



# Poetry-lovers find their favourite stuff

RAKIB AHAMMED

Compact discs (CDs) filled with recitations of poems written by eminent Bangla poets have created quite a stir among the poetry-lovers visiting the Amar Ekushey Boi Mela this year.

Stalls specialising in this niche of the market have been experiencing a huge rush since the beginning of the fair.

"I love reading and listening to poems in my spare time," said Abul Kalam Shohag, an ardent fan of poetry who was seen buying an audio album containing works of Jibanananda Das.

Mahidul Islam, owner of Abritti Mela, a stall selling such CDs said, "We sell 500 to 700 audio albums of recited poems, on average, everyday."

"Romanticism and patriotism seem to be most popular with the customers, so far," said Mahidul, who also recites poems himself.

Abritti Mela has brought in 12 new albums in the fair this year.

"People have liked the way we have delivered their favourite poems in a different form," Mahidul replied to the query of selling audio CDs in the fair meant for books.

Since most of these CDs are not available in shops especially if they live outside the capital, the book fair serves as the best place to get audio albums of their desired poems, he said.

Price of a CD is not over Tk 60 and discount is provided to those who buy more than one, he added.

## Double murder

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the families of the dead could ascertain the motive behind the killings.

Kohinur Begum, widow of Mohammad Ullah, filed a murder case with Kadamtoli Police Station last night accusing some 10 unknown persons.

Wari Division Deputy Commissioner (DC) Gazi Mozammel Huq said they detained the five people for questioning.

"The arrestees include two Juba League men, who were in the backseat of the car on which the Awami League leader was shot, while the rest three are locals," said the DC.

Mozammel said the investigation is being done keeping multiple suspicions under consideration.

Sources said feuds over the upcoming Dhaka City Corporation election's candidature could be a reason. The Awami League leader was aspiring for a councillor post in DCC Ward-89.

Other sources said disputes over his transport business and an educational institution after his name could lead to his death.

He was the senior vice-president of Shyampur-Kadamtoli unit of Awami League and the managing director of Duldul Paribahan, a transport company.

Mohammad Ullah's daughter Jannatul Ferdous Munni earlier said some unidentified callers had been threatening her father with death.

## Nuke power

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Ambassador to Bangladesh Gennady P Trotsenko and high officials of the ministry and Russian Embassy were present on the occasion.

Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission prepared the action plan for executing the NPP to meet the growing demand for energy.

"Both the sides agreed to install two third-generation reactors, each with 1,000MW capacity," a top official of the ministry told BSS.

The final deal would be signed in April this year when the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina would visit Russia, he added.

According to the ministry, Russia will manage the spent-fuel and recycle it.

Bangladesh completed all necessary preparations for setting up a nuclear power plant and signed MoUs with China, Russia, USA, France and India for cooperation in the area of peaceful use of nuclear energy. It also initiated talks with South Korea.

Considering the present reserves of gas, coal and other sources of energy in the country, the revised National Energy Policy (2008) strongly favoured a nuclear power plant as other imported fuel options like coal and oil for power generation are becoming increasingly expensive.

"We are moving fast to sign the agreement with Russia. We would complete all necessary procedures by one or two months. We are moving forward to fulfill our commitment to set up a nuclear power plant," said Yeafesh Osman.

## Indian Maoists make fresh demands over hostage

AFP, Bhubaneswar

Maoist rebels in eastern India have set new conditions for the release of an abducted government official -- the latest twist in a case that has drawn criticism for dealing with insurgents.

A letter from the Maoists made it clear that district administrator Veneel Krishna would now only be freed once five jailed Maoists, which the Orissa state government had already agreed to release, were actually handed over, mediators said yesterday.

The letter was carried by another kidnapped official who was released by the Maoists on Wednesday.

One of the three official mediators, G Hargopal, urged the Maoists to stick to an original agreement that should have seen Krishna -- kidnapped eight days ago -- freed by yesterday night.

## Poppy fields

**FROM PAGE 20**  
Myanmar border to discourage poppy cultivation and preserve indigenous culture.

A total of 29 indigenous families received seeds and instruments at Remacry of Bandarban.

A joint team of the army, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and police conducted the drive at Karakashan, Ivaanman Jhiri, and it chopped down the plants before burning them.

Region Commander Brig Gen Md Emdadul Hoque, Hill Tracts District Parishad Chairman Keyshau Hla, Deputy Commissioner Mijanur Rahman, Superintendent of Police Kamrul Hsan were also with the team.

Army Ruma zone commander Lieutenant Colonel Wasim, leading the drive, said the 14-day-long drive started on February 19 and the operation will continue to clean up areas between Remacry and Bhalupara.

Officials related to the drive said mainly Myanmar militant outfits lure Bangladeshi indigenous people into growing poppy.

The army had destroyed 122 poppy gardens in 2010 in these areas.

Sources claimed that a permanent army camp is required in the bordering area to provide indigenous people with alternative work so that they do not indulge in poppy cultivation.

Poppies are used for producing opium and other drugs like heroin.

## Farmland, hills

**FROM PAGE 20**  
The directive came at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecnec) with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

The meeting approved 11 projects of Tk 6,445 crore including those for building roads and providing schools with laptops and projectors.

The premier suggested that earth should be collected through dredging of sea and rivers, a source present at the meeting told The Daily Star.

ATk 306 crore project was approved to introduce information and communication technology in education. Under the project, the government will provide laptops and multimedia projectors to 20,500 public and private institutions to improve the classroom teaching-learning process.

The meeting also gave the nod to a project of the education ministry involving Tk 2,115 crore for infrastructure development of selected private secondary schools.

A planning ministry official said that following the list provided by lawmakers, some 3,000 schools have been selected for the scheme. Their infrastructures will be improved by 2014 and in this effort Tk 500 crore has been allocated in this fiscal year.

Under the project, the sanitary condition of the schools will be upgraded, electricity connections will be given and classrooms will be expanded.

Besides, measures will be taken so schools in the river erosion-prone areas can also be used as shelters.

## Safe exit

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Imam Hossain, who came to the oil-rich North African country from Comilla in 2009.

Hossain's version of the situation runs counter to Bangladesh government's remarks that all Bangladeshi workers are safe in Libya.

"Are we not citizens of Bangladesh? Workers from other countries have already left this place. Only Bangladeshis are all by themselves," he said, with an appeal to the government to rescue them.

Hossain said he was saddened by the government's inaction about evacuation of Bangladeshis from the chaos that stemmed from a broad-based uprising against Libya's strongman Muammar Gaddafi.

Witnesses said both pro- and anti-Gaddafi forces were firing at each other in the streets. The workers are panicked by rampant looting and drive-by shootings.

Imam said armed goons robbed some of his co-workers of whatever they had -- from money and mobile phones to cigarettes to clothes.

Imam's co-worker Md Sajib Sarkar has been surviving on small pieces of bread, but fears of attacks run deep.

"I can't sleep at night. I'm scared. The attackers may come in anytime and beat us," said Sajib, who was born in Narayanganj. Sajib left Bangladesh in July 2009 in search of a better life but ended up with only 180 Libyan dinars (Tk 10,332) a month.

The workers have teamed up to guard the camp, owned by Al Nahar Company, against the attackers.

Out on the street, many are armed and on the prowl to rob or attack people, said Sajib. Among the victims was Md Tajuddin, 21, from Uttara in Dhaka, who said he lost his money and mobile phone to the attackers.

A batch of more than 400 Bangladeshis was barred from entering Egypt by immigration officials yesterday. They were stranded in the open on the border, Mominur Rahman Talukder, a migrant worker, told BBC Radio last night.

Lokman Hossain of Gazipur said his brother Humayun Kabir and 4,000 other Bangladeshi workers fled their camps in Tripoli, following looting of the sites by the Libyans.

"They have some money, but cannot go to urban areas to buy food fearing attacks," Lokman said, adding that his brother was crying over the phone saying that he could not even have 250 grams of rice in the last three days.

Lokman said his brother and the others are now staying in a place far from downtown Tripoli. Some Korean citizens who were working for Korean Sinhan Company are also with them.

"I am seriously worried about my brother. My parents are crying. Please help us bring him back," he said.

Around 50 Bangladeshis in Altibia area of Tripoli are facing similar problems. Protesters burnt the workers' original camp four days back, forcing them to move to another site.

Meanwhile, 22 Bangladeshi workers remain trapped in Tripoli, as the flight they booked to fly back home has been cancelled. Their company could not buy any tickets as of yesterday.

"Contacting the travel agency was not possible as phone or fax shops were closed," Md Alauddin told The Daily Star from a warehouse, around 10km off Tripoli airport, where they were transferred from their original labour camp after it was looted on January 13.

The worker, who came from Dohar in Nawabganj, said the company has not paid them for two months, saying they would be paid before flying to Bangladesh.

"We are eating twice a day as the company cannot supply bread in the morning," he said adding that they do not have money to buy food on their own.

All the three projects of the Libyan construction company that recruited around 2,000 Bangladeshis in Tripoli are now closed, he said.

The situation suggests the unrest is not going to end anytime soon, and unless Bangladesh government takes immediate measures to evacuate them, they would be in even graver trouble, he noted.

"We are like orphans here. The company people are helpless. And we cannot contact our embassy either," Alauddin said.

**FM IN PARLIAMENT**  
Bangladesh has moved to evacuate its nationals living in Libya to safe places and if necessary bring them back, Foreign Minister Dipu Moni told parliament last night.

"The foreign ministry and the expatriate welfare ministry are working on different alternatives to ensure safety of the Bangladeshi nationals in Libya. We are taking measures to shift our citizens to temporary camps in Egypt and Tunisia," Moni said in a statement.

Besides, the government has requested Chinese, South Korean and Malaysian companies to ensure safety of the Bangladeshi nationals working for them in Libya, she added.

On news reports that 37 Bangladeshi citizens have died in the strife-torn African country, the minister said neither her ministry nor Bangladesh mission in Libya have any such information.

**EVACUATION PLAN**  
Speaking to The Daily Star last night, Foreign Secretary Mijarul Quayes said the foreign ministry would send an additional official by tomorrow to the Libya-Egypt border to help stranded Bangladeshis into safety. "If necessary, we will send out more officials."

He also said the Bangladesh embassy in Libya has provided shelter for 35 workers inside its compound.

In an attempt to defend the Bangladesh embassy in Tripoli against charges of inaction, Quayes said: "Scope for the embassy to do anything inside the capital is very limited as the situation is still volatile." But he said he would try to increase the capacity of the embassy.

It is not very easy to mobilise 50,000-60,000 people out of their homes and ask them to leave the scene, Quayes said ruling out any large-scale evacuation plan.

"But Bangladesh would do everything possible if somebody arrives on the border to cross into another country," he said.

News agency AFP quoted foreign ministry spokesman Syed Masud Khandker as saying Bangladesh had no evacuation plans, but was trying to move its citizens to safe places.

"So far, we have news that Bangladeshi workers are safe and still we are trying to find a way to move them to safer places, so that if conditions deteriorate further, they will not be in danger," he said.

Other Asian countries are using planes, ships and land routes to Egypt to secure their citizens' safety.

Thousands of Chinese began landing yesterday at the port of Heraklion on the Greek island of Crete after their evacuation from Libya aboard chartered Greek ferries.

India said that a passenger ferry with the capacity to carry 1,200 people would arrive in Libya on Sunday to begin evacuating some of its 18,000 nationals.

*With additional reporting from Shakhawat Liton, Rashidul Hasan and Md Fazlur Rahman.*

## Suicide blast kills one, wounds 26 in Afghanistan

AFP, Kandahar

A suicide car bomb attack killed an intelligence agent and wounded 26 other people in an Afghan town on the Pakistan border yesterday, officials said, in the latest in a wave of blasts.

The explosives-packed vehicle with two bombers inside blew up in Spin Boldak after intelligence agents acting on a tip-off opened fire in a bid to stop it.

Lutfullah Mashal, a spokesman for Afghanistan's national spy agency, said.

"We had intelligence that it was coming. The car was located, there were two suicide bombers in it. Our officers shot at it and killed one of the bombers after it did not heed their order to stop," he told AFP.

# Minister's nameplate stolen!

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nameplates of Social Welfare Minister Enamul Hoque Mostafa Shaheed and some other officials were stolen from their Secretariat offices last night, exposing security lapse in the country's administrative hub.

The officials whose nameplates went missing are Shahidul Haq Bhuiyan, deputy secretary of Women and Children Affairs Ministry and AKM Humayun Kabir and Maksuda Khatun, deputy secretaries of power division.

Officials and employees of the secretariat said both the collapsible gates on the second floor of the 20-storey building are not regularly kept locked since there are offices of different ministries on that floor.

"The stealing incident has alarmed us. We are investigating the matter," said Maruf Hossain Sardar, additional deputy police commissioner at the secretariat.

Sources, however, said valuables disappearing from the secretariat have become a common phenomenon in the recent months.

Bikas Chandra Das, deputy secretary of women and children affairs ministry, lost his nameplate last week while a computer went missing from local government and rural development ministry two weeks ago.

## Other forces

**FROM PAGE 1**

and submitted it to parliamentary standing committee on home affairs. The committee forwarded the draft to the home ministry, which is now examining it.

Maj Gen Chowdhury Hasan Sarwardy, director general of Ansar, said, "We took the initiative to amend Ansar Battalion Act, 1995 taking into consideration all the offences committed during the BDR mutiny in 2009."

All provisions needed to keep the force of around six million members, from BCS officers to battalion Ansars to volunteers under control, have been incorporated in the draft as the existing law does not define the crime and punishment in case of anarchic situation, the Ansar DG told The Daily Star.

Asked whether the police are mulling stringent law regarding mutiny in the force, the Inspector General of Police said there are laws but not specifically for mutiny. He referred to the then BDR mutiny and said the case had been investigated and charge sheets were submitted following which the trial has already started.

He, however, said the laws deserve to be reviewed time to time.

Meanwhile, intelligence activities among the armed forces and the intelligence have been strengthened so that all forces can give proper information about other forces and can alert the authorities for necessary steps before any untoward incidents take place.

Although the monitoring and sharing of information were supposed to be practised among all the forces, it came to notice in the wake of the BDR mutiny that they were not quite doing so.

**MUTINY TRIAL**

A total of 50 more BGB jawans may get included in the supplementary charge sheet of the BDR carnage case as the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) found evidence of their involvement in the mutiny during further investigation, said CID sources.

The CID which earlier submitted charge sheet against 824 BGB jawans started a fresh investigation as names of 77 other BGB jawans surfaced during the course of mutiny trial in Pikhana.

The trial court during its last proceedings on February 3 allotted CID one month to complete the investigation and submit the supplementary charge sheet during the next hearing date, March 3.

Besides, 6,052 BGB jawans, including those facing carnage charges, are facing trial for mutiny in 57 cases under the BGB laws. Of the cases, 11 were filed against 4,098 jawans on charge of mutiny in Pikhana and 46 were lodged at different places outside Pikhana accusing 1,954 others.

ALGERIA: US envoy William Burns arrived in Algiers to meet President Abdelaziz Bouteflika after Washington called for greater political freedom.

The special courts trying the mutiny have already handed down verdict in 26 cases in which 994 accused BGB jawans have been jailed on different terms ranging from six months to seven years while 22 were acquitted.

Recovering from the shock of February 25-26, 2009 BDR mutiny that claimed 74 people including 57 army officers, the border force has started functioning smoothly with its members seizing various contraband items including narcotics and liquor worth 546.27 crore in 2010 and captured 735 people in this connection.

In addition to that, the BGB authorities have promoted 3,817 junior commanding officers after around two years.

## Latest on ME

**FROM PAGE 1**  
the east fell to opposition control and others into lawlessness.

World governments scrambled to evacuate expatriates and world crude prices soared close to \$120 a barrel.

**BAHRAIN:** Top US military officer Admiral Mike Mullen arrived in Bahrain for talks as thousands of protesters staged a march in Manama, pressing an 11-day uprising against the monarchy.

**YEMEN:** President Ali Abdullah Saleh ordered his forces to offer "full protection" to anti-regime protesters and loyalists, as a second unemployed man died after setting himself ablaze.

-- MPs from his General People's Congress urged Saleh to implement a reform plan and 11 lawmakers from the ruling party resigned.

**EGYPT:** The prosecution ordered two ex-cabinet ministers and a top member of the former ruling party face criminal trial for corruption as police made further arrests over alleged graft under the Hosni Mubarak regime.

**IRAQ:** Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki called on Iraqis not to participate in planned demonstrations in Baghdad today, describing their organisers as insurgents and loyalists of Saddam Hussein.

**JORDAN:** The powerful Islamist opposition geared up for a "day of anger" today to demand reforms as Jordan evacuated nearly 1,100 out of its 9,000 citizens from Libya.

**TUNISIA:** A UN human rights mission called on Tunisia to open investigations immediately into alleged violations carried out by security forces to suppress the country's recent popular uprising.

-- The IOM said more than 30,000 Tunisian and Egyptian migrants have left Libya since Monday, with tens of thousands more expected to leave.

ALGERIA: US envoy William Burns arrived in Algiers to meet President Abdelaziz Bouteflika after Washington called for greater political freedom.