

SCHOOLBOY KILLING 2 held in Bogra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Detective Branch (DB) of police yesterday arrested two people on charge of their alleged involvement in killing of a schoolboy after kidnapping in Kahaloo upazila of Bogra district.

Earlier on April 5, the victim Md Naimul Islam Naim, 13, a class seven student at Kahaloo Pilot High School, and son of Rafiqul Islam of village Rostamchapor, went missing on way to his school.

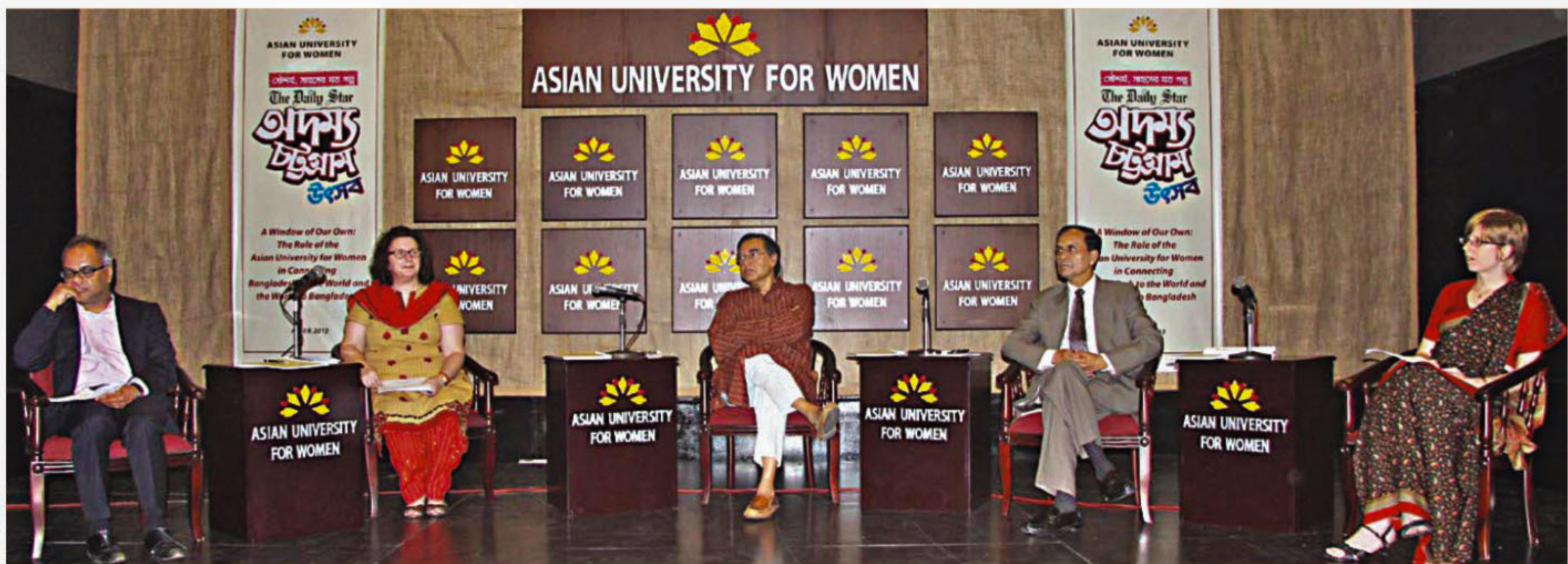
Mozzammel Haque, officer-in-charge of Kahaloo police station, said parents of Naim filed a general diary with the police station on the same day.

The gang demanded Tk 5 lakh as ransom from the victim's family within a few hours of kidnapping, but they failed to pay the money, he said.

A team of the DB raided Kahaloo Rail Station area and arrested one of the suspects Md Shahadat Hossain, 18, early yesterday, he added.

The DB also arrested Abdul Mannan 50, vice president of BNP of Kahaloo Pourashava unit following confession of Shahadat.

In a confessional statement Shahadat told the police that Naim was killed at around 10:00pm on the same day of abduction. The body was thrown into a brick kiln after strangulating him at an abandoned shop near Charmatha area. Arrested Mannan is the owner of the brick kiln.



(From left) Asian University for Women (AUW) Vice Chancellor Kamal Ahmed, Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Science at AUW Dr Kathleen Hewett-Smith, Editor and Publisher of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam, former principal secretary to the prime minister Abdul Karim and AUW teacher Dr Joanne Janssen at a discussion at AUW auditorium in Chittagong on Monday. The event was organised as part of "Odommo Chattagram" festival.

PHOTO: STAR

Two die as trains hit them

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two people were killed under the wheels of trains in Moghbazar and Malibagh areas of the capital yesterday.

A 30-year-old unidentified youth went under the wheels of a Rajshahi-bound train at around 8:00am at Peyarabagh in Moghbazar.

The victim, wearing three-quarter pant and shirt, was coming from Wireless Gate walking along the rail line. The train hit him from behind, said Emdadul Haq, assistant sub-inspector of Government Railway Police (GRP), Kamalapur.

Another unknown victim, aged around 50, was crossing the rail track at Gulbagh in Malibagh at about 8:30am when two trains from the opposite directions came to the spot. Having been panicky, he ran fast and the Kamalapur-bound train hit him, killing him instantly, said the GRP police.

FREE, FAIR ELECTION

Parties must reach agreed ground rule: Mozena

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador in Bangladesh Dan Mozena yesterday said dialogue among the political parties was the way ahead to reach an agreed ground rule for holding free, fair, credible and participatory general election in the country.

"If it has to be a democracy, there must be, I argue, free, fair, credible and participatory election. This is a challenge and the challenge is on the table", he said, responding to a question at a dialogue.

Group 2009, a pro-BNP a think tank, organised the programme, "US-Bangladesh Relationship: The Sky is the Limit", at a restaurant in the capital with G-9 president Sayeeful Islam in the chair.

The ambassador replying to a question about US-Bangladesh security dialogue on April 19 in Dhaka said the United States would review the entire range of existing bilateral and regional security related issues, assess the security cooperation, countering terrorism threat etc.

"It will help move Bangladesh to be more secured and bring peace and security in the region".

US Assistant Secretary of State for Political Affairs Andrew J Shapiro will attend the dialogue.

As Farhat Quader, wife of war crimes accused Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury, requested the US government to monitor the current trial process, the US envoy said, "Like everybody, we are also following the trial".

Mozena said the US Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes, Stephen Rapp, visited Bangladesh and put several suggestions and the government had accepted some of those.

Without giving a direct reply about a question about government withdrawing hundreds of cases bypassing the judiciary, Mozena said the US government was providing training to police to bring a radical change of mental framework and mindset of policing.

Besides, he said, the US would provide training to prosecutors and would arrange training for the judges in July to strengthen rule of law in the country.

America's partnership with Bangladesh is strong, deep and multi-faceted, he said, adding that Bangladesh was of strategic interest to the US.

BNP leaders M Morshed Khan, Dr RA Gani, Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan, Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury, Sabihuddin Ahmed, Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, Supreme Court Bar Association President Zainul Abedin and journalist Shafiq Rehman were present on the occasion.

Govt order to take Hotel Purbani land possession stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday stayed for three months a government order, which asked the authorities of the capital's Hotel Purbani Ltd to leave the possession of its land to it, claiming that the government is the original owner of the land.

On April 5, the government served a notice on the hotel managing director asking him to hand over the possession of the one acre and 32 kathas of land to it within 10 days.

The notice, which was issued by the court of wards, an office under the land ministry, said the court of wards was the original owner of the land in Dilkusha commercial area where, according to relevant survey records and documents, the hotel was built illegally.

Yesterday's stay order came in response to a writ petition filed by Abdul Momen, the director of Hotel Purbani, challenging the legality of the government notice.

Hearing the petition, the HC directed the government not to prevent the Hotel Purbani authorities from enjoying the peaceful possession of the land till further order.

It also issued a rule upon the government authorities concerned to explain in four weeks why the notice of the land ministry office should not be declared illegal.

The HC bench of Justice Mirza Hussain Haider and Justice Muhammad Khurshid Alam Sarkar came up with the order and the rule.

Chittagong's rich past recalled

It's a city of 1,400 years, says Abdul Karim

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

A colourful programme was organised at Asian University for Women (AUW) on Monday evening as part of the 12-day "Odommo Chattagram" (Indomitable Chittagong) Festival, an initiative of The Daily Star to promote culture, history, heritage and potentials of Chittagong.

The programme included a discussion, a question-answer session, where the students of AUW put different questions to Mahfuz Anam, the editor and publisher of The Daily Star.

At the discussion, Abdul Karim, former principal secretary to the prime minister, thanked The Daily Star for arranging this mega initiative [Odommo Chattagram]. He said Chittagong has a very rich past as it is a very old city.

Dhaka is a city of 400 years but Chittagong is a city of 1,400 years, he said.

Traders and businessmen from different countries used to come to this city from a very early period, he said, adding that that's why the language of Chittagong has been enriched with words from different languages, including Arabic, Urdu, Portuguese and Persian.

The anti-British revolutionary movement in the South Asian region started at first from Chittagong, Karim said recalling the anti-British hero Masterda Surya Sen.

He said Chittagong is the most prosperous area in this region, adding that Chittagong is the right place for a university like Asian University for Women.

Quoting Ibn Battuta, Karim said the culture of Chittagong is the richest in this region, adding that Battuta had discovered Chittagongian culture in China.

Editor and Publisher of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam, in his speech, advised students not to waste a single moment.

"This is the most beautiful phase in your life," he said, adding, "Don't waste a moment."

He advised the students to keep open the door of the window of their mind. "If you neglect sound, you will diminish yourselves," he said.

"The more you learn sounds the more you can communicate," he said, adding that a language is not just mere a means of speaking, it is a means of showing history, literature and music. Sound and colour make life beautiful, he said.

He said AUW is a platform for mutual understanding as over 400 students from 12 different countries are studying there.

He urged the students to build themselves as friendly and modest persons to make themselves citizens of the 21st century.

Mahfuz Anam also called upon the students to gain courage to challenge power. "Without being able to challenge power and orthodoxy, your intellectual learning will be meager," he said.

Terming this century "the century of ideas", he said, "You don't have the power but you can be successful by applying your innovative ideas."

About the definition of democracy, the editor said democracy should not be limited with the right of majority, it must protect the right of minority too.

After the meeting, a question-answer session was held where the students of AUW asked different questions of Mahfuz Anam.

Shakila, a student from Pakistan, said while watching the Bangladesh-Pakistan cricket match in Mirpur Stadium, she had found a placard where the Pakistanis were asked to seek pardon for 1971 acts. "Why did they bring politics into a cricket match?" she asked. Shakila urged doing something to change this trend through newspapers.

In reply, Mahfuz Anam said the Bangladesh of today has no ill feeling towards the Pakistan of today. But it has a lot of hatred for Pakistan in 1971, he said, adding, "As a young Pakistani [citizen], you should judge what happened in 1971."

Meher, another student from Pakistan, asked the same question.

"When I came to AUW I heard that the Bangladeshis hate Pakistanis," she said, adding, "What is my fault as I was not born in 1971." It was the government who did the massacre in Bangladesh and people did not know much about it as the media were not free, she said, adding, "Yes, we deserve hate for what our government did in 1971."

"The [Pakistan] government did it, that does not mean that I am bad [as its citizen]," she explained.

In reply, Mahfuz Anam said it is the purpose of a university to make students from different countries to be close together. Pakistan should apologise for what it did in 1971, he said, adding that Germany had apologised for the act in the Second World War.

He urged Meher to take the initiative from her end at first to break the ice with the Bangladeshis students.

A colourful cultural programme was held with the participation of AUW students from different countries immediately after the question-answer session.

Acting Vice Chancellor of AUW Kamal Ahmad, assistant professor of Literature at AUW Dr Joanne Janssen and Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Science at AUW Dr Kathleen Hewett-Smith were also present at the programme.



US Ambassador in Bangladesh Dan Mozena speaks at a dialogue titled "US-Bangladesh Relationship: The Sky is the Limit!", organised by pro-BNP think tank, Group 2009, at a restaurant in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

VCs asked to ramp up research works

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday urged the university vice chancellors to expedite research activities at respective institutions for social and economic advancement of the country.

Higher education means creation of new knowledge and research, he said, but recognised that it could not be possible to allocate necessary budget due to financial constraints.

The minister said it was imperative to increase budget for developing skilled human resources.

Nahid made the observation at the contract signing ceremony of a sub-project of Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project at University Grants Commission (UGC).

In order to graduate the country's tertiary level education to an international standard, UGC Chairman AK Azad Chowdhury called for increasing budget in the areas of innovative research, science and technology.

He termed enrolment in higher education excellent and said the country's economic progress would be accelerated if the students were equipped with updated knowledge and skills.

Prof Arefin Siddique, vice chancellor of Dhaka University, said the country's universities would see a rise in foreign students' enrolment if standard of higher education was ensured.

Education Secretary Dr Kamal Abdul Naser Chowdhury, HEQEP Project Director Kaniz Fatema, World Bank official Mokhesur Rahman, and UGC members were present on the occasion.

College girl, domestic help commit suicide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A college girl and a female domestic help allegedly committed suicide in separate incidents at Mirpur and Moghbazar of the capital yesterday.

Shathi Akhter, 19, daughter of late Din Mohammad, was a student of a local college.

Quoting her mother Momtaz Begum, Kazi Wajed Ali, officer-in-charge of Mirpur Police Station, said Shathi returned home from the college at around 3:00pm.

At the time, her mother was busy doing household chores. Momtaz, at a stage, found her daughter's room locked from inside for around an hour. When despite repeated knock, Shathi did not respond, her mother called neighbours and broke open the door with their help.

Shathi was found hanging with her scarf from the ceiling fan of the room. She was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), where doctors declared her dead.

Meanwhile, the victim at Moghbazar was identified as Alpona Akhter, 15, daughter of Al Amin at Gaibandha district. She had been working at Dolon Islam's house in Baro Moghbazar for the last three months, police said.

Alpona locked into an altercation over distribution of work with another house help Vanu Begum while the house-owners were not at home.

Following the quarrel, she went to the bathroom and did not come out even after an hour. Later, the housemistress Saleha Begum arrived home and broke open the door of the bathroom.

Saleha found her hanging with her scarf from a wall hanger in the bathroom.

Alpona was rushed to DMCH, where she was declared dead.

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