

NEWS IN *brief*

Limon gets bail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A Jhalakathi court yesterday granted bail to Limon, the college student maimed by Rab shooting, in a case filed for obstructing law-enforcers from discharging their duties and using arms against them. Magistrate Nusrat Jahan of Senior Judicial Magistrate Court granted the bail against a security bond of Tk 10,000 following a petition by Limon's counsel Nasimul Hasan. The court also ordered the petitioner to appear before it on May 29 for further hearing. Police are yet to submit the charge sheet of the case. Sixteen-year-old Limon, who is undergoing treatment at capital's Pangu hospital, was shown arrested in two cases -- one for "obstructing law-enforcers from discharging their duties and attempting to murder" and the other for "possessing firearms". Lutfor Rahman, deputy additional director of Rapid Action Battalion-8, filed the cases with Rajapur Police Station on March 23. Earlier that day, a Rab team led by Lutfor shot Limon in the left leg on his way to bring back his cattle home at Chhaturia village of Jhalakathi. The leg had to be amputated later. On April 24, Rajapur police pressed charges against him and seven others in the arms case.

8th wage board demanded

BSS, Dhaka

Leaders of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) yesterday demanded the government to immediately form the 8th Wage Board for the newspaper industry. The media people have been facing hardship in leading life as living cost has gone up to a great extent, but their salaries and allowances have not been enhanced rationally, they said. They were speaking at a discussion organised by DUJ on the occasion of May Day at Jatiya Press Club in the city with DUJ President Shah Alamgir in the chair. BFUJ President Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Secretary General Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan, former BFUJ secretary general Altaf Mahmud, BFUJ Vice-President Dr Utpal Sarkar, Treasurer Ataur Rahman, DUJ General Secretary Abu Jafar Surjya, former DUJ general secretary Omar Faruq, Rahman Mostafiz and Shaban Mahmud also spoke.



Chief of Transparency International Huguette Labelle speaks at a press conference at Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday. On her right is Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International, Bangladesh. (Story on Page 20)

Contempt of court act approved in principle

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday approved in principle a draft of the Contempt of Court Act-2011 incorporating a provision for easing the sufferings endured by government officials facing contempt of court charges. The approval came at a weekly cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. It also approved in principle a draft of Pornography Control Act-2011 in a bid to check pornography related crimes. Briefing reporters after the meeting, Prime Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad said government officials from the field level to secretary level face contempt of court charges while discharging government duties, and they have to stand before courts for a long time, which hampers governmental work. He gave an example of a sitting secretary who is facing 69 contempt of court charges. Law Minister Shafique Ahmed said currently if a government official or employee is charged with contempt of court, he or she must be present in a court in person for a hearing, and must bear the cost of legal defence. In the new draft, provisions have been made so government officials facing the charge may be represented in a court through

lawyers without their physical presence. If a court is satisfied with a lawyer's argument then his or her client will be cleared of the charge, and if not the accused must appear before the court in person for another hearing. According to the draft act, if it is proven that an accused official's contempt of court was not deliberate, then he or she will be cleared of the charge, and the authorities or the department concerned will bear the expenses of the legal defence. But if an official is found guilty then he or she must bear the cost of the legal defence. The law minister said government officials have long been demanding for easing of their sufferings related to contempt of court charges. According to the draft Pornography Control Act, punishment for creating, preserving, and marketing pornography through the internet, CDs or mobile technologies will be 7 to 10 years of imprisonment and a maximum of Tk 5 lakh fine. Azad said pornography related crimes have increased in the society and the government is enacting the law as there has been no specific act to control such crimes. Crimes related to pornography, however, will be considered bailable, he added.

Present EC must go

Demands Khaleda

UNB, Gazipur

Opposition leader Khaleda Zia has called for the formation of a neutral Election Commission to ensure fair election in the future, terming the incumbent commission a "puppet" of the party in power. "This election commission was a key to destroying BNP in the past. They are the stooges of the present ruling party. This commission must go," she told a May Day rally at Konabari College Ground Sunday afternoon. Calling for all out movement to remove the current government for restoration of democracy, peace and security, Khaleda said the incumbent ruling party is seeking out ways to retain power. Khaleda rejected the government plan to introduce electronic voting machines for future elections, alleging that the electronic voting machine is another ploy to retain power through rigging. Referring to the ruling party's new proposition about the caretaker government, she said although the caretaker government was the demand of Awami League, now they want to scrap this system to hang on to power. She opposed scrapping the system of caretaker government. Khaleda squarely blamed the present coalition for failure on all fronts, saying that the government is scared of mid-term elections. "This government has no point to stay in power," she told the rally. Without naming India, the BNP chairperson alleged that the government is busy in pleasing its foreign bosses by giving them transit corridors and businesses. On the contrary, she said the government has failed to realise the sharing of waters of the common rivers, and keeps mum over the killing of Felani. "The country has been liberated through war. We will not accept anyone's dictates," the former prime minister said. Khaleda accused the government of failing to solve the problems of electricity, gas and water, and instead creating a reign of plundering. Gazipur district Sramik Dal President Salahuddin Sarkar presided over the rally while BNP senior leaders Nazrul Islam Khan, Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir and Amanullah Aman, among others, addressed it.



Jahanara Imam's birthday today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 82nd birth anniversary of Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam, an eminent litterateur and the crusader against war criminals and fundamentalism. Born in Murshidabad in India in 1929, Jahanara Imam is mostly remembered for her role in bringing the issues of war crimes and war criminals of 1971 to the forefront. On the occasion, Ekatturer Ghatak Dalal Nirml Committee, the platform waging war against the collaborators since January 19, 1992 under her leadership, would place wreaths at her grave in Mirpur Shaheed Intellectuals' Graveyard at 8:00am, says a press release. Jahanara Imam wrote a total of 26 books including the widely acclaimed "Ekatturer Dinguli" (Days of 1971), and several articles on trial of war criminals and spirit of War of Liberation in various newspapers. Mother of martyred freedom fighter Rumi, Jahanara Imam breathed her last after struggling with cancer for long in USA in 1994. Different branches of the committee organise discussions at home and abroad. However, the central discussion would be held at BILIA auditorium on May 12 due to unavoidable reasons, the release adds.

May Day observed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Historic May Day was observed on Sunday in the country as elsewhere in the world with a vow to institutionalise socio-economic rights of workers. Apart from the government, different trade and labour unions, human rights organisations, professional bodies, socio-cultural bodies and political parties observed the day in a befitting manner. Rallies, seminars, discussions and cultural programmes were held in the capital and elsewhere in the country as part of the celebrations. It was a public holiday and a good number of city-dwellers thronged parks and amuse-

ment spots in the capital. Bangladesh Television, Bangladesh Betar and private television channels aired special programmes while national dailies brought out special supplements. President Zillur Rahman and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina greeted people through separate messages. The premier attended a discussion on the day at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the afternoon inaugurated an exhibition there. Opposition Leader Khaleda Zia addressed a public rally in Gazipur on the occasion. Bangladesh Federal Union of Newspaper Press Workers held a discussion at Jatiya Press Club in the city marking the day.

Death anniversary

METRO DESK



Today is the 7th death anniversary of Amberin Azam, wife of S M Shahed Al Azam, says a press release. On the occasion, a quarkhwani and special prayers will be held at Sir Nawab Salimullah Orphanage Mosque in Dhaka city. Quarkhwani and special prayers will be also held at Shazadi Latifa Khatun orphanage for khandia Madrasa at Azam Bari, Chittagong. Feeding of the destitute will follow the programme.

Obituary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Shafitl Haque Khan, also known as Salmia, a veteran freedom fighter and a retired senior government official, died of a cardiac arrest at his rented house in Bewtha of the district town Sunday night (May-1). He was 68, says a press release. Khan left behind wife, a son, a daughter, a brother, and a host of relatives to mourn his death. His first namaj-e-janaja was held on DC Court Mosque premises at 9:00am yesterday.

'Make workers' welfare foundation functional'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Labour rights activists and trade union leaders yesterday demanded the government to immediately make Workers' Welfare Foundation functional, formed five years back. They suggested government allocation for it in the next budget, alongside contributions by industry owners and workers. The demands came at a post-May Day seminar titled "Labour Welfare and Workers' Welfare Foundation: Present status and imperatives" organised by Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city. The foundation, a legal entity, had none of the government's or industry owners' contribution since its creation. Only a few companies provided Tk 54 lakh from their workers' welfare fund, said speakers. The foundation's law says fund sources could be its investments, contributions from the government, industries and profit per-

centages that companies share with workers, said Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmed, assistant executive director of Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies. Of 4.5 crore workers, 3.5 are in the informal sectors including agriculture, rice mills, light engineering, construction, foundry etc. The foundation could greatly help these workers, as they lack death and accident insurances, he said. "However, fixing the criteria on who would benefit from the fund is a vital question," Ahmed said. Kazi Saifuddin Ahmed, adviser to Bangladesh Employers' Federation; Jatiya Sramik League Chairman Abdul Matin Master; State Minister for labour and employment Begum Monnujan Sufian; the foundation Director General Abdur Razzaque; and Abu Sayeed Mohammad Khurshid Alam, labour director at the Directorate of Labour; spoke at the programme, moderated by MJF Director Dr Shameem Imam.

Case against Rab men dismissed

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday dismissed a murder case filed against six Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel and three civilians saying that it had no jurisdiction to take into cognisance the matter that took place outside the city. Metropolitan Magistrate Mostafa Shahriar Khan dismissed the case against the accused on grounds that the incident took place in Narayanganj. Shafiqul Islam, former chairman of Ziakandi Union Parishad under Titas upazila in Comilla district, was killed in a 'shootout' between his cohorts and Rab in Araihaaz upazila in Narayanganj on April 3. On April 25, Shafiqul's wife Tahmina Akhter filed the case. The accused are Deputy Assistant Director of Rab-11 Mohammad Yunus Ali, Assistant Director Mohammad Mizanur Rahman, lance corporal Al Amin, constables Bipul Biswas, Aminul Islam and Amzad Hossain, Titas Upazila Chairman Parvez Hossain Sarker, his two accomplices Monir Hossain and Mohammad Abdullah.

Missing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Sani Miah, 23, son of Golap Rahman of Purangaon village under Bajitpur Police Station of Kishorganj district, went missing on September 21 last year. He went missing on way to his workplace at Aftab Feed Products in Rupganj of Narayanganj district. A general diary was filed with Bajitpur Police Station in this connection, confirmed his elder brother Mizanur Rahman. Anyone who may know his whereabouts is requested to contact Mizanur Rahman of Prodhaz Bari, Rupshi, Tarabo under Rupganj upazila of Narayanganj district on cellphone #01746086403, says a press release.

DHAKA TODAY

Human chain
Campaign on Citizen Rights to Information will hold a human chain; Venue: in front of National Museum; Time: 10:30am.

Rally
Sammito Sangskritik Jote will organise a protest rally; Venue: in front of Teacher Student Centre; Time: 5:00pm.

Memorial
Ekatturer Ghatak Dalal Nirml Committee will place wreaths; Venue: Martyred Intellectuals Graveyard, Mirpur; Time: 8:00am.

Human chain
Campaign for Good Governance will hold a human chain; Venue: National Museum; Time: 11:00am.

Human chain
Law department of Dhaka University will organise a human chain; Venue: in front of Jatiya Press Club; Time: 11:00am.

Discussion
Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalist will hold a discussion; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 11:00am.

Musical soiree
Rabindra Academy will organise a musical soiree; Venue: Bangladesh National Museum; Time: 6:30pm.

Musical soiree
Bengal Foundation will hold a musical soiree; Venue: Bengal Foundation; Time: 7:00pm.

Discussion
Deshpremik Jonogoner Mancha will organise a discussion; Venue: Gono Sangskritik Kendra; Time: 3:00pm.

Awarding ceremony
Bangladesh Centre for Development, Journalism and Communication will hold an awarding ceremony; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 11:00am.

Seminar
Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum will organise a seminar; Venue: BIAM Foundation; Time: 10:00am.

Human chain
Shushashoner Jonno Procharabhiyan will organise a human chain; Venue: National Museum; Time: 11:00am.

Seminar
Mass-line Media Centre will hold a seminar; Venue: IDB building; Time: 10:00am.

Glaxose WEATHER TODAY

100% GLUCOSE

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka
Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over all the seven divisions in next 12 hours till 6:00pm today. Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:28pm today and rises at 5:23am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 36.2 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 20.2 degrees Celsius at Mymensingh.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.7	21.3	70	67
Chittagong	31.3	25.0	69	77
Rajshahi	35.3	21.2	77	64
Rangpur	30.0	21.5	84	76
Khulna	34.3	26.0	77	60
Barisal	33.0	25.4	73	63
Sylhet	30.5	21.1	91	72
Cox's Bazar	32.6	25.0	73	83

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