

NEWS IN *brief*

Ctg mayor meets Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Mayor M Manjur Alam called on Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at her Gulshan office in the city last night. Officials of chairperson's office said mayor of the port city held an exclusive meeting with the former prime minister for about an hour from 8:45pm.

Four of a gang arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Detective Branch (DB) of Police yesterday arrested four suspected members of a gang that loots valuables from city's bus passengers in guise of hawkers and passengers. DB Deputy Commissioner Md Monirul Islam said one of the four detainees, Abdus Salam, 45, was arrested at least 10 times earlier and already suffered three years imprisonment in a case but, in most cases, came out on bail. Three other detainees are Abdul Rahman, 38, Lal Miah, 47, and Moyeen Uddin, 24. Various types of medicine were recovered from their possession, said DB officials, adding that the gang, for the last 15 years, poisoned passengers mainly on the Uttara route.


Guard shot in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A gang of alleged extortionists yesterday fired on a security guard of a residential building, leaving him critically injured, at Bank Colony, Nasir Khan Goli of the city's Shyampur area. Abdul Malek, 20, received five bullets in his two knees and was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital at about 3:00pm. Md Shah Alam, a witness and also an employee of the owner of the five-storey building, said a gang of three armed youths came at the main entry of the building at about 2:00pm and was looking for the guard of the building. Abdul Malek, who was inside the guardroom, came out and the youths fired several bullets on him from a close range as soon as they saw him, Alam said.


Two injured in blasts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Two people were injured as a gang of unidentified criminals hurled hand-made bombs on them at Uttar Jatrabari in the city yesterday evening. Of the injured, Mohammad Limon, 20, a salesman of Bismillah Tiles of Uttar Jatrabari, was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH). Limon told this correspondent that he heard a big bang while he was standing in front of the shop at around 6:30 pm and was bleeding as a splinter hit his forehead. He also saw a man walking past him suddenly fall down and was taken to a local clinic by the local people. When contacted, the Jatrabari Police confirmed the incident without elaborating.

Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 Master Mohammad Saiful Islam, an eight-year-old son of Nazraul Islam, a vegetable vendor in Khulna, is suffering for the past eight years as his anus is displaced since birth. The operation for the correct placement of the anus, now situated in the middle of the abdomen, requires a huge amount of money, says a press release. Nazraul cannot bear the expense, now needing Tk 100 for everyday treatment, and urged the affluent to come forward. Nazraul can be helped by donations to the bank account -- Nazraul Islam, A/C No- MSA-908, Islami Bank Bangladesh Ltd, KDA-Avenue Branch, Khulna, Bangladesh or can be contacted through cellphone -- 01912-632192.

Help save ailing teacher

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 Moslema Khatun, 70, a retired assistant teacher of Motijheel Government Girls' High School, needs financial assistance to continue her treatment. She has been receiving treatment at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of Ayesha Memorial Hospital in Mohakhali. She had a cardiac arrest there and is still in an unconscious state. Her son AKM Shafiqul Islam appeals for financial assistance to continue his mother's treatment as the family finds it almost impossible to bear the costs, says a press release. Assistance can be sent to the following bank account -- AKM Shafiqul Islam, saving accounts no -- 117.101.1738, Dutch-Bangla Bank, Uttara, Dhaka or he can be contacted through cellphone -- 01711-036892.

MIRPUR KILLING FIELDS

Testimony to '71 atrocities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
People should be told stories of Mirpur killing fields to present the brutality of local agents of Pakistani army and non-Bangalee during the War of Liberation, said speakers. They said true picture of the battle of freedom fighters against the local collaborators and Biharis in the city's Mirpur on January 30, 1972 should also be unfolded. By this, the nation will see the massacre and sufferings of people of the area, which took place one and a half month after the victory, they told a roundtable yesterday. Mirpur Sanskritik Oikyo Forum organised it at The Daily Star Centre in the city as part of the forum's four-day celebration marking Mirpur victory day. Bangladesh achieved victory on December 16, yet Mirpur people tasted freedom on January 31, 1972 after a bloody war against the local agents and Biharis a day before. Liberation War Museum Trustee Mofidul Haque presented the keynote paper describing the situation of Mirpur during the war and killing fields in the area. He said, "Intensity of work to do appears before us as we stand before the perspective of blood-stained Mirpur."

Freedom fighter of Mirpur, Syed Shahidul Hoque, said the 1971 situation in Mirpur was not sudden, but resulted from pre-war activities of Jamaat leader Golam Azam. The discussants demanded exemplary punishment to the local collaborators responsible for the crimes against humanity in Mirpur area. Freedom fighter Habibul Alam Bir Pratik moderated the roundtable, addressed by Kazi Mizanur Rahman of Mirpur Oikyo Forum. Golam Kuddus of Sammilito Sanskritik Jote, Mizanur Rahman of Patho Natok Parishad, and Jhuna Chowdhury of Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation also spoke.



Transparency International Bangladesh forms a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday demanding reconsideration of the proposals approved by the cabinet for amendments to the Anti-Corruption Commission law. (Story on Page 1)
PHOTO: STAR

JOURNO, WIFE MURDER
Police still clueless

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A case was filed with city's Paltan Police Station on Friday night in connection with the killing of elderly journalist Farhad Khan and his wife Rahima Khatun in their Naya Paltan residence. Abdus Samad Khan, a brother of Farhad, filed the case accusing unknown people and mentioning unknown reasons for the killings. Samad last evening said they are yet to ascertain the motive behind the murder and the bodies were taken to their village home in Kalihati upazila of Tangail for burial. Meanwhile, police remain clueless. Sub-Inspector Zillur

Police now waiting for call lists of the victims' cellphones

Rahman of Paltan Police Station, investigation officer of the case, said they are yet to ascertain whether the couple was killed by robbers or following a feud. "We are now waiting for the call lists of their cellphones from which we may be able to find clues. We are also yet to ascertain whether any valuables went missing from the house," he said.

Free, fair polls not possible under AL govt, says BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Leaders of main opposition BNP yesterday said ruling Awami League (AL) government lost credibility to the people and recent municipality election proved that a free and fair election is not possible under this government. While addressing a discussion titled "Municipality polls: A pragmatic evaluation", speakers said they are yet to decide whether to participate in the upcoming union parishad (UP) election. The election commission earlier hinted that due UP polls might be held mid-March. G-9, a pro-Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) body, organised the meeting at Dhaka Reporters' Unity in the city with its President Saiful Islam in the chair while Barrister M Sarwar Hossain presented a keynote paper. BNP Standing Committee Member Nazrul Islam Khan said pro-BNP candidates could have won in more municipalities if the election was held in a free and fair manner. BNP chairperson's Adviser Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury and Vice President Shamsur Mobin Chowdhury also spoke at the meeting.



Untimely demise of Pathik Saha

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Journalist Pathik Saha, former general secretary of Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU), died yesterday morning of cardiac arrest. He was 45. His condition became critical around 5:30am and he breathed his last on the way to the hospital, said one of his relatives. Pathik, also chief reporter of the Bangladesh Protidin, left behind his wife, a son and a host of relatives. His body was brought to DRU premises around 11:00am and then to the Bangladesh Protidin office before taking it to his village home in Garpara of Manikganj for funeral rites. During his student life, Pathik was involved with politics and was organising secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra Union. Later he became information and research secretary of Awami Swachhchasebak League, a wing of ruling Awami League. In a message of condolence, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock over his early departure saying Pathik worked for the betterment of the under privileged people throughout his professional career. "The country has lost a dedicated journalist while the journalist family has lost a real friend at his death. The nation will recall his contribution to journalism and politics," the PM said in her message. She also prayed for the departed soul and conveyed condolences to the bereaved family. BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition **SEE PAGE 5 COL 2**

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