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Bangladeshi victim of Iraq hotel fire identified

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh embassy in Baghdad has confirmed death of a Bangladeshi man in Thursday's fire at Soma Hotel in the northern Iraqi city of Sulaimaniyah.

The victim was identified as Harun ur Rashid, a resident of Tongi in Gazipur district.

Kamaluddin, Bangladesh ambassador to Iraq, got the information from local Bangladeshi community in the region, said Saida Muna Tasneem, director general of the external publicity wing at the foreign ministry.

No other details could be known.

At least six other Bangladeshis work at the hotel which is about 300 kilometres from Baghdad in the Kurdish

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Ulfa leader captured

Bangladeshi aide also held; arms, bombs seized from Kishoreganj hideout

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-9) early yesterday arrested a leader of Indian separatist group United Liberation Front of Asom (Ulfa) and his Bangladeshi aide from Bhairab in Kishoreganj.

The arrestees are Ranjan Chowdhury alias Major Ranjan, 46, former general secretary of Dhubri district unit Ulfa, and his Bangladeshi aide Pradip Marak, 57, of Bakura village in Jhinaigati upazila.

The law enforcers also recovered one pistol, one revolver, four handmade bombs and bomb making materials from Ranjan's hideout at Lakshimpur village in Bhairab.

Rab sources said on information, they conducted a raid in Lakshimpur village around 4:30am and arrested the two with the arms and explosives. In preliminary interrogation the arrestees admitted their involvement with Ulfa, the sources added.

The arrestees were brought to the Rab headquarters in Dhaka yesterday for a media briefing and sent back to Bhairab in the

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Ulfa leader Ranjan Chowdhury, left, and his Bangladeshi aide Pradip Marak being paraded before newsmen with guns and explosives recovered from them at Rab headquarters in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

PROF HUMAYUN AZAD

JMB man discloses attack details

MUKHLESUR RAHMAN

Detained acting JMB chief Nazmul told interrogators that he and executed JMB military commander Ataur Rahman Sunny were there when JMB men stabbed eminent author Prof Humayun Azad in front of Bangla Academy in February, 2004.

Nazmul, who is also known as Bhagne Shahid and Anwar Alam, made the disclosure during remand at the Detective Branch of police office yesterday, a DB official told The Daily Star requesting not to be named.

Nazmul told interrogators that as Prof Azad cried for help he detonated a bomb to clear the way for their escape dispersing people coming forward to aid Azad.

Sunny had planned the attack and he had led the Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh operatives who carried out the attack, he told investigators, adding that he had provided them with the knives.

Nazmul told interrogators that they had also

issued several death threats over telephone to Azad to stop, what they claimed, his anti-Islamic writings and opinions. He said Azad did not pay heed to their warnings.

Asked about the information they received from Nazmul about the JMB operatives who took part in the attack, the DB official refused to give details for the sake of investigation.

However, another DB official said JMB operatives Minhaz and Shamim, who is also known as Sado, took part in the attack among others.

On February 27, 2004, they swooped on 56-year-old linguist Azad, a professor of Bangla at Dhaka University, as he was trying to catch a rickshaw to go home from the Ekushey Book Fair at Bangla Academy, sources said.

Four to five youths, who were shadowing Azad, emerged from the direction of Suhrawardy Udyan and hemmed him, witnesses had told The Daily Star after the attack. As Prof Azad cried for help, a loud blast rocked

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AL plans rallies in divisions, dists after Eid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League will hold rallies in all divisional and district headquarters after Ramadan to drum up support in favour of the government move's to try the war criminals, party General Secretary Syed Ashraf Islam said yesterday.

The government has already started a move to try the war criminals.

"We will strengthen Awami League-led Grand Alliance and unite pro-liberation forces to foil the conspiracies of war criminals against the trial," Ashraf, also LGRD and cooperatives minister, said at a press conference at the party president's political office in Dhanmondi.

He said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is likely to address those grand rallies.

Asked about AL central working committee (ALWC) meeting held on Friday, Ashraf

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MRP delivery gets slow

Project officials blame non-cooperation from Dept of Passport, police

M ABUL KALAM AZAD

The task of issuing Machine Readable Passports (MRP) is seriously hindered because of non-cooperation of staff at the Department of Immigration and Passport (DIP) and delay in submission of police verification reports.

The authorities now can utilise only half its capacity to produce MRPs as some DIP staff promote issue of manual passport to help a syndicate make a quick buck, said MRP project officials.

The authorities issue less than 1,000 MRPs a day despite having a capacity to produce nearly 2,000 MRPs.

The home ministry in a recent order allowed issuance of manual passports with three-year validity although the International Civil Aviation Authority (ICAO) allows issuing emergency manual passport with one-year validity.

The project officials fear it might put Bangladeshi nationals in trouble as the UAE, Bangladesh's largest manpower recruiting country, had denied accepting manual passport for two weeks.

"We could produce 3,000 Machine Readable Passports a day if we work in three shifts,

instead of two. But the capacity remains untapped as we do not get that many applications," said Noor A Alam Chowdhury of Dataedge Ltd, a local partner of Malaysia-based IRIS Corporation Berhad, implementing the Tk526-crore MRP project.

He said three more machines will be installed in November to increase the production capacity to 12,000 a day.

However, the official was unsure about the full utilisation of the production capacity.

"Why manual passports should be issued when we can produce emergency Machine Readable Passports in 24 hours?" he questioned.

He said they could easily open a special cell for migrant workers to provide them with MRPs on an emergency basis.

It was found that a few DIP staff delay the process of issuing MRP in various ways.

MRP Project Director Brig Gen Reyaet Ullah and IRIS officials are very unhappy over the procedural delay in issuing MRPs and submission of police verification reports.

"I recently engaged eight army personnel to ensure smooth delivery of Machine Readable

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KILLINGS IN '71 Nizami on 5-day fresh remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami on a five-day fresh remand in a case filed for killing 345 people during the country's Liberation War.

Metropolitan Magistrate Moazzem Hossain issued the order after Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Inspector Nurul Islam Siddiqui, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, produced Nizami before it seeking 10 days' remand.

Earlier, on July 14 the same court granted a five-day remand each to detained Jamaat leaders Muhammad Kamaruzzaman and Abdul Quader Molla in the case. Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid, the party's secretary general, was also placed on a three-day remand on July 15 in the same case.

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CHALLENGED PEOPLE PM for ensuring job as per quota

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed the authorities concerned to strictly follow the quota reserved for physically challenged people while recruiting manpower for government services to give them the opportunities to demonstrate their excellence and efficiency.

The premier made the remarks while launching the "Centre for Neurodevelopment and Autism in Children" of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) at a local hotel yesterday morning.

"We have to provide them with the scope according to their eligibility and efficiency in development activities as the physically challenged people could be turned into human resources if they are given proper facilities and a congenial environment to this end," she added.

The PM asked the concerned ministry to appoint psychologist at each school across the country for extending proper counselling to the autistic children as well as to train the teachers on how to behave with autistic and physically challenged children.

Mentioning the negligence to the autistic and physically challenged children in the family, Hasina called upon all

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40 injured as train derails at Parbatipur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

At least 40 people were injured after three compartments of a Nilphamari-bound passenger train derailed at Parbatipur upazila yesterday.

According to sources, Titumir Express heading for Nilphamari from Rajshahi got derailed about 200 metres from Parbatipur Railway Station around 12:30pm.

The injured were taken to Parbatipur Railway Hospital and Parbatipur Upazila Health Complex. Most of them were released after primary treatment, said hospital sources.

The accident damaged the compartments severely as the rail tracks tore up like paper, sources said.

Sohel, an injured passenger, said the train shook violently as it derailed while

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Police manhandle a person after they charged truncheon on a procession at Topkhana Road yesterday. The people who brought out the procession demanded reestablishment of Hizb-ut Tahrir.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Banned Tahrir brings out procession 3 activists held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three activists of the banned Islamist outfit, Hizb ut-Tahrir were arrested from a procession brought out by them near the press club in the capital yesterday.

The arrestees were identified as Fazle Hadi, 28, Ripon Mia, 22, and Mohammad Ahsan, 30.

The banned organisation brought out the procession at around 1:00pm demanding release of their leaders and activists who were arrested earlier.

Four policemen were also injured as they tried to disperse the procession of the banned outfit.

Officer-in-Charge of Shabbagh Police Station Rezaul Karim said around 50

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CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT Govt move faces stiff opposition from BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government moves to form an all-party parliamentary committee to amend the constitution in light of the High Court judgment that declared illegal the fifth amendment.

Suranjit Sengupta, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the law ministry, has been assigned to prepare a draft outlining the size of the committee and terms of reference.

He will start working to that end today.

The fifth amendment ratified all changes made to the constitution between August 15, 1975, and April 9, 1979. It also meant

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Small industries face tax anomaly hurdles

The Daily Star roundtable told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Progress in light engineering, electrical and electronics industries suffers a setback due to anomalies in tax and VAT (value added tax) structures, sector representatives and experts said yesterday.

Tariff policies in many cases encourage import instead of creating scopes for domestic industries, they told a roundtable held at The Daily Star office.

They demanded that the government remove discrepancies in the tariff structures

and create a level playing field through appropriate policy support to facilitate local manufacturing bases.

They called for political commitment and changes in the mindset of bureaucrats to help domestic industries expand which is needed to accelerate economic growth and employment opportunities.

Stakeholders also favoured increased government investment in research and

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MORE STORY IN STAR BUSINESS

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Heartiest Congratulations for success in HSC results

Heartiest congratulations

to the brilliant students, the leaders of the nation's future, on their grand success in HSC and Equivalent Exams of 2010, especially to those who secured GPA-5, their educational institutions, honorable teachers parents and caring guardians.

We hope that this successful meritorious students will demonstrate further glorious result and take part in the nation building process in the days to come.

"Bangladesh is mine and I am for Bangladesh" be our commitment

Our best wishes for bright future of the brilliant students

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