



The manhole near Bangla
Motor in the city keeps open since its broken lid was removed four days ago. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL

Charges framed against 19 Jamaat leaders, activists

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday framed charges against 19 Jamaat-e-Islami men, including former lawmaker Mujibur Rahman from Rajshahi, in a case filed against them for possessing "bomb making materials" and "anti-state" leaflets in October last year.

Judge Mujibul Kamal of Special Tribunal-9 framed the charges and fixed July 7 to start trial of the case.

Mujibur, an assistant secretary general of Jamaat and president of Sramik Kalyan Federation, Jamaat's associate body; and the others, now on bail, pleaded not guilty and demanded justice before the court after the charges were read out.

Mahfuzur Rahman, Jamaat Mirpur thana (west) unit ameer; Kazirul Islam, an executive member of Jamaat; Shafiqul Alam, Khulna city unit nayeb-e-ameer; SA Abdul Hai, the federation's publicity secretary; and Abdul Karim, a leader of Jamaat's ward-12 unit, were among the accused.

On October 28 of 2010, after a tip-off, police raided a building at Kalwalapara of the city's Mirpur-1 around 11:30am and arrested the 19 men.

Police also recovered six explosive-like substances, bomb making materials, around 200 "jihadi" books, a sack full of "anti-state" leaflets, a laptop and some foreign currencies.

Police then filed a case against them under Explosive Substances Act.

Stop commercialisation of water: Green activists

UNB, Dhaka

Water experts and green activists yesterday stressed for a strong mass movement against the proposed Water Bill 2010 to resist the "commercialisation" of water.

They cautioned at a roundtable that people will lose their right to water and social chaos will surface if water sector goes under the control of private hand.

Dr MM Shafiqullah, former vice chancellor of Buet, said water is a fundamental right of the people, and the government should not pass any law that violates this right.

"The private companies will never think of public interest. They will try to

earn more profit through commercialisation of water," he said.

Dr Shafiqullah, who chaired the roundtable on "The proposed Water Bill 2010: The right of people and nature to water", also criticised the proposed law.

He said there is no effective law in the country to punish the water-polluters.

Bangladesh has huge water resources, yet people now are compelled to buy drinking water, said Engr M Enamul Haque, former director general of Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB).

He said, "We've a historical right to water that must be protected."

Haque suggested the government

elicit public opinion before placing the proposed Water Bill 2010 in parliament, aiming at making the law people-friendly.

Abu Naser Khan, chairman of Paribesh Bachao Andolan (Paba), warned that if the government leaves water to private sector, its commercialisation can never be stopped.

He demanded inclusion of people's right to water as a fundamental right in the constitution for the greater interest of the nation.

Shafiquddin Sarkar, former president of Diploma Engineers' Institute, and columnist Syed Abul Mokshed also addressed the roundtable organised by Paba at the Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday.

Country's first bio-safety lab opens

BSS, Dhaka

International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) yesterday opened country's first bio-safety laboratory to protect its scientists and technicians from infliction of viral onslights during research work.

US ambassador in Dhaka James F Moriarty inaugurated the lab.

ICDDR,B officials said the new facility would help researchers to handle the deadly viruses with more proficiency under enhanced protective measures.

The United States is a major sponsor of the ICDDR,B and the US envoy said his country would continue work with Bangladesh to promote

health and nutrition standard alongside agriculture.

"In implementing our feed the future and global health initiatives, the United States is aligning our resources with Bangladesh's own strategies, working together with many other partners," he said.

Moriarty said the ICDDR,B's BS-3

laboratory is a very good example of broad collaboration linking the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Centre for Disease Control, the National Institutes of Health, the US Agency for International Development and different organisations of Bangladesh.

Referring to the one million US dollar support provided by the USDA, national Institute of Food and

Agriculture and the USDA research service for ICDDR,B's research on vitamin A deficiency, he said USDA works closely with the centre for disease control to monitor and control the spread of infectious animal diseases - a critical part of the work here at ICDDR,B.

Executive Director of ICDDR,B Dr A Cravioto addressed the function. Researchers, officials of ICDDR,B and US embassy officials were also present on the occasion.

ICDDR,B researchers said with the new BS-3 laboratory, the center can assist the government of Bangladesh with research on deadly diseases and provide an accurate diagnosis using the equipment installed in the laboratory.

Robbery in railway GM's Ctg bungalow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A gang of armed robbers looted cash and valuables from the bungalow of Bangladesh Railway's GM in Chittagong early yesterday.

Some 30-35 robbers entered the bungalow of Yusuf Ali Mridha, general manager (GM) of railway (East Zone), behind Central Railway Building after tying up four security guards with trees around 3:30am at gunpoint, said Abul Kalam Azad, OC of Kotwali Police Station.

They cut the grill of the back door and looted laptops, mobile phone sets, and some cash, said sources.

Nine officers used to reside in five rooms while their family lived in Dhaka. Seven officers, including Yusuf, were not present during the robbery.

Contacted, Yusuf who was in Dhaka, said there might be some other reasons behind the robbery.

Yusuf said a recruitment process is going on and many requests were made against the posts. "But as a general manager it is not possible for me to satisfy everyone. Some who are dissatisfied might be involved," he said.

Yusuf said one laptop, one mobile phone set and Tk 2,000 were also looted from his room.

SM Liaquat Ali, additional chief engineer

(track), present during the robbery, said he awoke when they started breaking the door of his room (room no 4).

All of a sudden, six people entered the room and looked for Yusuf and asked him for the keys of the almirah at gunpoint, he added.

"As I gave it (the key) to them, they opened the almirah and broke the suitcase kept there," he said adding that the robbers took away cash worth Tk 2 lakh, one camera, two Nokia N70 mobile phone sets.

Liaquat said they tied him up and ransacked the room.

The robbers also ransacked two other rooms of the bungalow and took away three laptops, one printer and two cell phone sets.

Chief Accounts Officer of the railway Gaura Chandra Roy, present in his room during the robbery, could not ascertain anything as the robbers did not enter his room, said police.

Police visited the spot in the morning while a CID team also started investigation into the robbery incident. CID Inspector Ibrahim said they collected some evidence, but could not collect any fingerprints.

SI Alamgir Hossain said they are trying to arrest the robbers to recover the valuables and money. "We suspect they are an organised and professional gang," he said.

SM Liaquat Ali, additional chief engineer



A ransacked room following the overnight robbery at the bungalow of Bangladesh Railway (east zone) general manager near Central Railway Building in Chittagong city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



Bangladesh National Museum brings out a procession in the city yesterday marking the International Museum Day.

Bangladesh envoy meets Mamata

BSS, Kolkata

Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Tareque Ahmed Karim yesterday met the West Bengal Chief Minister designate Mamata Banerjee and congratulated her on her landslide victory in the recent state assembly elections.

Mamata thanked the High Commissioner, who was accompanied by the Deputy High Commissioner Mustafizur Rahman.

Karim, who arrived here on Tuesday, will fly to Gowa today to meet the re-elected Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi.

Road crashes kill 3, injure 2

METRO DESK

Three people were killed and two others injured in separate road accidents in Satkhira and Chapainawabganj on Tuesday and yesterday.

Our Satkhira correspondent reports: At least two people were killed and two others injured in separate road accidents in the district on Tuesday night.

The deceased were identified as Md Nayeem Dewan, 40, of Sonadanga in Khulna, also a manager of Shymnagar branch of American Life Insurance Company and Sarojit Kumar Ghosh, 45, a milkman, son of Durga Prasad Ghosh, of village Alipur Nathpara of Sadar upazila.

The injured, Bishwa Nath Mondal, was admitted to Khulna Medical College Hospital and Prashanta Kumar Ghosh brother of

Sarojit Kumar Ghosh was admitted to Satkhira Sadar Hospital.

Police said Nayeem was killed as his motorcycle dashed a roadside tree at Banshipur bazar in Shyamnagar upazila, leaving him dead on the spot and injured Bishwa Nath.

Meanwhile, Sarojit Kumar was killed as a pickup hit his bicycle on Satkhira-Kaliganj road near Alipur check post in Sadar upazila, leaving him dead on the spot and injured his brother.

Our Chapainawabganj correspondent says: A man was killed as he fell down from a speedy Bhutbuti, locally made three-wheeler, at Baripukur of Shibganj upazila yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Abdus Salam, 34, son of Entaj Ali, of Porsha in Naogaon.