

Jagannath Hall tragedy remembered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students, teachers, and staff of Dhaka University yesterday commemorated those who were killed in a tragic building collapse on October 15, 1985 at the university's Jagannath Hall.

Several hundred students wore black badges, observed a one-minute silence and brought out a mourning procession in memory of the victims.

On the day in 1985, the roof of the hall's assembly building (now October Smriti Bhaban) collapsed on students and employees who were watching television claiming 39 lives.

DU authorities hoisted black flags, kept the university flag at half-mast and arranged special prayers in observance of the day.

DU Vice-Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique and the hall authorities of the university placed wreaths at the October Memorial commemorative inscription.

The VC said students, teachers and staff remember the victims of the tragedy with deep respect and sorrow.

2 killed, 12 hurt in road crashes

METRO DESK

Two people were killed and twelve others injured in separate road accidents in Tangail and Jessore on Sunday and yesterday.

Our Tangail correspondent reports, Sonia Akter, 19, daughter of Abdul Halim of Nagarjalpai area in Tangail town, and a second year student of Fazilatunnesa Mujib College, was killed and four others injured as a truck hit a battery-run three-wheeler in the town yesterday.

The injured were taken to Tangail General Hospital.

UNB from Benapole (Jessore) reports, Nur Ali, 40, of Magura, was killed and eight others were injured when a covered van of Bangladesh Army hit a CNG-run auto-rickshaw at Churamonkati Sakomatha in sadar upazila on Sunday night.

ATTACK ON COUPLE Motive still unknown

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Neither police nor the victim couple, who were shot by unidentified criminals in the capital's Badda area on Sunday night, had any clue about the motive of the attack till yesterday evening.

The couple faced the gun attack just after receiving an amount of money from two people. However, the attackers did not take anything from them.

Nijamul Haq, 35, an expatriate living in the US, said he along with his wife Nazma Begum, 24, went there to collect the money that Foliq Khan, his expatriate friend, owed him.

When they received Tk 25,000 from two persons, two other men opened fire on them.

Nijamul could not tell who attacked them and why. The injured couple were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.



Leader of the Opposition and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia meets Head of the International Department of Communist Party of China (CPC) Minister Wang Jiaru in Beijing yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

ATTACK ON BUDDHISTS

Role of law enforcers, admin criticised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday strongly criticised law enforcement agencies and administration for, what they said, playing a silent role and even instigating the September 29 attack on the Buddhist community in Cox's Bazar's Ramu.

They also condemned the remanding of Madhu Barua and Aadi Barua by police, stating that this was what Jamaat-e-Islami was hoping for.

Madhu is the mother and Aadi is the aunt of Uttam Kumar Barua, whose Facebook account was falsely used to launch anti-Buddhist propaganda that triggered the violence.

The discussion, "Jamaat's link with militants and trial of war criminals", was organised by Ekatturer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee in the capital's SWVA Auditorium.

If punitive action is not taken against Cox's Bazar's superintendent of police and deputy commissioner, such mayhem might be repeated in other parts of the country, they said.

"Law enforcers will forcibly take confessional statements from them (Madhu and Aadi)," said the committee's acting president Shahriar Kabir.

Claiming that agents of Jamaat were active in the administration, he said, "How can we expect an impartial investigation."

Around 17 militant and fundamentalist organisations are active in the Bangladesh-Myanmar border while some non-government organisations are patronising them, claimed Kabir.

Addressing the function, Information

Minister Hasanul Haq Inu said Jamaat has connections with armed activities, militancy and international terrorism and the government primarily found proof of Jamaat's link with the attack.

Voice should be raised demanding a ban on Jamaat's politics and bringing the party under war crimes trial as an organisation, he said.

International Crimes Tribunal Prosecutor Advocate Rana Dasgupta said the fundamentalist force has been launching attacks on households and temples of minority communities as part of their conspiracy to foil the war crimes trial.

"We are trying to provide some results of the trial process by next December," he said.

State Minister for Liberation War Affairs AB Tajul Islam, academician Prof Muntasir Mamun and cultural personality Kamal Lohani also spoke at the discussion.

Meanwhile, female leaders of Sector Commanders' Forum, Liberation War-71; Rajshahi University teachers; and Khulna's artists condemned the attack and demanded exemplary punishment for the perpetrators.

The seven female leaders, in a statement, expressed deep concern over the destruction of the over 300-year-old invaluable and ancient sculptures in Ramu.

The teachers, at a human chain in the university, urged people to strengthen communal harmony among all communities in Ramu and the country.

The artists formed a human chain at Picture Palace Intersection in Khulna city where they demanded exemplary punishment for the perpetrators.

Death anniversary

METRO DESK



Today is the 5th death anniversary of Prof Dr MA Hadi, former vice chancellor

of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University and president of Bangladesh Medical Association.

He was the former president of Doctor's Association of Bangladesh, principal of Dhaka Medical College, dean of Dhaka University Medical Faculty, president of Bangladesh College of Physicians and Surgeons, and president of Bangladesh Medical Research Council.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his family graveyard at Gafargaon in Mymensingh after Juma prayers today.

Besides, different organisations have chalked out various programmes to mark the day.

Alhaj Engr Fakhru Islam

METRO DESK

Today is the 27th death anniversary of Alhaj Engr Fakhru Islam.

He is the father-in-law of MA Mannan MP of Sunamganj-3 constituency.

Hindu community worried about celebrating puja

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the country's Hindu community yesterday expressed anxiety about celebrating Durga Puja following the recent communal attack in Ramu, Ukhia, Teknaf and Patia.

Although the government has taken action against the attackers, fundamentalists continued their attack by damaging idols of Durga in Munshiganj, Jessore, Chittagong, Kishoreganj and Patuakhali, they said at a view-exchange meeting.

They urged people to stand against all types of fundamentalism and fanaticism saying it will be the best security measure to celebrate the festival.

Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad organ-

ised the view exchange meeting in the Dhakeshwari National Temple auditorium marking the 'Shuvo Mahalaya', beginning of Durga Puja.

Reading the keynote paper, Manindra Kumar Nath, the organisation's general secretary, said the Ramu incident might have been avoided if the government had taken action against the communal attackers in Hathazari of Chittagong, Satkhira and Chirirbandar of Dinajpur.

He said 28,000 pujas would be held across the country of which 202 would be held in the capital.

Kanutosh Majumdar, president of Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad, spoke among others.



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Agri co-ops, organic farming demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday urged the government to form agricultural cooperatives and implement organic farming to ensure risk and adulteration free food supply.

They said with government's support it is possible to develop organic farming. Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa), B-safe Foundation, Hunger Free World and Prottasha 2021 Forum jointly organised the discussion, said a press release.

Mentioning Cuba as an example, speakers said 80 percent of their farming is dependent on agriculture cooperatives and organic farming.

For the interest of food security and sustainable farming, the government has to implement a method, which is both farmer

and agriculture friendly, they said.

The speakers said ensuring food supply is the country's first and foremost responsibility but food adulteration and excessive use of chemicals in foods is a major obstacle in achieving food security.

Expressing anxiety about food adulteration, they said though food production has increased but its quality is questionable.

There is also a concern about the quality of food that is imported or comes as assistance from abroad, they said.

Public health is under risk due to excessive use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides in food, formalin in fishes and fruits, and dyeing colours in packaged food items, they said.

Dr Jaynul Abedin, president of B-Safe Foundation, chaired the discussion.

Everest conqueror Musa seeks ban on book

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Musa Ibrahim, the first Bangladeshi to conquer Mount Everest, yesterday filed a case seeking a ban on a book, "Shokal Belar Pakhi", which claims MA Muhit to be the first Bangladeshi to achieve the feat.

The Chandraboti Academy published the book, meant especially for children.

Ibrahim filed another petition seeking an ad-interim injunction on seven defendants, who published the book, from selling the book.

The defendants are Enam Al Haque, an article writer who made the claim, and the book's Chief Editor Shubal Kumar Banik, Editorial Adviser Mahfuzur Rahman, Editor Rahim Shah, Guest Editor Shyamal Kanti Das and Editorial Assistant Arif Najrul and Kamruzzaman Kagal.

The Fifth Joint District Judge's Court of Dhaka fixed today's date to pass order on the injunction.

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