

BOAT CAPSIZES
2 drown, 3 missing in Kurigram

UNB, Kurigram

Two people drowned and three others went missing as an engine-run boat sank in the river Brahmaputra at Nauwarchar in Chilmari upazila yesterday.

The dead were identified as Balram Das, 45, of Majipara and Jamena Begum, 65, of Rajarhat in the upazila.

Police said the incident took place around 10:00am when the boat bound for Roumari from Kachkol Bazar suddenly capsized in the mid-river with some 30 passengers on board.

Twenty-five passengers managed to swim ashore while three still remained missing.



An exhibition of handicrafts made by autistic children began at Autism Welfare Foundation office in the city yesterday. The Foundation organised the event to mark the World Autism Awareness Day. The exhibition will remain open from 10:00am to 5:00pm daily up to April 8.

An event by autistic children

Six-day handicraft fair by challenged children begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The premises of Autism Welfare Foundation at Mohammadpur in the city was high in cheerful spirits yesterday with the launching of a six-day long product fair prepared by autistic children.

The AWF organised the fair to mark the World Autism Awareness Day and its sixth founding anniversary on Friday.

Yasin Ahmed Chowdhury, a 14 years old boy, was among the 150 autistic children participating in the exhibition. Yasin was seen to prepare an artificial bonsai with beads with full concentration. He was happy but could not express his feelings for his condition.

The student of autistic children's school, Kanan, run by the AWF presented their products to the visitors at the fair.

Dr Rowan Hafiz, chairperson of AWF, said the purpose of the fair is to create awareness

about autistic children. "They are no longer burdens of the society. They can now manifest their abilities with a little assistance," she added.

Dr Rowan said the awareness should begin from the family. "The tendency to hide autism of a children is the major reason why autistic children do not receive proper care and endorsement for their abilities," she added.

The government should take a rehabilitation programme for such kids, she observed.

The six-day long fair also includes painting exhibition, painting competition and cultural performance by autistic children and their health check-up.

Gazi Mohammad Nurul Kabir, director of Jatiya Protibondhi Unnayan Foundation, inaugurated the fair, which is open everyday from 10:00am to 5:00pm.

Newspaper archives testify to 1971 role of Mojaheed, other war crimes suspects

BSS, Dhaka

As Jamaat-e-Islami secretary general Ali Ahsan Muhammad Mojaheed has claimed to have forgotten 'many things' he did in 1971, newspaper archives including that of his party's mouthpiece appeared to be of great help in retrieving his 'lost memories'.

During the nine months of Liberation War in 1971, Mojaheed and several other high profile collaborators of the Pakistani occupation forces or suspected perpetrators of 'crimes against humanity' dominated the newspaper headlines with their passionate statements supporting the Pakistani troops and spreading hatred against the freedom fighters.

In one such occasion, newspapers including the Jamaat mouthpiece Sangram, on October 17, 1971, widely covered Mojaheed addressing a meet-

ing of Jamaat's the then student wing Islamic Chhatra Sangha (ICS) in Rangpur where he directed the party workers to join and strongly build the so-called elite Gestapo like Al-Badr Bahini.

The notorious Al-Badr, which is believed to have killed the front ranking intellectuals particularly at the fag end of the liberation war, celebrated the Al Badr Day on November 7, 1971 when Mojaheed announced a four-point declaration.

"We do not believe in any map of Hindustan on earth. We will not rest until the name of Hindustan is erased from the world," several newspapers quoted him the next day as telling the function.

"From tomorrow, you will not be allowed to sell, publicise or keep in libraries books either written by Hindus or written in their support," he

added, according to reports published in the daily Azad on November 8, 1971.

Incumbent Jamaat chief Motiur Rahman Nizami, himself the top leader of Al-Badr, wrote in a signed article in the Sangram on November 14, 1971 that "defensive actions" could not foil the conspiracy and protect the existence and ideal of Pakistan.

"We are lucky that the Islam-loving youths of this country formed the Al-Badr unit with the help of the Pakistani military... The youths of Al-Badr have renewed their pledge... to stand by the army to defeat the Hindu forces and annihilate Hindustan and hoist the flag of Islam all over the world," he wrote.

In the previous month of September, he addressed a razakar rally in Jessore where, according to the Sangram newspaper, he said "every

single one of us must identify ourselves as soldiers of Islam and we have to use all our forces to kill the people who are involved in an armed conspiracy against Pakistan and Islam."

Addressing as the chief guest an ICS rally in Jamalpur on June 14, 1971, he directed his party workers to assist the Pakistani army to save Islam.

"The Pakistani soldiers are our brothers... it's not a matter of personal dignity or partisan interest, it is a matter of Pakistan's survival," the Sangram newspaper quoted Nizami as saying at a seminar in Chittagong on August 3, 1971.

He added: "If the patriotic people would have come forward since March 1 to confront the 'assailants' (freedom fighters?), this situation would not have taken place in the country."

Nizami visited an Al-Badr camp on

September 22, 1971 when he said, "Only the patriotic youths of East Pakistan can effectively wipe out the Indian infiltrators and their local agents."

Earlier on September 9, Nizami said in Jessore, "The way we have come forward risking our lives, the same way the government should build Pakistan in a purely militaristic manner."

Nizami was the president of ICS while Mojaheed was the president of the student wing's Dhaka unit in 1971.

The 1971 role or activities of Nizami and Mojaheed were supported and justified with the comments of the then East Pakistan unit chief of Jamaat Golam Azam who in a statement published in newspapers on September 26, 1971 said, "The Jamaat workers don't find any meaning of life without the existence of Pakistan."

CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY IN '71 Jamaat not involved
Says Nizami

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami yesterday said the government should complete the trial of recent crimes against humanity committed during the BDR carnage and other such incidents before holding the trial of such crimes during the liberation war in 1971.

He also claimed that no one can prove Jamaat leaders' involvement in killings, rape, arson and looting during the liberation war.

The Awami League calls Jamaat leaders war criminals as Jamaat had several times refused AL's proposals to support them, he said at the representatives' conference of

Islamic Lawyers' Council, an organisation of pro-jamaat lawyers, at Al-Falah auditorium in the city.

"In 1991, Awami League offered to make us ministers if we supported them to form the government. They also wanted to offer 6 or 7 reserved seats for women to our party. Since we refused their offer, they are calling us war criminals," Nizami said.

Like BNP, the Jamaat chief also smelled mystery over the term 'crimes against humanity'.

"Now they [government] are talking about 'crimes against humanity' instead of war crimes. It's not clear whether any legal tactics are involved in using such terms," Nizami said.

'Mobile phone can help develop edn sector'

METRO DESK

Mobile phone can immensely contribute to the development of formal and informal education sector in the country, speakers at a seminar said recently.

They said Robi has already taken a number of initiatives such as EIS (English in Schools) programme to boost the country's education system.

The speakers said this at a seminar titled 'Mobile phone: Tools for distance education' organised by mobile phone operator Robi at a city hotel on April 1.

Role of telecommunication in enhancing the possibilities in education system of Bangladesh was the underlying theme of discussion at the seminar.

State Minister for Science and ICT Yeafesh Osman was present at the seminar as the chief guest while Robi Chief Marketing Officer Bidyut Kumar Basu and Head of Communications and Media Relations Mohiuddin Babar were present.

Dr Shahadat Ullah Khan, chief strategy officer of Eyeball Network Inc. Canada, was the keynote speaker at the event moderated by Bangladesh Computer Society president Mustafa Jabbar.

Sabur Khan, chairman of Daffodil International University, and TIM Nurul Kabir, CEO of Spinnovation Ltd, took part in the seminar.



State Minister for Science and ICT Yeafesh Osman speaks at a seminar titled 'Mobile phone: Tools for distance education' organised by mobile phone operator Robi at a city hotel recently.

BNP's statement a bid to protect war criminals
Says state minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Law Qamrul Islam yesterday said the war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the liberation war in 1971 are similar offences, and perpetrators of both types of crimes will be put on trial.

Referring to a statement of BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain, the state minister said that he (Delwar) made such statements to protect the war criminals.

At a press briefing on Friday, Delwar said the government should hold the trial of crimes against humanity under the existing Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code, and there is no need for constituting special court or tribunal or any investigation team for this.

Addressing a discussion organised by Bangabandhu Academy at Dhaka Reporters Unity yesterday, State Minister for Law Qamrul

Islam said crimes such as murder, looting, arson, rape and abduction will be tried at the tribunal, which the government has formed recently under the International War Crimes (Tribunal) Act 1973.

Only the identified war criminals will be put on trial, he said, adding that the countrymen know very well who are the identified war criminals.

Qamrul also said the government never termed Jamaat-e-Islami leaders Motiur Rahman Nizami and Ali Ahsan Muhammad Mojaheed 'war criminals', but some Jamaat leaders said they would appeal to the higher court if they are sentenced to death on charges war crimes, which is tantamount to confessing the crimes.

Hemayet Uddin, Bir Bikram, presided over the meeting, which was addressed by Awami League leaders Mohammad Nasim and Habibur Rahman Siraj.

Road crash kills 6 in Patuakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Six people were killed and eight others injured in a road accident in Rajapara area on Patuakhali-Kuakata road yesterday.

The deceased were identified as microbus driver Shahin, 28, Kalam, 12, Rakibul Hasan, 13, Hawa Begum, 2, Zakir Hossain, 35, and Rubel, 14, of Rajapara village under Kalapara upazila.

Police said four people died on the spot while Zakir and

Rubel succumbed to their injuries at Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital.

Seriously injured Babul Akhter, 18, was also sent to the hospital where he was fighting for life. Others injured were admitted to Kalapara Upazila Health Complex.

Locals said when a Barisal-bound microbus of Sunflower Insurance Company reached Rajapara, a tempo was coming from the opposite direction. Both the vehicles collided head-on and fell into a roadside ditch.

War crimes trial move a good initiative
Says Mannan Bhuiyan

BSS, Dhaka

Former BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said those who were involved in crimes against humanity, including killings, rapes and setting fire, during the liberation war should be tried.

In an interview with the state-run news agency at his Gulshan residence yesterday, he said, "Only the trial is not enough, public opinion would have to be created through political means against the perpetrators of crimes against humanity and their associates."

A veteran freedom fighter Mannan Bhuiyan said the trial of the perpetrators of crimes during the war could not be held earlier for some reasons or the other.

"However, an initiative for the trial has now been taken and it is a good initiative."

It is not right to call anybody war criminal before the trial and felt the need to bring the culprits to book with proper evidence, he added.

The trial process should be transparent, fair and acceptable and the authorities should be careful so that no innocent person is harassed for nothing.

'Plot on to create unrest in country'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The anti-liberation forces are engaged in hatching conspiracies to create unrest across the country to foil the trial of war criminals, said State Minister for Housing and Public Works Abdul Mannan Khan yesterday.

"The forces are trying to instigate people centring the water and gas crises to foil the trial of war criminals. So, we all have to make people understand about the conspiracies so that the forces cannot make them incensed."

Mannan said while addressing a discussion on 'Implementation of the spirit of liberation war and trial of war criminals' organised by Muktiuddher Chetona Bastabayan Committee at Dhaka Reporters' Unity.

He blamed the previous BNP-Jamaat government and caretaker regime for power and

energy crises.

"It is not possible to resolve the problems one day, which were created during last seven years. We are pledge-bound to resolve the persisting crises," the minister said.

He urged all the freedom fighters to remain united to strengthen the movement everywhere in demand for the trial of war criminals because the existence of the country depends on their trial.

Presiding over the meeting, Principal Abdul Ahad Chowdhury demanded a ban on religion-based politics in the country forever.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority Chairman Abdul Malek Miah, Awami League Information and Research Secretary Afzal Hossain and Sammilita Sangskritik Jote General Secretary Hasan Arif also spoke.

Manpower outflow at low ebb

FROM PAGE 1

Employment Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, however, said besides irregularities, a good number of Rohingya who identified themselves as Bangladeshis and are engaged in crimes in the KSA are a serious concern for Bangladesh.

"We are working silently to address all these problems," he claimed.

Meanwhile, Malaysia that cancelled work visas for 55,000 Bangladeshis in March last year following the economic crisis is now hiring 1 lakh workers from Nepal.

Labour market analysts say anomalies in the work of both the manpower agents and government officials of both the countries dominated the recruitment process of Bangladeshis in Malaysia. The agents processed recruitment of excessive workers to make money, they say.

"However, there is no visible

effort to rectify the regulatory loopholes," said Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira) President Ghulam Mustafa.

Bangladesh must make strong moves to address the problems with Malaysia, which requires several lakh workers, he said.

Mustafa said Libya will require several lakh workers in the next few years, but still, the government is not smartly handling the labour recruitment process.

Several thousand workers who got visas cannot join the jobs there because Bangladesh did not authenticate the job demand letters, he told The Daily Star, adding, "We requested the government to issue emigration clearance by keeping affidavits from the recruiting agents. But nothing worked."

The Libyan authorities are not happy about the Bangladesh embassy's slow regime, he said, adding that Libya may take its eyes off

Bangladesh if the situation persists.

"The government can neither settle the problems with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait nor streamline the recruitment in Libya or Malaysia. With such lethargy, we can see no light in manpower sector," said Baira Joint Secretary Shameem Ahmed Chowdhury.

However, Expatriates' Welfare Minister Mosharraf Hossain said overseas jobs would boost by April when the UAE's economy recovers fully, and political stability of prospective market in Iraq returns after the national polls.

He says this although UAE, the second highest labour market, still hired on average monthly 17,309 jobseekers this year. On the other hand, Iraq's market is highly uncertain because of its political instability though it has reportedly issued several thousand work visas for the Bangladeshis.

Prof Tasneem Siddiqui of

Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit said lack of market analysis and promotion is a huge problem for Bangladesh.

"In today's competitive world, it is not possible to win labour markets without well-researched and coordinated efforts of both the expatriates' welfare and foreign ministries," she said, adding a market research cell must be there to find out jobs and offer suggestions for training manpower.

"We have been urging the authorities to expand nursing education, as there are huge demands for nurses worldwide, but the authorities have no concern in this regard," Siddiqui said.

Mosharraf Hossain said he would propose a market research cell in the next budget.

"Nursing education requires huge investment, you know. However, we are in talks with a US company about it," he told The Daily Star.

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The Candidate should be Masters/MBA in marketing from a recognized university with at least 2 years practical work experience of marketing and sales at Forklift, Excavator, Automobile, Marine & Industrial engine & machine tools Company. Have excellent interpersonal and communication skill & well versed in computer literacy.

The candidates are requested to submit their CV along with copies of the certificate and a P.P size photo to the following address on or before April 20, 2010.

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