

NEWS IN *brief*

3 held over city mugging

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Detective Branch (DB) of police on Wednesday arrested three alleged members of a gang, who shot two officials of a private organisation and robbed them of Tk 23 in front of a bank at the city's Elephant Road on February 6.

The detectives said they also recovered Tk 1.23 lakh of the total amount after arresting Shimul Bepari, 20, Sagar Hossain, 22, and Joynal Abedin Raju, 25.

Monirul Islam, deputy commissioner of DB (South) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said the gang comprises eight members and is led by fugitive Sultan Ahmed.

The detectives made the arrests in the city's Sutrapur, Keraniganj, and Shariyatpur district, he added.

Construction worker dies in fall

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A worker was killed on the spot after falling from the 11th floor of an under-construction building in the city's Uttara yesterday.

The victim, Enamul Haque, 30, was working on the scaffold at under-construction Hossain Tower in Uttara Sector-7. He hailed from Rangpur.

Uttara police sent the body to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy and said they were looking into if proper safety measures were in place at the construction site.

Teenaged girl commits suicide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A teenaged girl committed suicide at Gulbagh in the city's Motijheel area yesterday being humiliated following a refusal to marry her by her lover.

Shahnaz Akhter, 15, daughter of rickshawpuller Mohammad Selim, killed herself by hanging from a ceiling of their residence with a sari.

Police recovered the hanging body of Shahnaz breaking open the door of the house. Shahnaz's uncle Shah Alam told this correspondent that his niece committed suicide after the landlord's son Mohammad Kamal, 32, jilted her.

The landlord issued them a notice to vacate the house as he protested it, Shah Alam said.

Motijheel Police Station officer-in-charge (OC) Hayatuzzaman Mollah said a case was filed against Kamal in this regard. Mollah said Kamal was on the

Youth killed, 2 caught

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Local people caught two youths red handed while they were fleeing as they had allegedly killed another youth at a housing project in Keraniganj early hours of yesterday.

The youths, Salauddin Ahmed and Ahsan Hossain, living in the city's Hazaribagh area, were handed over to the police after mass beating.

Officer-in-Charge of Keraniganj Police Station, Mainuddin Khan said three youths came to the Godarbagh, a housing project, riding a motor cycle at around 12:15am.

Locals intercepted them when they were returning, pushing the bike without the third one.

When they asked them about the third one, they tried to run away but locals caught them, said the OC. Police recovered the body identified as that of Imam Mahmud alias Mamun, 36.

Morgue sources said Mamun was strangled to death. The motive behind the killing was not known immediately.

Game ends in tragedy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A seemingly harmless game between two young boys ended tragically yesterday with the death of one of them.

The deceased was Al Amin, 11, son of truck driver Osman Gani living at Koratitola in the city. He was a class-IV student of Sayedabad Koratitola Primary School.

His mother Asma Begum said Al Amin and his neighbour Saifur, 14, were playing along with some other boys in front of their residence in the evening. Amidst the playing, Saifur picked up a quarrel with Al Amin and slapped him, due to which Al Amin lost his balance and hit his head against a nearby wall, she said.

Asma rushed her injured son to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where duty doctors declared him dead.

WEATHER TODAY

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Khulna, Barisal, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Comilla and Noakhali and weather may remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country in 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may occur over the river basins of the country during late night till morning, Met Office said.

Day and night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:54pm today and rises at 6:30am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 32.7 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakunda and lowest 12.5 degrees Celsius at Srimongal.

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 | 28.3 | 20.3 | 62 | 44 |
| Chittagong | 31.9 | 19.2 | 74 | 42 |
| Rajshahi | 28.0 | 17.4 | 83 | 73 |
| Rangpur | 28.6 | 16.2 | 79 | 91 |
| Khulna | 24.5 | 19.2 | 90 | 89 |
| Barisal | 26.6 | 18.0 | 71 | 80 |



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina takes a photo with graduates of Defence Services Command and Staff College course 2011-2012 at Mirpur Cantonment in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PMO

AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION

Blake for Bangladesh's engagement

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Assistant Secretary of State Robert Blake has emphasised increased engagement of Bangladesh with Afghanistan as that would be very helpful for the ongoing reconstruction process in Afghanistan.

He said this when he called on Foreign Minister Dipu Moni at her office yesterday.

Blake commended the progress Bangladesh has been making in various socio-economic sectors and appreciated the growing capacity of Bangladesh in offering opportunities and potentials for the development of the country as well as in contributing to the positive changes in the region's

economy thanks to the physical connectivity and improved relations of Bangladesh with its neighbours.

Blake also lauded the passage of the Anti-Human Trafficking Act 2011 in Bangladesh which he hoped would contribute to addressing the menace of trafficking in persons.

A host of issues of mutual interest between the US and Bangladesh were discussed during the meeting, said a foreign ministry press release.

Dipu Moni said although the trade between the two countries reached close to \$6 billion, there remain tremendous opportunities for increased trade and particularly bigger investment in Bangladesh.

C'wealth mission begins Maldives tour today

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A ministerial mission comprised of the foreign ministers of Australia, Bangladesh and Trinidad and Tobago will begin a three-day visit to the Maldives today.

The mission is to ascertain the facts about the transfer of power and promote adherence to Commonwealth values and principles.

Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni left Dhaka for Male last night to join two other members -- Australian Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd and Trinidad and Tobago Foreign Minister Dr Sururjattan Rambachan.

ACC boss urges youths to fight corruption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Golam Rahaman yesterday called upon the young generation to lead the battle against corruption.

"It was youths who led all national movements of the country. Like that, young people will also have to take the lead in the movement for curbing corruption", he said.

The ACC chief made the call as he inaugurated the CD of the theme song of Satata Sangha at Queen's School and College in the city's Adabari.

Satata Sangha is an association formed by ACC's Corruption Resistance Committee at the educational institutions across the country to mobilise youths for character building and against corruption.

At the launching ceremony, the ACC boss distributed rulers inscribed with anti-corruption slogans among the students of the institution.

Corruption is the main obstacle to the country's economic development, employment, and poverty alleviation, so it has to be resisted, he said.

ACC Commissioner Mohammad Badiuzzaman and its Secretary Faizur Rahman Chowdhury also spoke.

Dipu Moni seeks Thai support

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday sought Thai support in Bangladesh's initiatives in becoming a member of Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM).

She urged this when the outgoing Thai Ambassador Tasanawadee Miancharoen paid a farewell call on her at her office, a press release said.

During the meeting, the foreign minister said many untapped potentials exist for bilateral trade between Bangladesh and Thailand.

The a m b a s s a d o r expressed her gratitude to the Bangladesh government for all support accorded to her during her stay in Dhaka.

Boi Mela: A time for children

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Anyone taking a look into Amar Ekushey Boi Mela yesterday between 11:00am and 4:00pm might have mistaken it for a children's recreational centre.

They cannot be blamed. Only children and their guardians occupied the Bangla Academy premises.

The youngsters were scampering from one end to the other, shuffling through books and tugging and making faces at the guardians to buy something of their liking.

It was an exclusive four-hour period for children, termed Shishu Prohor (children's hour), announced by the academy authorities on Wednesday to encourage guardians into acquainting budding minds with books and the habit of reading.

Shishu Prohor will also be observed today and on February 23 and 24.

Though the number of child visitors did not meet the expectations of the organisers and book publishers, the fair was quite lively with their clamour.

One enthusiastic child bares all his fingers and thumbs at this correspondent. "I got 10 books," says the child, Sarmi Fatima Mahbub, who arrived with her two nursery-going friends and mother.

The friends, Ayeen Ali Khan and Ariyana Manjur Tonmona, not to be outdone, proudly display the books they are carrying under their little arms.

"We came here during Shishu Prohor as it would not be crowded and the kids would be able to have a good time while roaming around freely," said Sarmi's mother, Roksana Mahbub.

However, the books failed to attract Ayeen's mother, Sadia Afroz. "Chil-

dren's books available here should be more attractive and suited to their age," she said.

An author of children's literature, Lutfar Rahman Riton, echoed Sadia. Despite the large number of arrivals, most children's books are below standard, he said.

Arman Bhuiya of Eti Prokashon said overall sales of children's books, especially one based on a cartoon character, Doraemon, is satisfactory.

Meanwhile, booksellers and publishers put the blame for yesterday's low turnouts on the lack of publicity.

The academy's Deputy Director Murshiduddin Anwar said at least 15 to 16 national dailies published the news on Shishu Prohor yesterday.

The authority itself gave the announcement twice. The publishers themselves should have spread the news, he said.

TK 11CR FRAUD ACC sues 27 gang members

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday lodged 10 cases against 27 members of a gang, which has forged government cheques and swindled around Tk 11 crore from the state coffee.

One of the accused is Abdul Rouf, office assistant of the Deputy Commissioner's (DC) office of Dhaka district.

The gang has forged 47 cheques similar to those printed by Bangladesh Government Press and withdrawn the money posing as people getting compensation for land acquisition, said Deputy Director Benogir Ahmed of Special Enquiry and Investigation Section-2 of the ACC.

The ACC will file 25 more cases against the remaining fraudsters, he said.

Benogir said the gang members used different commercial banks and state-run Sonali Bank to withdraw the money. They opened 20 bank accounts with fake documents, he added.

HC keeps 5 cops standing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday kept five officials of Dhaka Metropolitan Police standing before it for around four and half hours on charge of torturing Rakib Hossain, a grandson of the country's first premier Tajuddin Ahmed.

The police officials are Deputy Commissioner of Gulshan zone Chowdhury Lutful Kabir, Assistant Commissioner Ashraful Azim Miah, Officer-in-Charge of Gulshan Police Station Shah Alam and sub-inspectors Soumen Barua and Mostafiz.

They appeared before the bench of Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik and Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim in the morning as per its earlier order.

The police officials will again have to appear before the same bench on Monday in this connection, Deputy Attorney General ABM Altaf Hossain told The Daily Star.

As the court was busy with other urgent issues, it could not hear the statements of the

police officials yesterday, he said adding that the court will pass further order after hearing their explanations on that day.

The bench on February 12 summoned the five police officials to appear before it yesterday to explain their alleged involvement in the torture on Rakib Hossain.

It also issued a rule asking the government to explain why it should not be directed to take appropriate legal action against the police officials responsible for the torture.

The HC order came when Supreme Court lawyer SM Rezaul Karim brought to its attention press reports on the incident.

According to the reports, Soumen and Mostafiz tortured Rakib when he along with a friend, Himel, parked his car in front of a roadside restaurant on Gulshan Avenue around 6:00pm on February 10.

The two police personnel reached the spot and addressed them as "Tui". As Rakib strongly protested this, they beat him up severely.



Zoom ultra

THE FASTEST MOBILE BROADBAND IN BANGLADESH

CITYCELL/FEBRUARY 12

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Begum Rokeya Khatun

METRO DESK

Begum Rokeya Khatun, wife of late Dr Alhaj Yasin Ali, passed away at her residence at Ataikula village of Sathia Upazila in