

# 16-day Ctg festival

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The announcement was made at a city hotel in the presence of distinguished guests. The logo of the festival was also unveiled on the occasion.

The key themes of the event will cover Chittagong's history, culture and tradition; contemporary lifestyle, food and entertainment; business; and civic and environmental issues.

Speaking on the occasion, Mahfuz Anam, Editor and Publisher of The Daily Star, said the daily had initiated the event to project Chittagong in its true spirit before the nation.

Everything in the country happens around the capital Dhaka, which he thought was not the right way to lead a country to prosperity.

The country's development would not gain its expected pace if Chittagong was not developed, he said. Through this festival, he pointed out, the heritage of the port city would be publicised throughout the country so that people could know more about it and thus about the country.

The event will also give a direction about how the potentials of Chittagong could be used in the best possible way; how the obstacles to Chittagong's success would be removed; and how the doors of prosperity would be unveiled, mentioned the editor.

A former adviser of a caretaker government, Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman, said Bangladesh would be developed if every part of it was developed.

He insisted that though

Chittagong was a neglected city, its citizens should go ahead with their talents and potentials instead of complaining about the negligence.

The Vice-Chancellor of Chittagong University, Prof Anwarul Azim Arif, in his remarks said Chittagong was the focal point to increase the competitiveness of Bangladesh. He urged all to know more about the port city.

Chittagong has always been odommo (indomitable), said MA Malek, editor of The Daily Azadi.

Both Malek and Taslim Uddin Chowdhury, editor of The Daily Purbokone, thanked The Daily Star for taking the initiative.

Chittagong is unable to retain its talents in the city as they are Dhaka-bound, pointed out Abul Momen, resident editor of Daily Prothom Alo.

Although the city is older than Dhaka and Kolkata, it has been neglected for a long time, he observed.

Salahuddin Kashem Khan, managing director of AK Khan Group, said the port city had a history of 1,400 years. Quoting the renowned explorer Ibn Battuta, he said Chittagong is asleeping princess.

The President of Chittagong Samity, Rezaul Hoque Moshtaque, said the demand for developing Chittagong was not from a regional point of view, but for the overall development of the country.

Prof Shyamal Kanti Biswas, Vice-Chancellor of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology, said Chittagong had a lot of

talents and potentials. The expected development of the country could be achieved through utilising those, he added.

The first vice-president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters' Association (BGMEA), Nasir Uddin Chowdhury, demanded the opening of an office of the shipping ministry in Chittagong as part of decentralisation.

He hoped the festival would play a vital role in the branding of Chittagong.

M Nasir Uddin, managing director of Pacific Jeans, said China's economy had grown rapidly over the past few years, which was possible due to the growth of its coastal and port areas.

Eminent scientist Prof Jamal Nazrul Islam, Awami League lawmaker MA Latif, president (in-charge) of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) Mahbul Alam, former CCCI president Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Javed, Vice-chancellor of East Delta University Prof Dr Sikander Khan, Prof Dr Mainul Islam of Chittagong University, principal of Sunshine Grammar School and College Safia Gazi Rahman, Chittagong Club president SM Abu Tayeb, managing director of Grey Advertising Gauchul Alam Shaon and artiste Abdur Gafur Hali were present, among others.

Shahriar Shahid, manager, business development and marketing of The Daily Star, made a PowerPoint presentation of Odommo Chittagong on the occasion.

# Six govt websites hacked

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of hackers, claiming to be Indians, has attacked websites of five ministries yesterday.

The ministries are communications, youth and sports, primary and mass education, education and posts and telecommunications.

The site of Trading Corporation of Bangladesh has also been hacked.

However, the telecoms ministry's site was restored in the afternoon.

The sites had gone black and the hackers wrote, "Hacked by Love the Risk, Amal Landhe, Lnx Root, Silent Killer."

In the hacked pages, between two eyes resembling Indian flags, the hackers wrote, "We have an EYE on you".

The name of another hacker group, Indian Cyber Army, was also displayed in the pages.

In the page of TCB, the hackers wrote, "No one Can Stop Us, Hacked Saadi and Hax.r00".

The Daily Star could not reach officials of any ministry for comment.

# Bangladeshi

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profusely after the beating.

Fazlul Haque, commander of 26 Border Guard Bangladesh Battalion, Benapole check post, said BSF men beat Halima and left her in near senseless state yesterday afternoon at Petrapole opposite to the checkpost.

Local people later took her to a Benapole clinic.

They alleged that Halima was near the Bangladesh-India railway line close to Benapole check post when a team of Petrapole BSF patrol team chased and caught her.

The Indians dragged her deep into their territory and beat her, leaving her bruised and bleeding.

Assuming that she had died of torture they left her at a secluded place in Petrapole, said locals.

# Journo killed

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the capital.

Police said a speeding BRTC bus rammed the couple's motorcycle from behind near an over bridge around 7:30pm, leaving Haider dead on the spot and his wife critically injured.

The injured was admitted to the Sadar hospital.

Police sent Haider's body to the morgue of the same hospital.

# Iran

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captured in December in front of the president's stage, and hosted on the stage the Hamas prime minister of Gaza.

Hamas "will never recognise Israel," Gaza leader Ismail Haniya told the crowd just before Ahmadinejad spoke.

His remarks were likely to complicate efforts to form with rival party Fatah a Palestinian unity government in the face of strong opposition from the Jewish state, which views Hamas as a terrorist organisation armed by Iran.

Ahmadinejad gave no details about the "important nuclear projects" about to be made public.

However, the UN nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), has already said Iran is enriching uranium to 20 percent -- a level significantly closer to military-grade 90 percent purity -- at a mountain bunker near the Shiite shrine city of Qoms.

Ahmadinejad used his speech to again question the veracity of the Jewish Holocaust, which he has in the past dismissed as a "myth".

He claimed the United States and the West had created "a story called the Holocaust" to create the Israeli state as part of a plan "to dominate the world".

But, he said, "the Iranian nation with courage and wisdom smashed this idol to free the people of the West (of its hold)."

Iran denies Israel's right to exist and has said it will back any group trying to put an end to the Jewish state.

# Journalist couple killed

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old Mahir Sarowar Megh, was in the flat when the twin murders were committed sometime between 2:00am and 5:00am yesterday.

Sagar suffered 28 stab wounds and Runi five before they breathed their last, doctors at Dhaka Medical College morgue said after autopsies on their bodies.

The two and their son had been residing in the flat, on the fourth floor of a five-storey building, for only a few months.

Around 7:30am, Megh called his grandmother Nurunnahar Mirza (Runi's mother) from Runi's mobile phone and gave her the shocking news.

Nurunnahar, who lives nearby, said, "I rushed to the flat and found Sagar and Runi murdered in their bedroom."

It was Megh who opened the door when she rang the bell. A student in nursery class, he could not say anything specific as to how his parents had been killed or who had committed the crime.

Hamida Sultana Ananda, who lives in a neighbouring flat, quoting Megh said some guests had dinner at the flat on Friday. She said she had heard Megh tell his grandmother that those who killed his parents had stayed in the house and also had dinner that night.

Sources say that a few people staying in the couple's home on a late Friday night was not unusual. It could not be confirmed, though, as to how and when the killers had got in or out of the flat.

Relatives, colleagues, senior journalists, police, members of intelligence agencies and politicians rushed to the small flat as soon as news of the murders hit TV screens in the morning. Many colleagues of Sagar and Runi could not hold back their tears.

Police detained two security guards and the caretaker of the building --- Palash Rudra Paul, Humayun Kabir and Abu Taher. They also seized three mobile phones of the couple, police said.

Members of the Detective Branch of police also picked up Runi's brothers -- Nawsher Alam and Nawzesh Alam around 2:15pm but they were freed by 4:30pm.

Mahbubor Rahman, deputy commissioner of Detective Branch (DB-South), said police were yet to ascertain the reason behind the murders or identify the killers.

It could not be confirmed whether the killers had left with any valuables from the house. A visit to the flat revealed clothes scattered on the couple's bed. The room was found virtually ransacked. The iron grill of the kitchen window was missing a bar but the hole did not appear large enough for an average person to get in or out.

Before being detained by police, security guard Palash, who was on duty between 10:00pm Friday and 6:00am yesterday, told The Daily Star that Nur-un-Nobi, president of the building committee, had informed him over the intercom that he heard moaning sounds. Nur-un-Nobi asked him to see what was going on.

"I went out of the building and I also heard the sounds of crying coming from a flat upstairs," he said. He could not ascertain, though, which flat it was. "I informed him [Nur-un-Nobi] about the matter just before the azan for Fajr prayers," Palash said, adding that he had no clue that the couple had been murdered.

He said Sagar had returned home around 2:00am. His office car dropped him off. He said he did not see anyone entering or going out of the building after 2:00am.

The visitor's register of the building shows that one Toufiq went to Sagar and Runi's flat at 4:52pm Friday but there is no record of his leaving.

Talking to The Daily Star, Nur-un-Nobi, who lives in the flat below Sagar and Runi's, said he heard sounds of moaning and asked the security guard to see what was going on. "I came to know about the murder after



Nawzesh and Nawsher, brothers of Meherun Runi, come out of the Rajabazar apartment of their sister and head for the Detective Branch office.

PHOTO: STAR

Runi's mother came to the house," he said.

However, Rafiqul Islam, who owns a neighbouring building and whose flat is just four feet away from the couple's flat, said he was awake until 2:00am yesterday and again woke up for Tahajjud prayers around 4:30am but he did not hear any sounds.

Home Minister Shahara Khatun, BNP acting Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir, Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University AAMS Arefin Siddique, Inspector General of Police Hassan Mahmood Khandker, Chief Executive Officer of Maasranga Television Syed Fahim Munaim, Prime Minister's Special Assistant Mahbulul Haque Shakil and Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Benajir Ahmed visited the flat.

Several hundred journalists thronged the spot. President Zillur Rahman, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and BNP Chairperson Khaleida Zia have expressed their shock at the murder of Sagar and Runi. Shahara Khatun said she had given instructions to the law enforcement agencies to arrest the killers within 48 hours.

BNP leader Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir said, "We've been saying repeatedly that the country is turning into a slaughter ground gradually. This brutal killing again proves there is no law and order and rule of law in the country."

Law enforcers and intelligence personnel from Criminal Investigation Department (CID), DB and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) swiftly made their way to the scene of the crime.

Autopsies on Sagar and Runi were conducted at Dhaka Medical College morgue around 1:00pm. The couple were buried later at Azimpur graveyard after four namaz-e-janaza.

No case had been lodged in this connection till the filing of this report at 10:30pm.

THE BRUTALITY

The killers stabbed Sagar 28 times. According to morgue sources, six were in his chest, two in the abdomen, three in the throat, 15 in the back and one on a thigh.

During autopsy, a small knife (which had roughly a four-inch blade) was found jammed in the right side of his chest. Almost the whole of the blade was stuck in his body. This stab penetrated Sagar's lungs deeply, according to morgue sources, who added that the knife did not have its handle.

They noted that all the stabs in Sagar's body were very much straight and some of the stabs penetrated his lungs and liver. The stabs in the throat partially cut his oesophagus (the passage down which food moves between the throat and the stomach) but left his carotid arteries (which supply blood to the head) intact.

The sources also said Sagar's hands were tied at the back with a scarf and his legs were bound with another scarf.

The morgue sources suspect that three types of knives were used in the attack on

Sagar. The width of some stabs was found to be around two-and-a-half inches while the width of the others was around two inches and one inch.

The killers made two close stabs in Meherun Runi's abdomen. They also stabbed her under the eyebrows, said the morgue sources.

Sohel Mahmud, Lecturer of the Forensic Department of Dhaka Medical College, conducted the autopsies. He told reporters that it appeared to him that the killers were "unprofessional." "If the killers were professional, they would not have made so many stabs," he commented.

COUPLE LAID TO ETERNAL REST

Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi were laid to eternal rest at Azimpur graveyard last evening after four namaz-e-janaza.

The first one was held at the Dhaka Reporters Unity premises in Segunbagicha at noon. The bodies were then taken to Maasranga Television office premises, the last workplace of Sarowar, and to ATN Bangla at Karwanbazar.

The last janaza was held at their own residence at Nawabpur in Old Dhaka.

Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad, special adviser to a caretaker government M Tamim, State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Jahangir Kabir Nanak, Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abidin Farroque, Workers Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon, Awami League president member Yusuf Hossain Humayun, Jatiya Press Club President Kamal Uddin Sabuj, among others, attended the namaz-e-janaza.

Runi's kulkhani will be held on Tuesday after Asr prayers at her uncle's residence at 45, Old Boubazar of Panthapath, while Sarowar's kulkhani will be on Wednesday after Asr prayers at Boro Mosque of Ray Shaheb Bazar in Old Dhaka.

Monipur

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remained after the second round, most making mistakes in rushing through their words. Only four students remained -- three girls and a boy -- after the third round.

With two more students eligible to qualify for the TV rounds, the competition really picked up as the three remaining students got their words right for three consecutive tie-breaker rounds before the two remaining winners came through in Salwa Siddique Juthi and Saleh Ibtasam of class IX.

"I was very surprised at how well the event was organised as well as its magnitude," said a visibly-elated Nafisa, who had no previous experience in seeing Spelling Bees.

"I think I can go far in this competition. I'll work as hard as possible and give it my best shot," said a determined Saleh, who had seen Spelling Bee before and had also practised hard before the competition started.

Students who did not make the cut can still qualify for the TV rounds by visiting www.champs21.com and playing the online version of the game.

# Myanmar frees monk held for questioning

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar officials have freed a leading dissident Buddhist monk after a brief detention, his monastery said yesterday, following a call from the United States for his immediate release.

Gambira was taken away by authorities early on Friday and released that night, less than a month after he was freed from a jail term for his leading role in mass anti-government protests in 2007.

He was one of hundreds of political prisoners released in January, cutting short a 68-year jail term imposed for his key role in the 2007 "Saffron Revolution", which was brutally crushed by the former junta.

Since he was freed, Gambira has breached regulations by breaking into monasteries closed by the government after the mass monk-led demonstrations, a government official told AFP Friday on condition of anonymity.

# BCL factions

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ensued as up to 30 members of Dr Javed faction attacked Main Hostel at around 1:00am and ransacked at least 35 rooms. As the news spread, rival Dr Ataul Karim faction reiterated by vandalising around 20 rooms at Alauddin Hostel.

At one stage, both the factions equipped with rods and sticks attacked each other in front of the Main Hostel's gate leaving 10 injured.

At around 3:00am Kotwali police raided the hostels and college premises and detained 53 BCL activists. However, they were all released around noon after a request from the principal, said Officer-in-Charge of Kotwali Police Station Salahuddin Khan.

Dr Javed is now a central committee leader of BCL, students' associate body of ruling Awami League. Dr Ataul was a leader of BCL SSMC unit. Both passed from the college several years ago and also completed their internship.

As there is no committee in the SSMC unit for the last seven years, Dr Javed and Dr Ataul had long-standing rivalry over control of the hostels, tender of the college and hospital and Leo and Sandhani clubs, students say.

In Dhaka Dental College, supporters of BCL college unit president Sayeed Masud Johnny and secretary Shafiqul Haq Shafi clashed on the campus.

Around 10 supporters from both factions suffered injuries during the clash when the feuding group members attacked each other with iron rods and sticks.

Witnesses say some 20 supporters of Shafiqul faction swooped on as many supporters of Sayeed group in front of the office of the college principal around 9:30am leading to the clash.

OC of Kafurul police Abdul Latif said police dispersed the BCL activists and took control of the campus soon after the clash. He added police have been deployed on the campus to ward off further clashes.

Students say there was a strained relation between the president and secretary groups over formation of a new BCL committee of the college unit.

# BSF boss'

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occasions."

The statement said attention of the ministry has been drawn to the recent remarks made by the BSF chief, regarding deaths of Bangladeshis caused by the BSF's shooting along the border areas.

During an interview with the BBC Bangla Service last Wednesday, Bansal said it would not be possible to put an end to the firing along the border as his troops must take steps to stop the offenders.

The statement said that Bangladesh's concern at such incidents has been brought to the attention of the Indian side at various forums, where Bangladesh was assured by the Indian leadership that maximum restraint would be exercised by BSF personnel.