bazar	29.6	25.0	82	96



Roundtable

The daily Bhorer Kagoj organises a roundtable on 'Importance of learning English as international language for better entry in global job market and world business'. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 10:00am.

Workshop

The inaugural ceremony of a workshop on 'Result of the programme funded research in support of the national food policy and review of on-going projects' will be held. Venue: Sheraton Hotel. Time: 5:30pm. FAO organises the workshop.

Training

The inaugural ceremony of the training programme on 'Climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in South Asia' will be held. Venue: DU senate auditorium. Time: 10:30am. Faculty of Earth and Environment of DU and Saarc Disaster Management Centre in New Delhi jointly organise the training.