



Journalists manhandled in presence of minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Activists of Jatiya Sramik League of Bangladesh Railway unit manhandled journalists in the presence of Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain at a meeting here yesterday as the journalists protested the theft of two mobile sets and a digital recorder from the venue.

The theft took place at Railway Officers Rest House near Central Railway Building (CRB) at around 12:00pm where the minister was addressing a view exchange meeting with the officials of Bangladesh Railway (east zone) and of roads and highways department.

Just as the meeting was about to end, a group of leaders and activists of Jatiya Sramik League of Bangladesh Railway unit forcefully entered the small but crowded room to

greet the minister.

As the minister went to an adjacent room, staff reporter of The Daily Star Dwaipayana Barua found that his digital recorder, kept just in front of the minister, was missing.

Cell phone of Hazera Sheuly, a reporter of banglanews24.com, and one of Shafiq Ahmed Sajib, cameraman of Channel i, was also found missing from their pockets.

When the reporters, while talking to themselves, blamed the crowd that entered the room, a group of the activists locked into an altercation with them.

At one stage they started shoving the journalists and hurled abuses at them.

Mohammed Abu Naser, public relation officer (PRO) of the minister, called Dwaipayana and Hazera to the room where the minister was talking with some of the leaders and railway officials.

The PRO offered the two

journalists Tk 10,000 as compensation but the latter refused, demanding an investigation into the matter.

When the journalists turned to leave the premises, around 20 to 30 of the activists led by the unit's Joint Secretary Lokman Hossain and railway clerk Jakir Hossain encircled them.

They again started manhandling the journalists while the minister was still in the adjacent room.

Those hurt during the scuffle include Dwaipayana, Kamal Parvez, senior staff reporter of ATN Bangla, Chowdhury Farid, bureau chief of Channel i, Mintu Chowdhury, staff reporter of bdnews24.com, Golam Maula Murad, senior staff reporter of Diganta, Alamgir Opu, staff reporter of RTV and several other local reporters.

The minister left while the scuffle was going on.

Chittagong Union of

Journalists (CUJ) in an immediate meeting at Chittagong Press Club (CPC) at around 2:00pm announced to bring out protest procession from CPC premises at around 11:00am today and hold a protest rally tomorrow, demanding immediate steps against the culprits.

Dwaipayana filed a case with Kotwali Police Station at 5:00pm in this connection.

The minister contacted and met with the journalists in Chittagong Circuit House at 7:30pm.

He condemned the incident and directed Railway General Manager Nurul Amin to form a probe body to investigate the matter and submit a report within one week.

He also directed law enforcers to find the missing items and arrest the culprits.

In light of the minister's assurance, CUJ postponed its programmes for one week.

PHOTO: STAR

Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain hurriedly leaves Railway Officers' Rest House in Chittagong yesterday while Railway Sramik League activists were still manhandling the journalists.

40pc students incline towards drug addiction: Study

BSS, Dhaka

Nearly 40 percent students between the ages of 15 and 30 have inclined towards different forms of drug addiction and other crimes in country's educational institutions, says a study of Department of Narcotic Control (DNC) of Bangladesh.

This trend of drug addiction is no more limited within university levels but has already contaminated boys in schools and colleges, the study found.

According to the study, both female and male medical students, a highly educated subgroup, are addicted to

drugs in large numbers as they have access to pharmaceutical opiates like codeine-based medications.

The study found that most students justify their addictions with depression. They live in hostels and have little opportunity for recreation, as they are too busy with their studies, it adds.

They do not have access to any kind of extracurricular activities and spend most of their free time with each other, consequently becoming emotionally dependent on each other, said the study.

Another cause of drug addiction is peer pressure, the study said.

Another important cause of drug addiction, said the study, is the availability of drugs as law enforcement agencies are not being able to stop drug dealing and trafficking.

Unemployment is also another reason why many young people get frustrated, land into depression and eventually use drugs, said the study, adding that unemployed people are sometimes associated with criminal acts.

Dhaka University (DU) Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique said, "Such frustrations mainly emerge, among other reasons, due to the absence of care by their parents and guardians in this

fast moving society.

"Effective remedies to divert them from this vicious circle and towards the realm of light is to involve them in creative pursuits like writing in magazines, taking part in seminars, discussions and other creative activities."

Eminent psychologist Dr Mehtab Khanam of DU said it is very much important to appoint psychologists at educational institutions as done in foreign countries.

She said, "Psychologists can suggest to discipline students as well as play a vital role on policy making of the respective institutions."

Seized timbers looted

A CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

A gang of criminals took away a boat full of seized timbers from Guatola canal at SB Bazar in Morelganj upazila of the district yesterday.

The criminals also beat up two forest guards and one boat rider and took their guns and kept them confine for five hours. Later, they returned the guns.

The injured are Abdur Rashid, forester of Gulishakhali camp, Fazlur Rahman, a forest guard and Yunus, the boat rider.

The victims said they could identify six of the criminals.

They are Plash and Giash, son of Malek Gazi, Poltu and Polash, son of Bolai, Wasim, son of Tota member and Kanchan of Morelganj upazila.

Climate change holding back achievements

Say speakers

Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a workshop said effects of climate change are holding back Bangladesh's achievements made in the last two decades.

Development partners can play a vital role in providing technical assistance to help the country overcome the situation, they said.

Ministry of Environment and Forest in association with Asian Development Bank (ADB) organised the inception workshop titled "Supporting implementation of Bangladesh climate change strategy and action plan" at Cirdap auditorium in the city on Thursday.

Rise of temperature, irregular monsoon with erratic rainfall, heavy rainfall over short period of time and very little rainfall in dry periods are

the impacts Bangladesh is facing due to climate change, they observed.

They also noted rise of cyclones and storm surges, flood and salinity intrusion along the coastal areas due to climate change.

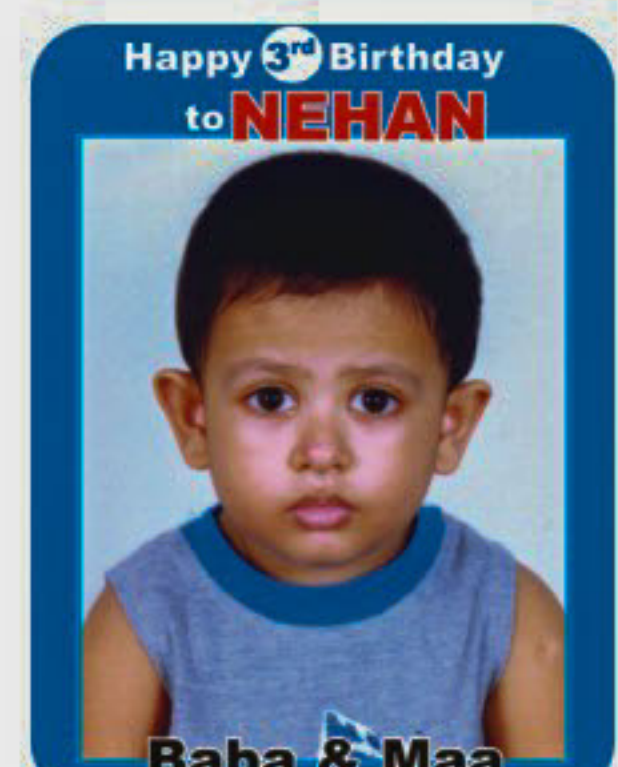
Marking climate change as the most pressing development concern in Bangladesh, they urged the government to engage all its ministries and departments in the process of combating the ill effects of climate change.

Nobody will be safe from the effects if a combined attempt is not made to combat the situation, they added.

"Climate change threatens the significant achievements Bangladesh made in the last 20 years in increasing incomes and reducing poverty including those related to the Millennium Development Goals," said

Thevakumar Kandiah, country director of ADB.

Agricultural specialist Dr Aftabuddin Ahmed, mitigation and adaptation specialist Stiya Ranjan Bhattacharjee, Arif M Faisal of ADB and natural resources specialist SMA Rashid spoke on the occasion.



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BCL, JCD fail to hold rally at DU

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday could not bring out their traditional procession to welcome the admission seekers of Dhaka University as the authorities directed them not to bring out such processions fearing clashes.

The authorities have urged the student leaders verbally not to bring out any procession fearing clashes that might hamper the image of the university.

Earlier on October 29 two groups of BCL activists locked into a clash during the admission tests of Kha unit in front of the Arts Building which spread panic among the admission seekers and their guardians. The admission test for Ka (A) unit was held at 10:00am yesterday.

General Secretary of DU unit of BCL Sazzad Sakib

Badsha said as of his memory it was the first time that the BCL could not bring out welcome procession.

Meanwhile, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (BCD) couldn't enter the campus to welcome the admission seekers as police blocked them in front of the Public Library at Shahbag. They staged a demonstration at the gate of the library.

DU unit JCD Convener Abdul Matin said it was BCL leaders and activists who were making chaos on the campus but police and the university authorities were not allowing us to enter the campus.

Rezaul Karim, officer-in-charge of Shahbag Police Station, told The Daily Star that police did not bar any student wings rather they requested the leaders not to bring out procession to avoid clashes and make the admission environment peaceful.

UP chairman held on charge of cutting trees

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A Union Parisad (UP) chairman of Birganj upazila of Dinajpur was arrested yesterday on charge of cutting of at least 30 trees of Bangladesh Forest Department in the upazila early this month.

Arrestee Md Zahir Uddin, 70, is a UP chairman of Palashbari union of the upazila.

Officer-in-Charge Md Aktaruzzaman of Birganj Police Station said they arrested Zahir in connection to a case filed by Md Azizar Rahman, a UP member of the union, on Thursday against seven people.

On contact, Zahir said the trees were cut down in a valid process.

Schoolboy rescued after abduction

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rab rescued a schoolboy after 48 hours of his abduction and arrested the abductor from Bangshal in the city yesterday.

The arrestee was identified as Sohel, 30, of Noamora village under Akhaura upazila in Brahmanbaria.

Rab sources said Sohel was arrested from a two-storey house at Hazi Abdullah Lane of the area around 6:00am with the help of mobile call tracking technology.

The victim's family knew Sohel, they added.

Abdullah Faysal, a student of class three, was abducted from Savar on his way to school around 7:00am on November 3.

Faysal had been handed over to his family.

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