

DU rights historic wrong
Withdraws his expulsion order after 61 years
RAKIB AHAMMED

Sixty-one years after Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was expelled from Dhaka University for his role in a movement of class four employees, the university authorities yesterday withdrew the expulsion order terming it "undemocratic and unjust."

On March 26, 1949, the then DU authorities issued the expulsion order that also contained some conditions for its withdrawal.

But a rebel against anything unjust as he always was,

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Bloodbath on Road 32

Even after 35 years of the gruesome massacre on Road 32, the event needs to be retold for the nation to know the brutality with which the killers swung into accomplishing a mission -- annihilating Bangabandhu and his family.

The reprint of the story based on interviews of the survivors and their accounts at the court during the trial of the killings was thought to be worth it for the detail it speaks of.

INAM AHMED & JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

It was not dawn yet. A false dawn spread its pale light

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Freed of stigma, nation mourns

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

For thirty-four years the nation observed the death anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with a demand for justice, but it is different this year, as justice has finally been done.

Some historic developments in the judiciary in the past eight months gave this new dimension to observance of the National Mourning Day on the 35th death anniversary of Bangabandhu, today.

"It is impossible to forget the grief of the gruesome killings of August 15, but this time we at least have the consolation that we could ensure justice," Bangabandhu's grandson Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh, who lost his parents in the August 1975 mayhem, told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We must mourn tomorrow [today], but this time we have an achievement, as the nation has been freed from its stigma. We hope that six other condemned killers absconding abroad will also be brought back to complete implementation of the court verdict," continued Taposh, who was around four years at that time and survived the mayhem.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, daughter of Bangabandhu, in a message

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No justice yet in 3 other Aug 15 cases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members apart, a number of people were murdered in three separate incidents on August 15, 1975, but no effective move has yet been made to bring the guilty to justice.

Disgruntled army personnel killed Sheikh Mujib's nephew Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni, founding chairman of Awami Jubo League, and wife Arzu Moni at their Dhanmondi home. Mujib's brother-in-law Abdur Rab Serniabat, former water resources minister, was murdered at his Minto Road house.

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Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni

Six killers still out of reach

KAILASH SARKAR

About nine months into the announcement of Supreme Court verdict in Bangabandhu murder case, the government could do little about the extradition of six fugitive convicts and tracing their whereabouts.

The Supreme Court on November 19 last year upheld the death sentence of 12 self-confessed killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Of them, five persons were hanged on January 28 this year.

The six convicts -- Khandaker Abdur Rashid, Shariful Haque Dalim, SHMB Nur Chowdhury, AM Rashed

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Water worry for N-power project

Padma shifts 1,000 feet away from Rooppur site in four decades

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

The declining water level of the Padma has become a cause of concern about availability of required water for the proposed Rooppur nuclear power plant.

Water is essential for a nuclear power plant for cooling its atomic reactors, experts say.

The 40-year old Rooppur project finally got a shot in the arm last month through an agreement with Russia.

A high official of the Atomic Energy Commission pointed out that when the project site was selected at Rooppur beside the Padma in 1960s, the river had adequate flow of water.

But a survey conducted by the commission shows that the once mighty river has become narrower with its water flow alarmingly decreasing in the last four decades. The course of the river has also moved far from the project site, jeopardising the original plan for cooling the atomic reactors.

This prompted the commission to launch another survey to find a suitable point in the Padma for collecting water.

A key official of the nuclear power project, requesting anonymity, said, they are now looking for a point in the river that can meet the requirement of water for the plant's cooling system for the next 100 years.

In the sixties, when the government acquired 256 acres of land by the Padma for this project, part of the land was under the river water. But now the main channel of the river has moved at least one thousand feet away from the project site, KBM Ruhul Kuddus, the official in charge of the project, told this correspondent when he visited the site recently.

Besides, an official of hydrology wing of Water Development Board (WDB) in Pabna, noted that flow of water in the Padma varied sharply at different periods

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A marshy road through Rooppur nuke power project site in Pabna. The Padma was close to the site when the project field was acquired in the 60s. The river has now moved so far away that experts worry about the supply of water to cool the project's atomic reactors. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR

WB sees good in regional deal

Offers to fund transit, transshipment, power, water projects

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

While the main opposition BNP is resisting negotiations between Bangladesh and India on bilateral cooperation, the World Bank (WB) has welcomed the initiative offering an extended fund for projects in this regard.

The Breton Woods institution has already indicated to finance different projects on transit, transshipment, power and water to increase regional and bilateral cooperation, said Economic Relations Division (ERD) sources.

The WB thinks such cooperation will not only help the country develop but also reduce poverty level substantially, the ERD sources said.

In its new Country Assistance Strategy (CAS), WB remarks, "Programming under the strategy will remain sufficiently flexible to respond to regional opportunities as they emerge, including on-going consideration of India-Bangladesh cooperation in the power sector and a proposed cross-border water resource management operation."

In its CAS report, the WB observed that significant progress has been made on regional cooperation with the recent signing of cooperation agreement with India. But the opposition party has raised concern and it has the potential to tap into public fears of a dominant India.

The historic rapprochement has the potential to create regional opportunities for water resource management, transport, trade and energy, the report said.

It said the government's dialogue with

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Railway to link Cox's Bazar

7 priority projects in communications sector

M ABUL KALAM AZAD

The communications ministry has taken up seven priority projects to upgrade the internal railway links and signal system and connect Bangladesh with Trans-Asian Railway (TAR) network.

Under the projects of around \$ 5 billion, the tourist city of Cox's Bazar will be connected with Dhaka via Chittagong while new tracks will be constructed between Dohazari and Cox's Bazar via Ramu at an estimated cost of \$ 298 million. This rail track will reach Gundum near Myanmar border to connect TAR, a railway network across Europe and Asia. This is the only missing link with TAR inside the country.

Apart from that, the Mongla port will again be brought under railway network through construction of a 53-kilometre track at a cost of about \$246 million.

Considering the TAR traffic scenario, the plan also aims at constructing two railway bridges over the river Jamuna--one parallel to Bangabandhu Multipurpose Bridge at a cost of \$ 1,640 million and the other near Phulchari-Bahadurabad Ghat at \$1,500 million.

Meanwhile, signalling system of 20 train stations between Ishwardi-Parbatipur section, five between Rajshahi-Abdullapur section and 15 between Darsana and Khulna will also be modernised.

The project proposals have been sent to the planning commission Wednesday for scrutiny and approval.

"Once the projects are finalised, we hope to implement those in three to four years," said a communications ministry official.

The priority projects were prepared as a follow-up action, as

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Public health staff shot to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unknown criminals shot dead an employee of Institute of Public Health (IPH) in the capital's Mohakhali yesterday afternoon.

The deceased, Siddiqur Rahman, 46, was a laboratory assistant and also the general secretary of the class IV employees' union.

A gang of three on a motor-bike shot seven bullets at Rahman near IPH around 5:00pm.

The bullet-hit man was first rushed to nearby Ayesha Memorial Hospital and later to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Doctors at DMCH declared him dead around 7:00pm.

Hailing from Munsiganj district, Rahman was a resident of Dalipara in Turag.

Family sources said there was a dispute over the IPH canteen. Rahman was running the canteen alongside his job.

Gulshan police confirmed the incident.

Tough law for stalkers

Vows Nahid

UNB, Munshiganj

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid warned that steps would be taken for meting out severe punishment to those who instigated the suicide of Sinthia.

"None would be spared. If necessary, law would be enacted. Her death cannot be accepted", said the minister while addressing a meeting at Baroikhali High School maiden in Srinagar upazila yesterday.

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