

NEWS IN *brief*

Jewellery shop looted in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Masked raiders looted gold, silver, and cash worth about Tk 40 lakh from a jewellery shop at Siddhirganj Bazar of the sadar upazila early yesterday.

Some 10-12 robbers entered the shop breaking the lock after holding security guard Abdul Motalib hostage at gunpoint, shop owner Sirajul Islam quoted Motalib as saying.

They looted 65 tolas of gold, 200 tolas of silver, and Tk 92,000 in cash and also took away the vault of the jewellery on a pick-up van.

Siddhirganj Police Station Officer-in-charge Kamrul Alam confirmed the incident and said they are trying to recover the looted stuff.

Traders stabbed in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of snatchers stabbed a trader and snatched Tk 84,000 from his possession in the city's Mirpur area yesterday.

The injured is Razu Sheikh, 40, an egg trader, of Bihari Camp of Mirpur, Section No-11.

Police said the 6-7 members gang of snatchers swooped on him with lethal weapons in front of Mohammadi Market of the area in broad daylight and hacked him on his head and neck.

He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital in a critical state.

BMP condemns fatwa

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) expressed resentment towards an incident in Thakurgaon where a housewife was imposed with the fatwa of 'hilla marriage' (marriage with a third person), said a press release yesterday.

BMP also demanded that the culprits be arrested and punished upon investigation into the incident.

Abdullah of Haragachpara village in the district's Sadar upazila divorced his wife Karuna Begum through an affidavit and evicted her from the house along with their child, the release said.

When she asked for help from the local UP chairman, he sent her back to her husband's house where some locals imposed the fatwa upon her, it added.

HC questions ACC act provisions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday questioned the legality of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) rules that empower it to charge people with amassing wealth beyond known sources of income and concealing the information about it.

An HC bench issued rules on the government and the ACC asking to explain within four weeks why sections 26(2) and 27(1) of the ACC act should not be declared illegal and unconstitutional.

The ruling came in response to separate petitions by Abdul Mannan, an Awami League lawmaker from Bogra, and his wife Sahadara Mannan.

The ACC on July 4 filed two cases against the couple under the two sections.

During the immediate past caretaker government, the commission sued many top politicians, government officials and businessmen under those provisions.

Abdul Mannan and his wife recently challenged the two provisions saying the income tax law allows an accused to get acquitted of the charge of dodging tax by paying 10 per cent tax on the income. But the commission filed the cases against them without giving them an opportunity to seek remedy under the law.

In response to their petitions, the HC bench of Justice Bazlur Rahman and Justice M Enayetur Rahim asked the government and the commission to explain why the proceedings of the cases against them should not be declared illegal.

Advocate SM Zahurul Islam appeared for the petitioners and advocate Khurshid Alam Khan for the ACC. Deputy Attorney General Amit Talukder represented the government.



An artist gives the finishing touches to a huge replica of a stork on the road beside the VIP lounge in Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in the city yesterday as part of the preparations to welcome Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on his two-day visit to the country beginning today. PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Manmohan pledges dev of Bangladesh

UNB, Dhaka

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh who arrives in Bangladesh today said, as a close neighbour and friend, India is committed to extend its full support to Bangladesh in its development efforts.

"Our partnership with Bangladesh is important for the stability and prosperity of our Northeast region.

"It is a partnership which can have a profound positive impact on the South Asian region as a whole," he said in a statement in New Delhi yesterday prior to his departure for Bangladesh.

Manmohan, making his first bilateral visit to Bangladesh, said "We attach the highest importance to further developing and strengthening our relations with Bangladesh.

"Our relations with Bangladesh are rooted in history, culture and the struggle for freedom. Both our countries share common democratic values and development aspirations."

Manmohan will be accompanied by chief ministers of all the Northeast States neighbouring Bangladesh.

"This reflects our desire to have across the border engagement with Bangladesh, so that the fruits of our cooperation are available to people on both sides of the border," he said.

Manmohan said Bangladesh and India are today witnessing an extraordinary period of cooperation and friendship.

"My visit will provide an opportunity to review the progress achieved in the implementation of the decisions taken during the historic visit of Prime

Minister Sheikh Hasina to India in 2010," he said.

Manmohan said, "It is a matter of satisfaction that we have made concrete progress in several areas such as security, boundary issues, water resources, power connectivity, improvement of border infrastructure, trade facilitation and economic cooperation."

"Our endeavour will be to sustain and build upon this positive momentum."

He expects his visit would lead to greater cooperation between India and Bangladesh in all these areas.

"We also expect to conclude concrete agreements which will help us to elevate the level of our cooperation in the traditional areas of cooperation and to develop cooperation in new areas," he said.

TEESTA WATER SHARING DEAL India's withdrawal not unexpected: BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Main opposition BNP yesterday said it was "not unexpected" that the Indian side would oppose the proposed Teesta water sharing deal with Bangladesh as India "never cared for Bangladesh's interests".

Talking to The Daily Star, BNP Vice-Chairman and former water resources minister Hafizuddin Ahmed said India designed to ink an "eyewash treaty" on Teesta water sharing.

"India would not have gained if the proposed treaty was finally signed. And that is why India staged the drama willfully at the final stage of Manmohan's visit to postpone the signing," Hafizuddin said over telephone.

Meanwhile, top leaders of Workers Party of Bangladesh, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) and Jatiya Party expressed dissatisfaction over West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's opposition to the proposed deal.

Rashed Khan Menon, president of Workers Party of Bangladesh, expressed surprise at India's latest stance on the deal.

JSD Chief Hasanul Haq Inu said the news was certainly disheartening for Bangladesh.

Jatiya Party Presidium Member Anisul Islam Mahmud said it was disappointing to hear that the deal would not be inked due to Mamata's opposition at the final stage.

TIB differs on Abul's claim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Transparency International Bangladesh yesterday differed on the communications minister's claim made on Sunday that he communicates all development-related decisions to TIB to ensure transparency in the ministry.

TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said the documents sent by the ministry are inadequate to evaluate its transparency. TIB has not enough scope to conduct investigations required to evaluate and certify transparency of the ministry, he said in a statement.

TIB proposed an Integrity Pact to the communication ministry fearing possible corruption over the construction of the Padma Bridge and talked about it with Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain, but he did not respond, he said.

Iftekharuzzaman said the minister also pledged to implement the recommendations, made by TIB on March 2009, on preventing corruption in communication sector. TIB is yet to see any steps regarding the matter, he added.

Saifur's anniversary of death observed

UNB, Dhaka

The second death anniversary of former finance minister and BNP standing committee member M Saifur Rahman was observed yesterday.

Saifur Rahman died in a road accident on this day in 2009.



Eminent artistes, cultural personalities and people from all walks of life place wreaths on the coffin of Ajit Roy, an artiste of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra, to pay their last respect to him at Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

AHSANULLAH MASTER KILLING BNP blocked search for masterminds Reveals Wikileaks

BSS, Dhaka

The four-party alliance led by Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) blocked the investigation process of finding out the masterminds of the killing of AL leader Ahsanullah Master to protect BNP's top leaders.

On April 18, 2005, the then US ambassador to Bangladesh Harry K Thomas, quoting reliable sources, in a cable report, informed Washington about the incident that was published by whistleblower Wikileaks on August 30.

Thomas said the then ruling government blocked police investigation

about involvement of BNP's top leaders into the gruesome murder.

On May 7, 2004, Ahsanullah Master, a sitting member of Bangladesh Jatiya Sangsad, was shot dead in broad daylight at a meeting at Gazipur district.

One year after the killing, a speedy tribunal court sentenced 22 people to death while handed over six others lifetime imprisonment on April 16, 2005 for the murder.

Most of the convicts are leaders and workers of the than ruling party BNP. Of them, 10 are now hiding in different neighbouring countries while 16 are now in jail custody and the remaining

two died.

Though Awami League expressed satisfaction over the judgment, it demanded to find the masterminds of the killing and bring them to justice.

After the incident, Ahsanullah Master's son Zahid Hassan Russel was elected as parliament member of Gazipur-2 constituency in 2004 by-elections and later he was re-elected in the 2008 general election.

Russel, now the chairman of a parliamentary standing committee on Ministry of Youth and Sports, demanded immediate extradition of the killers hiding abroad and execution of the court verdict.

Charge to be framed against Sayedee Sept 15

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Charge will be framed on September 15 against Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee in a tax evasion case.

Judge Mohammad Mozammel Hossain of the Special Judge's Court-3 fixed the date yesterday after hearing both the sides.

Syedee, also an accused for killing people during the War of Liberation in 1971, was produced before the court during the hearing.

Meantime, Sayedee's lawyer submitted a petition seeking an adjournment of the hearing saying that they had earlier filed a writ petition with the High Court (HC) challenging the legality of the case.

After the hearing, the HC issued a rule upon the government to explain why the proceeding of the case should not be declared illegal. But the rule remained pending for hearing. So, Sayedee's lawyer prayed for an adjournment of the hearing.

But the court asked the prosecution to explain on what basis the charge would be framed against the accused.

The court also asked Sayedee's lawyer to submit by the scheduled date any order of the HC regarding quashing the proceeding of the case.

Masuma Kahtun, deputy tax commissioner of the National Board of Revenue (NBR), filed the case on August 19 last year against the Jamaat leader on charge of dodging income tax of Tk 56.45 lakh for the fiscal years from 2005-2006 to 2009-2010.

WEATHER TODAY

Light rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at many places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi, Rangpur and Dhaka divisions in 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls are also likely at places over southern part of the country, Met office said.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:12pm today and rises at 5:42am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 35.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sayedpur and lowest 25.5 degrees Celsius at Cox's Bazar and Srirongal.

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	33.2	25.4	71	68
Chittagong	32.2	25.8	74	80
Rajshahi	34.0	26.6	78	74
Rangpur	34.0	27.4	69	67
Khulna	32.8	26.6	88	79
Barisal	32.5	26.2	84	80
Sylhet	34.0	26.2	83	75