



Prof Muhammed Zafar Iqbal talks to journalists at the demise of his elder brother, Humayun Ahmed. The popular writer breathed his last at Manhattan's Bellevue Hospital, inset, in New York on Thursday.

PHOTO: COURTESY

## Humayun Ahmed's death mourned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent personalities and different social, political and cultural organisations yesterday expressed deep shock at the death of popular writer Humayun Ahmed.

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

Humayun Ahmed, 64, died while undergoing treatment for cancer at Bellevue Hospital in Manhattan, New York Thursday night.

Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus expressed deep shock at the death, reports UNB.

In a condolence message yesterday, he said, "It is with great sadness and a deep shock that I learned of the death of Humayun Ahmed.

"Humayun Ahmed has been a shining light in Bangladeshi literature for over decades. He gave our nation confidence in our creativity. His impact on Bangla literature will last forever.

"He became a rallying point for our nationhood. His death is not just a great loss to our culture and literature, but also to

the entire nation."

Yunus conveyed deep sympathy to the bereaved family and wished them strength and courage in a time of their loss.

Former president Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury said the nation lost one of its best sons. Dhaka University Vice Chancellor AAMS Arefin Siddique termed the death an irreparable loss to Bangladesh.

Labour and Employment Minister Engineer Khandker Mosharraf Hossain, Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan, Chief Whip Vice-Principal Abdus Shahid and Inspector General of Police Hassan Mahmood Khandker also expressed shock at the death.

Gonoforum, Workers' Party of Bangladesh, Communist Party of Bangladesh, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Revolutionary Workers' Party of Bangladesh, Bangla Academy, Ain O Salish Kendra, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote, Zia Sena, Bangabandhu Lekhak Prishad and Dr Selim Al Deen Smriti Parishad also prayed for salvation of the departed soul.

## Dockyard worker killed in Keraniganj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A dockyard worker was killed as one of his co-workers hit him with a stick over a past feud in Par Gandaria area in Keraniganj on the outskirts of the capital yesterday.

The victim was Mohammad Rajib, 19.

Quoting Rajib's co-workers, Mohammad Rasel, a cousin of the victim, said Billal Hossain hit on his [Rajib] head with a stick following an altercation at boat ghat in the area.

Rajib was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead around 6:30am.

Police said they were trying to arrest Billal. They, however, could not say about the feud immediately.

## 10 members of 'dope gang' held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective Branch of police arrested 10 people, who were alleged members of a gang that doped and then robbed people of their belongings, in two separate drives in the capital on Thursday.

A DB team led by Dhaka Metropolitan Police Senior Assistant Commissioner Nasir Uddin Khan carried out the drives at Darussalam and Shah Ali area of Mirpur 1 around 9:30pm and made the arrests, said police.

"We had information that the arrestees were preparing to dope and rob people in Dhaka-bound buses and trains in guise of passengers or as hawkers of herbal medicine," said AC Nasir.

Police also recovered some fake herbal products mixed with sedatives, he said, adding that several teams of detectives were out on the lookout for such gangs.

The gang had confessed that, with the onset of the holy month of Ramadan, they were planning to rob people by making them unconscious with doped Iftar food items, added AC Nasir.

Police filed two separate cases with Darussalam and Shah Ali police stations in this connection.

## 66pc population still poor: Study

UNB, Dhaka

Though the government reduced population growth and improved health and education, around 91.8 million or 66 percent people of the country are now poor, shows a recent study.

"In my estimation, of the total 150 million population, 66 percent are now poor," noted economist Prof Abul Barakat showed in the study.

Meanwhile, the number of poor people increased by 38.9 million over the past 25 years till 2010, the study, "Emerging Middle Class and Consumer Market in Bangladesh", also showed.

"This increase of poor population is a clear reflection of the failure of the national development policy," said Prof Barakat, also president of Bangladesh Economic Association.

According to his estimation, 47 million or 31.3 percent people of the country are middle class and the rest 4.1 million or 2.7 percent are rich or affluent.

He said the middle class in Bangladesh is unique, a complex combination of many good and bad, and the middle class is not a hundred percent homogenous entity.

On the basis of wealth criterion, middle class can be divided at least into three categories -- lower middle class, mid-middle class and upper-middle class, he said, adding that each type of middle class people have their own characteristics, status and life style.

"The size and growth of the middle class in Bangladesh during 1984-2010 has major implications for the current and future broad-based growth and development," Barakat said.

The tendency of the growth of the socio-economic class structure in Bangladesh clearly indicates that the overall poverty situation witnessed a downturn during the last 25 years, the study said.

It said the country's emerging middle class has immense potential to help accelerate industrialisation.

Barakat said the middle class can play a vital role in expanding the domestic consumer market, especially for the durable industrial products.

The country's growing middle class, he added, has enormous power of consumption and with this spending the domestic market size can be expanded further resulting in increased real investment, employment, productivity and savings.

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## 'Ban Pakistan loyalist political orgs'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political organisations that supported Pakistan during the Liberation War in 1971 should be banned, speakers said at a discussion yesterday.

Mentioning that members of these organisations, which include Jamaat-e-Islami, are war criminals, treasurer of Col Taher Sangsad Dr Mushtaq Hussain said they should not have the right to vote.

He was addressing the discussion on Col Taher Day titled "War criminals trial- Future of Democracy" organised by Col Taher Sangsad at the Teachers-Students Centre of Dhaka University.

Col Abu Taher, a sector commander of the country's liberation war, was killed in a secret trial on July 21, 1976.

Communist Party of Bangladesh's (CPB) president Monjurul Ahsan Khan called upon the new generation to cultivate the spirit of Col Taher to bring positive change in the country.

Mourning the death of fiction writer Humayun Ahmed, Col Taher's younger brother and the Vice-Chancellor of Jahangirnagar University Prof Anwar Hossain said in his last novel Deyal, which was not published, Humayun Ahmed cited some secret incidents about his brother's killing.

Humayun Ahmed had given him (Anwar) the script of the novel, he said.

Col Taher Sangsad will hold several programmes today to observe the colonel's death anniversary.

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