



Saikat Datta, *extreme right*, assistant editor, Outlook Magazine of India, gives a presentation at a roundtable discussion in a city hotel yesterday. (From left) Ralph Frammolino, former Los Angeles Times reporter; Farid Hossain, bureau chief, Associated Press Bangladesh; and Hasibur Rahman, executive director, Management and Resources Development Initiative; were present.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Garment factory looted in Gazipur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Armed robbers looted machinery and other valuables worth about Tk 15 lakh from a composite garment factory in Gazipur early hours of yesterday.

At about 3:00am, the robbers numbering about 30 equipped with lethal arms stormed into Sahaba Yan Dying and Horizon Garments near the Rajendrapur intersection.

Factory Manager Nuruzzaman Khokon told this correspondent that the robbers entered the factory premises climbing the wall, tied up 15 workers in a room at gunpoint and looted motors, heavy dyeing coils, batteries of generators and other valuables. They escaped with the valuables in a pick-up van.

They beat the workers with sticks and iron bars and took away Tk 50,000 and several cellphones from them, he added.

Utilise RTI Act to get info from intelligence agencies

Speakers urge journalists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Right to Information (RTI) Act should be utilised to ensure people's right to information from the country's intelligence agencies which has a tradition of maintaining secrecy, speakers at a discussion said yesterday.

"We should put special focus on using Right to Information Act to get information from intelligence agencies as much as possible.

"It would be a move against the typical tradition of secrecy strictly nurtured by the agencies," said Saikat Datta, assistant editor of Outlook Magazine, India.

Except for exemptions for the agencies in RTI Act, he said, none can prevent people from enjoying his or her right to information involving human rights and corruption.

The discussion titled "Use of the RTI Act by Journalists: Lessons from international experience", aimed at introducing journalist with the effectiveness of RTI Act, was held at Hotel La Vinci in the city.

It was organised by Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI) in cooperation with CIDA-WBI governance programme in Bangladesh.

Legal experts emphasise persistent and careful use of Right to Information Act as the implementing authorities are bureaucrats

Citing examples of reports made by Indian journalists using laws in his country, he said, "You can use RTI not only to create a story, but also to see through the story to its logical conclusion."

Speaking at the discussion, legal experts repeatedly emphasised on persistent and careful use of law as the implementing authorities are bureaucrats who always look for legal loopholes and prefer taking shelter under official secrecy act.

Former Los Angeles Times reporter Ralph Frammolino and MRDI Executive Director Hasibur Rahman Mukur attended the discussion, moderated by Associated Press Bureau Chief Farid Hossain.

ATTACK ON BAULS

Punishment to culprits demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Kabita Parishad (JKP), an organisation of poets, yesterday demanded arrest and exemplary punishment to culprits who forcibly shaved off long hair and moustaches of 28 bauls (mystic devotees) in Rajbari recently.

The parishad leaders placed their demands at a human chain organised in

front of National Museum in the city protesting the attack.

Speaking at the programme, the poets said it is fundamentalists who attacked eminent writer Prof Humayun Azad in the past and have now harassed bauls in Rajbari. This group is acting in order to turn this country into a copy of Pakistan, they said.

Poet Dr Muhammad Samad, Munir

Siraj, Aslam Sani, Nipu Shahdat, Tarique Sujat and JKP President Habibullah Siraji addressed the function.

The poets threatened to initiate a movement if the culprits are not brought to book soon.

A good number of bauls from different districts of the country attended the demonstration and sang songs protesting the attack.

Housewife commits suicide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A housewife committed suicide on Friday night at her residence following a feud with her husband in the city's Mirpur area.

The dead was identified as Taslima Akhter, 31, wife of Arifuzzaman Titu of the area.

Sub-Inspector Rabiul Haq of Kafrul Police Station said Taslima went for shopping with her niece in the evening and returned after three hours. Her husband rebuked her for being late as her four children were waiting for their mother to cook them evening food.

Her husband slapped Taslima at point of the row, following which she entered her room and locked the door from inside.

After half an hour, family members broke open the door and found her hanging with a ceiling fan with her scarf and rushed her to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) around 10:00pm where the doctors declared her dead, Rabiul said.

DMCH camp police detained Titu for primary interrogation and later set him free.

Police said the victim's three brothers went to Kafrul Police Station but did not lodge any complaint in this regard.

Police sent the body to DMCH morgue for autopsy.



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