

Bangabandhu's sister Khadiza passes away

BSS, Dhaka

Khadiza Hossain, youngest sister of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman passed away due to old-age complications at LabAid Hospital in the capital on Tuesday at the age of 82.

Khadiza Hossain, also paternal aunt of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, left behind her three daughters and a son to mourn her death. One of her daughters was Rozi Jamal, wife of Sheikh Jamal, second son of Bangabandhu. Rozi and Jamal were killed along with Bangabandhu on August 15, 1975.

Khadiza was laid to eternal rest at the Banani Graveyard in the capital on Tuesday afternoon.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited the residence of Khadiza at Dhanmondi in the capital on Tuesday morning.

She stood in solemn silence beside the coffin of the deceased for some time, offered Fateha and prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul. Hasina consoled the family members of the deceased.

A good number of cabinet members and government leaders condoled the death of Khadiza.

In separate condolence messages, Textile Minister and Awami League presidium member Abdul Latif Siddique, State Minister for Liberation War Ministry Captain (retd) ABM Tajul Islam and Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan expressed grave shock and sorrow at her death.

They prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed deep sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

SEPTIC TANK Toxic gas kills 3 workers

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Noakhali

Three labourers died after inhaling toxic gas trapped inside a septic tank of a house at Gonipur village under Begumganj upazila of Noakhali yesterday.

The victims are Saddam Hossain 29, son of Abul Kalam, Jashim Uddin 30, son of Jalal Uddin and Md Nizam 28, son of Jamal Uddin of the same village.

The labourers went to the house of Abu Taher at about 1:00pm and entered inside the septic tank to clean it, Amirul Alam, officer-in-charge of Begumganj Model Police Station, said quoting witnesses.

As Taher got no response from them even after an hour of their entry, he cried out for help. Neighbours rushed to the spot and informed the police and firefighters.

Firefighters entered inside the tank and brought the bodies out of it, the OC said.

Police later sent the bodies to Noakhali Medical College Hospital for autopsies.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina recites from the Holy Quran beside the corpse of her paternal aunt Khadiza Hossain at the deceased's Dhanmondi residence in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: PMO

BANGLADESH VOTERS' DATABASE Indian EC officials impressed

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Bangladesh Election Commission's achievement of cent percent biometric database of voters has impressed Indian election officials.

Chief Election Commissioner of Bangladesh Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad showcased the biometric database of the electorate to his counterparts from India and six other Saarc countries at the ongoing conference of Saarc election officials here on Tuesday.

Kazi Rakibuddin said Bangladesh is looking forward to emulating some good election practices from India.

"We have just started...yes, we are looking forward" to some good practices adopted by India in elections, he told journalists here.

He said Bangladesh EC is using digital cameras for creating database of voters' photos, as the previous database was created with use of web cameras and some were not very clear.

Election Commission of India also displayed its use of modern technology for strengthening democracy and election management.

India made a presentation on the use of technology in election management which generated encouraging response from election commissions of Saarc countries.

"Yes, we would like to follow the best practices followed by India. We are inspired by India's controls on use of money power and help us increase voter turnouts, as our voter turnout is very low..." said Justice (retd) Muhammad Roshan Essani, member of Election Commission of Pakistan.

Pakistan EC's spokesman Muhammad Afzal Khan said, "With Pakistan, India and Bangladesh having similar cultures, all should help each other... We must learn from each other."

Survey on tiger numbers in winter

STAR REPORT

Bangladesh will undertake a survey in the Sundarbans next winter to determine the exact figure of tigers living there, said Chief Conservator of Forest Md Yunus Ali.

"We have decided to start the survey to count tiger population next winter as the period between May and September is not favourable for counting," he told BSS at Forest Bhaban in the capital's Agargaon.

The survey would be conducted by a dedicated team under a project called 'Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Wildlife Protection', Ali told The Daily Star.

"We are going to begin tiger surveillance very soon and would engage expert people to implement the programme," he said.

About the possibility of a joint survey by Bangladesh and India, the forest chief said there is no need for a joint survey as habitat in Bangladesh part of the Sunderbans is richer than its West Bengal part.

Quoting some Indian experts who attended a workshop in Dhaka recently, Ali said there are only 60 to 70 tigers in the West Bengal part of the Sunderbans.

On the other hand, he said, tiger population was 440 in Bangladesh part of the mangrove forests as per the last survey conducted in 2004.

Ali said they would use several methods -- camera trapping, radio caller and khal (canal) survey -- to count the tiger population.

Bangladesh and India have already signed a protocol to prevent poaching or smuggling of tigers from their sanctuaries shared by the two countries.

According to the protocol, the two countries will undertake joint scientific research and launch projects to promote their understanding and knowledge of Bengal tigers, develop information systems, share research, and exchange personnel for training and education.

The two countries will start patrolling the waterways that crisscross the mangrove forests on their respective sides to prevent poaching or smuggling of tigers, the protocol stated.

Ali said a number of projects were underway aimed at improving the understanding of the ecology of the Sunderbans and improving it as well.

About man-animal encounter, the chief conservator of forest said tigers often stray into villages of Satkhira district, either looking for food or fleeing from smugglers.

"The government has taken steps to conserve and expand mangrove forests to prevent poaching and retaliatory killing of tigers", he added.

Tk 80,000 looted from CNG station, manager shot

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An armed gang looted Tk 80,000 from a CNG filling station in the capital's Wari after shooting its manager on Tuesday morning.

Pradip Kumar Sen, 35, manager of HS Enterprise, was shot in the leg once while he was trying to resist them from reaching for the cash box.

The victim was treated in Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Quoting Pradip, Shafiqur Rahman, a sub-inspector of Wari Police Station, said a white car entered the filling station near Joy Kali Temple around 6:30am for refill. From the car, at least four armed criminals got down and looted the money from the cash box, he added.

Pradip filed a case with Wari Police Station.

Meanwhile, unidentified criminals shot a security guard of the under-construction Azad Plaza in the capital's Madhya Badda on Tuesday.

Kabir Hossain, 38, who sustained a bullet in the left thigh, was admitted to DMCH. He hails from Baufal upazila in Patuakhali.

At the hospital, Kabir told reporters that two or three unknown persons arrived at the construction site around 12:00pm and asked him for the whereabouts of the building's owner.

"When I told them that I did not know, one of them shot me in the leg and ran away", he said. "Locals rushed me to the hospital".

Badda police said the cause of the attack and identities of the attackers were not known.

ACC sues shipping chief engr, six dredger owners

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed five cases against eight persons, including chief engineer of the Department of Shipping and six dredger owners, on charge of tax evasion and misuse of power.

Shafiul Azam, assistant director of combined district office of ACC Chittagong-1, filed the five cases with Sadar Model Police Station yesterday afternoon.

Shafiul in the cases said AKM Fakrul Islam, the then engineer of the office of Registrar and Surveyor of Inland Ship, Narayanganj, evaded Tk 6.4 lakh as taxes while importing five dredgers in collusion with the dredger owners without conducting any proper survey and examining VAT certificates.

AKM Fakrul Islam has been made principal accused in all the five cases. Other accused of the cases are Nurul Haque, owner of Nur Meem Dredger, Ramjan Ali, owner of MV Bajjeed, Ali Hossein and Zahiduzzaman, owners of MV Dayal Kaja Baba, Abdus Sattar, owner of MV Kanok Dredger, Riazuddin, owner of MV Amar Ammajan and Anisur Rahman, office assistant at the office of Registrar and Surveyor of Inland Ship, Narayanganj.

Manzur Kader, officer-in-charge of the police station, said more five cases were also filed earlier with the police station against AKM Fakrul Islam.

Two DU students detained for 'motorbike snatching'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two Dhaka University students, also activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), were handed over to police early Tuesday for their involvement in a motorcycle snatching on the campus 20 days ago.

The detainees are Fuad Alam, an MPhil student of the political science department, and Mahtab, a master's student of anthropology department, of the university.

DU Proctor Prof MA Amzad Ali handed over the accused to Shahbagh police as they confessed to their involvement in the snatching.

A case would be filed against the two soon, the proctor said last evening.

Sources said Fuad was a former vice-president of DU unit BCL and Mahtab was a president aspirant of Kabi Jasim Uddin Hall unit BCL. They were resi-

dents of room-208 of the hall.

Several leaders of BCL, however, claimed that the detainees were refused post of the organisation for their involvement in theft and mugging.

The two students were caught after some students identified them on the campus Tuesday.

Sources said that on April 10, a group of DU students spread out across the campus to drive out outsiders, as one of their friends was severely beaten up by students of some private universities at Shahbagh intersection two hours ago the same day.

Near Fuller Road, the agitating students caught a private university student and seized his motorcycle as they wanted to collect money for treatment of their injured friend.

As one of the students, Bijoy, a first year student of law faculty, was bring-

ing the motorcycle to hall, Fuad and Mahtab intercepted them before Surya Sen Hall and fled with the motorbike.

A section of DU students also beat up Bijoy and handed him over to Shahbagh police, branding him as a member of a group of snatchers. Bijoy also served five days in police custody as the bike owner alleged that first year students led by him snatched his bike.

Family of Bijoy, with the arbitration of the university authorities, compensated the victim and got him released.

Bijoy told The Daily Star that he demanded strict action against Fuad and Mahtab. "I have to suffer in jail for the misdeeds of the accused. I demand strict action against the culprits".

Sirajul Islam, officer-in-charge of Shahbagh Police Station, was repeatedly called for comments to no avail.

Death again at ship-scrap yard

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A worker died after being crushed by a ship's hydraulic door at a ship breaking yard in Sitakunda upazila of Chittagong yesterday morning.

The deceased, identified as Md Mansur Ali, 32, of Naogaon, was working at Sima Ship Breaking Yard located at Madambibir Hat in the upazila.

At about 10:20am, foreman Mansur tried to enter the ship's engine room through its heavy hydraulic door. As Mansur was entering the room, the opened door swung back crushing him against the ship's wall and killing him instantly, said Nur Mohammad, officer-in-charge of Sitakunda Police Station, quoting staff of the yard.

Another worker was killed in an accident at the same ship breaking yard on February 28 this year.

At least 38 workers were killed and many others injured in accidents at ship breaking yards in the last 44 months.

Most of these accidents have been attributed to lack of adequate safety precautions in ship breaking yards and the country's apex court had on several occasions asked the government to frame rules and enforce them to ensure safety of the workers.

Though the ship breaking sector has been declared an industry recently, the court's directive regarding the safety measures are yet to be implemented.



Inauguration

United Nations Population Fund will inaugurate a programme; Venue: IDB Bhaban, Agargaon; Time: 11:30am.

Workshop

Bangladesh University Grants Commission will hold a workshop; Venue: UGC Auditorium, Agargaon; Time: 9:30am.

Discussion


National Forum of Organizations Working with the Disabled will organise a discussion; Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity; Time: 3:00pm.

Programme

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad will organise a programme; Venue: its auditorium, Segunbagicha; Time: 3:30pm.

Discussion

Ekatturer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee will hold a discussion;



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