

## Tajul Islam represents Bangladesh at Gujral's funeral

BSS, New Delhi

Bangladesh paid tributes to former Indian prime minister Inder Kumar Gujral with State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Captain (retd) ABM Tajul Islam attending the former's funeral with full state honours.

While, Awami League presidium member Kazi Jafar Ullah was present at the funeral on behalf of the party President Sheikh Hasina, a Bangladesh High Commission spokesman told the news agency.

Earlier reports said Gujral's body, draped in the tricolour Indian flag, was brought to the cremation site from his New Delhi home in a flower-laden gun-carriage accompanied by military personnel who fired a 21-gun salute.

India's President Pranab Mukherjee and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh attended the ceremony held amid prayers on the banks of the Jamuna River.

Gujral, who served as prime minister in a coalition government from April 1997 to March 1998, played a significant role in promoting ties with Bangladesh alongside seeking to improve India's strained ties with Pakistan.

Gujral, died on Friday at the age of 92 from a lung infection, was regarded for propounding the "Gujral Doctrine", a foreign policy approach based on peaceful accommodation that argued India should treat its neighbours with generosity.



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## YET ANOTHER DISAPPOINTMENT

1) Officer-in-charge of Ashulia Police Station talks to the surviving workers of Tazreen Fashions Ltd who arrived at Nischintapur Non-Government Primary School premises in Ashulia yesterday demanding their salary for three months and 13 days. 2) A sign outside the garment factory reads that workers' salary for the month of November would be paid on 1/12/2012, which was yesterday. However, no salary was paid. 3) Some workers fall down as the crowd tries to break a police barricade on hearing that they would not be paid. 4) Alelul Begum, injured in a deadly fire in the factory on November 24 which claimed 111 lives, leaves the premises on a rickshaw-van after being denied her salary. 5) Workers crowd around an official of the factory to confirm their names on the list of workers to be paid. 6) Attendance of children at the primary school has remained sparse following the fire.



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## Rawhide being smuggled to India with impunity

Seminar told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Speakers at a seminar in Rajshahi yesterday expressed concern over "unabated smuggling" of rawhides to India through different borders in northwestern region of Bangladesh.

Although a huge number of rawhides are being smuggled to India every day, the country's law enforcers are not playing active role to stop it, they said.

Because of the smuggling, the country is incurring a huge loss in earning of foreign currencies, and local traders are being deprived of prices, they added.

Bangladesh Finished Leather, Leathergoods and Footwear Exporters Association and Leather Sector Business Promotion Council jointly organised the seminar titled "Awareness building against smuggling of rawhides" at Safawang Community Centre in the city.

With the association's adviser Dil Jahan Bhuiyan in the chair, Rajshahi City Corporation Mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, as chief guest; the association's Rajshahi unit President Ataur Rahman, Rajshahi District Hide Traders Group President Lutfar Rahman, and Natore District Hide Traders Association General Secretary Lutfar Rahman, among others, attended the programme.

Khairuzzaman said the city corporation will set up a modern slaughterhouse in the city within six months with cost of Tk 20 crore.

The slaughterhouse would be equipped with a modern hide-processing unit, he said.

## Swachip sweeps BMA election

Pro-AL panel takes all central executive committee posts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-Awami League Swadhinata Chikitsak Parishad (Swachip) won the elections to all of the 41 posts of the central executive committee of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA).

However, rival panel pro-BNP Doctors' Association of Bangladesh (DAB) rejected the polls result, bringing allegations of vote rigging and demanding for fresh polls to be conducted by an "impartial" BMA Election Commission.

Dr Mahmud Hasan was elected president with 15,998 votes while his rival Dr AKM Azizul Haque, contesting from the DAB panel, bagged 8,273 votes. BMA Election Commission General Secretary Dr Shakhawat Hossain told journalists at BMA office yesterday.

In the secretary general post, Dr Iqbal Arslan was elected with 14,955 votes while his rival from DAB, Dr AZM Zahid Hossain, got 8,870 votes, he said.

DAB leaders organised a press conference at Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday.

In the press conference, they demanded fresh polls under an "impartial" election commission, formed through negotiation with all parties, and threatened to launch a countrywide movement if



Dr Mahmud Hasan



Dr Iqbal Arslan

their demand was not fulfilled.

"We, with all the doctors alongside, will launch a greater movement across the country if any committee is formed illegally," said Dr Zahid.

While giving an example of vote rigging, Dr Zahid claimed that an additional 301 ballots, with the votes having been cast on them, were found while the votes were being counted on Thursday night.

He said DAB handed a written allegation over the vote rigging to the BMA Election Commission on Thursday, the day the votes were cast, but the BMA Election Commission did not pay any heed to it.

In response, the BMA Election Commission denied the allegations of vote rigging, saying that

such claims were "baseless" and the election was conducted in a free and fair manner.

BMA Election Commission General Secretary Dr Shakhawat Hossain said, "We found 150 to 180 additional ballots. We are investigating the incident.

"As the vote difference between the two panels is huge, I think these additional ballots do not have any impact in the election results."

On the written allegations, Dr Shakhawat said the BMA Election Commission got the copy yesterday.

Along with the central executive committee, 364 central councillors have been elected by voters across the country. The elections for many district unit committees were held on the same day, while elections to others will be held later on.

Earlier on Friday, BMA Election Commission President Dr Abdur Rahman Khan claimed that around 60 percent of the votes were cast across the country. The figure was 61 in Dhaka, he said.

The number of voters in the election to the BMA is 32,892. Out of the total, 13,338 voters are in Dhaka. The biennial election of BMA was held at 67 centres across the country, including Dhaka.

## DR EVA KILLING Prime accused arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prime accused in the killing of a female doctor at her clinic office in the capital early Friday was arrested in Brahmanbaria yesterday.

The arrestee, Faysal, 27, was the caretaker of the clinic in Dhakshin Khan, where Dr Sajia Afrin Eva, 28, was strangled after an attempted rape.

Investigator of the murder case, Sub-inspector Golam Sarwar of Dakshin Khan Police Station, said Faysal confessed to killing Eva.

Police quoted Faysal as saying that he used to stay in the room next to Eva's duty room. On Friday, he entered her room at 12:30am and forced her onto bed to rape her. He strangled Eva when she resisted.

Faysal went missing soon after the killing. He was arrested at his grand father's house in Nabinagar of Brahmanbaria, police said.

Eva's father Monirul Islam sued three staff of Amtola Brac Clinic, including Faysal, and some unidentified others on Friday.

Eva graduated from Sylhet Osmani Medical College and started working at the clinic less than two weeks ago. She used to work at night and live with her family in Ashkona. Eva had also been pursuing her FCPS degree.

Monirul, a serving sub-inspector of police in Brahmanbaria, said he had struggled hard to bring up his two daughters of whom Eva was the elder. He dreamed that Eva would have been an eminent physician.

## Ghulam Azam paroled for sister's janaza

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former Jamaat-e-Islami ameer Ghulam Azam, who has been detained in war crimes cases, was released on parole for three hours to attend the namaz-e-janaza of his sister yesterday.

Tajul Islam, a senior member of Ghulam Azam's defence team, said Ghulam Azam was released from the prison cell of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital (BSMMU) at 6:20pm.

He attended the namaz-e-janaza in front of his sister's house in the capital's Moghbazar area, and left for BSMMU around 7:45pm, he said.

Home ministry granted the parole to Ghulam Azam for attending the funeral of his younger sister Jannat Ara who died yesterday.

On January 11, Ghulam Azam was sent to jail after the International Crimes Tribunal rejected his bail prayer for his alleged involvement in crimes against humanity committed during the country's Liberation War in 1971.

On May 13, the tribunal-1 indicted the former ameer of Jamaat with five charges of crimes against humanity.

The charges against Ghulam Azam include involvement in murder and torture of unarmed people; and conspiracy, planning, incitement and complicity to commit genocide and crimes against humanity during the 1971 war.



## Road crashes kill 7, injure 10

METRO DESK

Seven people were killed and ten others injured in separate road accidents in Chittagong, Jhalakathi, Brahmanbaria, Bogra and Tangail on Friday and yesterday.

Our staff correspondent from Chittagong reports, a man died instantly as a covered van hit him while he was crossing Dhaka-Chittagong highway in Bariyarahat of Mirsarai upazila at around 1:30pm yesterday.

The deceased was Md Mijanur Rahman Khan, 40, of Bhandaria in Pirojpur.

Meanwhile, four people were injured as a bus hit a rickshaw-laden truck from behind on the intersection of Gate No 2 in Chittagong city yesterday afternoon.

Injured Ariful Islam, 30, Badshah, 28, Belal, 48, and Jahangir, 35, were undergoing treatment at Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

A correspondent from Jhalakathi reports, a man and his son were killed and another was injured as a bus ran them over on Barisal-Patuakhali highway at Zero Point in Nalchhity upazila on Friday night.

The deceased were Jasim Khan and his

son Ziad Khan, 4.

Locals blocked the highway for more than an hour, said witnesses.

Injured Nirab Khan was taken to Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital, Barisal.

Our Brahmanbaria correspondent reports, Bijoy Banik, 35, of Banikpara village in Sarail upazila, was killed after a bus knocked him on Dhaka-Sylhet highway at Kharijala village in Ashuganj upazila of Brahmanbaria district on Friday night.

Our Bogra correspondent reports, a motorcycle rider died as a bus ran him over on Dhaka-Bogra highway in Sherpur bus stand area of the district yesterday noon.

The deceased was Al-Amin, 28, son of Javed Ali of Tarash upazila in Sirajganj.

BSS from Tangail reports, two persons were killed and five others injured as a car fell into a ditch beside Dhaka-Tangail highway near Gharinda bypass on Friday afternoon.

The deceased were Makbul Hossain, 30, and Faruk Hossain, 35.

The injured were admitted to Tangail General Hospital.

## Law protecting Dalits' rights demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rights activists yesterday demanded enactment of a law for ensuring equal rights of Dalits and other socially excluded communities of the country.

They came up with the demand at South Asian Consultation on Social, Economic and Legal Protections for Dalit and Socially Excluded Communities held at National Academy for Planning and Development in the capital.

Bangladesh Dalit and Excluded Rights Movement (BDERM) and Nagorik Uddyog jointly organised the two-day long programme, says a press release.

Eminent human rights activist Hamida Hossain, chief guest of the two-day long programme, said the discriminatory culture is not being practised in the administration and state machinery, however, has always been practised in the society.

Paul Divakar, general secretary of Dalit Arthik Odhikar Andolon, said all discriminations against the Dalit and other socially excluded communities could be eliminated by launching social and cultural movements.

Rikke Nohrlind, coordinator of International Dalit Solidarity Network, Denmark, said Bangladesh should take initiative to introduce special policy and programmes to eliminate discrimination based on work and descent, the press release added.