

## Saudi beheads national for murder

AFP, Riyadh

Saudi Arabia yesterday beheaded one of its nationals convicted of murdering a fellow Saudi in the western Mecca region, the interior ministry said.

Nemr al-Subaie had shot dead Hunaitem al-Subaie following a dispute between them, the ministry said in a statement carried by SPA state news agency.

His execution brings to 17 the number of people beheaded in Saudi Arabia so far this year.

In 2012, the kingdom executed 76 people, according to an AFP tally based on official figures. The US-based Human Rights Watch put the number at 69.

Rape, murder, apostasy, armed robbery and drug trafficking are all punishable by death under Saudi Arabia's strict version of sharia, or Islamic law.

## Jamaat men

FROM PAGE 1

Rahat, witnesses said. As they tried to launch an attack, police chased them. The protesters hurled several cocktails at the law enforcers, in response to which police fired shots in the air, dispersing the crowd.

Jamaat-Shibir men also took to the streets in the capital's Sher-e-Banglanagar and Shyamoli, said Abdul Momen, officer-in-charge of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station. Police dispersed them and detained 10 activists from the areas.

Rahat was injured on February 16 in a clash with police in Sylhet. The clash followed a procession brought out to demand the release of war crimes accused Delwar Hossain Sayedee. Rahat succumbed to his injuries on Monday.

On Friday, Jamaat and its sympathisers attacked law enforcers and journalists, tore and vandalised Shaheed Minars to counter the mass demand for capital punishment to 1971 war criminals.

They chose mosques as gathering points and launched attacks with hand-made bombs, guns, and sticks, leaving at least four people killed and nearly 1,000, including 14 journalists, wounded.

## Stop attacks

FROM PAGE 20

are neutral, they will be biased towards the country in the event of desecration of the national flag and Shaheed Minars.

Journalists at the rally observed a minute's silence to pay tributes to the newsmen who sacrificed their lives during the Liberation War.

They also condemned the propaganda against the Shahbagh movement and criticised the acting editor of a Bangla daily for instigating religious strife.

Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury said a mural of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will be unveiled at the Jatiya Press Club on March 26.

He urged all journalists, who believe in the spirit of Liberation War, to join the programme at 11:00am on that day.

Several hundred newsmen from different media houses joined the rally yesterday. Leaders of Dhaka Reporters Unity, Crime Reporters Association of Bangladesh and Dhaka Sub-Editors Council were present.

Thousands of youths started a non-stop demonstration at the Shahbagh roundabout in the capital on February 5, hours after the International Crimes Tribunal-2 awarded life sentence to Jamaat Assistant Secretary General Abdul Quader Mollah for committing crimes against humanity during the Liberation War.

## Qatar offers

FROM PAGE 20

embassy in Doha, said Qatar would require around 10 lakh foreign workers to complete the construction works ahead of the event.

"We are continuing our discussions formally and informally on the employment of Bangladeshi workers," he said. "Once they open the door, we shall certainly try and tap into the opportunity."

He added that a delegation from Bangladesh might visit Qatar next month to discuss with the authorities the recruitment of more Bangladeshis there.

Director General of the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training Begum Shamsun Nahar, however, said around 10,000 Bangladeshi workers are migrating to Qatar every month.

"Nepal and other countries are sending their workers to Qatar in huge numbers. But we cannot capture the market because we cannot work together," he told The Daily Star.

The government says it will send workers under a government-to-government process. This is a good step but the private sector should be involved in occupying the market, the Baira secretary added.

Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain said the government is preparing to send workers under state arrangements to curb the dominance of middlemen and ensure transparency in recruitment.

He, however, said the government would work with private recruiting agencies when the malpractices in the recruitment sector are stamped out.

Bangladesh Chargé d'Affaires in Qatar Mohammad Nasir Uddin said Qatar plans to build

around 100 five-star hotels and 12 stadiums with the tournament in mind.

But Qatar is yet to reveal any specific plans to recruit migrant workers for the works, he told The Daily Star.

The Arab country, however, is interested to recruit female domestic workers from Bangladesh, Nasir added.

First Secretary (Labour) Maqsudur Rahman said, "Around 7,500 Bangladeshis have migrated to Qatar in the first two months of this year while around 30,000 migrated last year."

Director General of the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training Begum Shamsun Nahar, however, said around 10,000 Bangladeshi workers are migrating to Qatar every month.

## 5 accused

FROM PAGE 20

Senior Judicial Magistrate Quazi Shahidul Islam rejected their bail petitions and passed the order for sending them to jail.

In the early hours of July 18, 2011, a mob killed six students after branding them as bandits at Aminbazar in Savar on the outskirts of the capital.

Three of the deceased were students of Mirpur Bangla College, while the others were of Tejaon College, Bangladesh University of Business and Technology and Maple Leaf International School in the capital.

Savar Model police filed a murder case against 60 people in connection with their alleged involvement in the killing incident.

On January 13 this year, Additional Police Super Sharif Uddin Ahmed of Rab Headquarters, also the investigation officer of the case, pressed charges against the 60 accused.

## PHENSIDYL CASE Judge Javed gets bail on health ground

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to Javed Imam, a suspended senior assistant judge of Bhola District Judge's Court, after nearly three months' of his arrest in a drug case.

Police arrested Javed from the capital's New Market for allegedly carrying 342 bottles of Phensidyl on December 1, last year.

Judge Mohammad Anisur Rahman of the Second Additional Judge's Court granted him bail for 10 days considering his health condition.

During the hearing on a bail petition, Javed's lawyer Gopal Chandra Saha told the court that his client suffered a cardiac arrest and is now undergoing treatment at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital.

He prayed to the court to grant Javed bail considering his health condition, the lawyers said.

The court fixed March 7 for hearing on charge framing against the accused.

Police on December 20 last year pressed charges against Javed in connection with the drug case.

Sub-Inspector Mohammad Shafiqul Islam, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka, showing 15 people as prosecution witnesses.

Earlier, petition for Javed's bail was rejected in both the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court and the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court.

Later, the High Court issued a rule upon the government to explain why Javed should not be granted bail in the case after his lawyer filed a petition challenging the legality of the lower courts' orders.

## Darfur tribal clashes 'killed 510' in 7 weeks

AFP, Khartoum

More than 500 members of an Arab tribe in Sudan's war-ravaged Darfur region have been killed and almost 900 wounded in seven weeks of clashes, an MP representing the district said on Monday.

The toll is far higher than figures previously given for the fighting between the Rezeigat tribe and rival Arabs from the Beni Hussein group in the Jebel Amir gold mining area of North Darfur.

Aid workers say the fighting has caused the region's largest uprooting of the population in years.

The MP said that 68 villages had been burned to the ground, with 120 partly burned, and that 15 women were raped.

In the latest attack, on Saturday, residents in El Sireaf town said a Rezeigat militia fired heavy machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades, burned houses and killed more than 50 people.

Up to 200 died during clashes in January, Amnesty International said earlier, adding that Sudanese security officers were reportedly involved.

## Farabi

FROM PAGE 20

sought a 10-day remand for Farabi, a fourth-year student of Chittagong University physics department.

In the remand prayer, Detective Branch Inspector Mainul Islam said probe found that Farabi had made the death threat in a blog post.

The student would also be interrogated in connection with the killing of Rajib Haider, the official added.

Police detained Farabi on the CU campus on February 24.

Rajib, an architect and activist of the Shahbagh movement, was brutally murdered near his house at Mirpur on February 15. His first namaz-e-janaza was held at Shahbagh the next day.



Comilla Cadet College team, school-round qualifier of the Spelling Bee, poses with golden tickets.

## Tk 8cr on way from Singapore

FROM PAGE 1

Singapore court that he had deposited the money with the bank.

The attorney general said the process of bringing back the laundered money started following the directives of a Dhaka court that sentenced Koko and Saimon to six years' imprisonment on June 23, 2011.

The Special Judge's Court-3 in Dhaka also fined them Tk 38.83 crore for laundering money to Singapore, and directed the government to bring back more than Tk 20 crore laundered by the two.

Following the Dhaka court order, Bangladesh attorney general's office requested its Singapore counterpart to take legal steps to this end.

In November last year when the ACC said it retrieved part of the sum laundered by Koko and his associate, the main opposition BNP termed it a ruling party ploy to taint the image of Zia family, and claimed the ACC didn't retrieve any money.

However, documents show that Singapore attorney general's office on November 22 last year deposited 2.04 million

Singaporean dollars with the Stolen Asset Recovery Account that the ACC opened with Sonali Bank.

Such transaction between the two offices was possible because the two countries had signed a mutual legal assistance request on October 20, 2008.

ACC Deputy Director Abu Sayeed on March 17, 2009 sued Koko and Saimon for laundering more than Tk 20 crore.

According to the case statement, Koko and Saimon had received the money in bribe from telecom giant Siemens and China Harbour Engineering Company Ltd to help them win contracts. The two later siphoned off the money to Singapore.

The ACC pinpointed Koko's dealings with the Chinese engineering firm for constructing the New Mooring Container Terminal and with Siemens for supplying and setting up equipment for mobile phone company Teletalk.

In a verdict on the money laundering case on January 2, 2011, the Singapore court fined local businessman Cheng for keeping Koko's money in his account.

Cheng was fined \$900,677

for having Koko's \$317,000 transferred to his account and keeping it on Koko's advice, reported The Straits Times, an English language daily in the island state.

According to other media reports, the US authorities on January 8, 2009, initiated a move in a District of Columbia court to recover funds worth \$3 million allegedly obtained by Koko from German company Siemens and kept in a Singapore-based bank.

On December 15, 2008 in a settlement with the US Department of Justice, Siemens agreed to pay \$1.6 billion in fine to various authorities as penalties for its "corruption".

The US authorities alleged that former Siemens Telecommunication Group had made payments totaling \$813.9 million to win various telecom projects in Argentina, Bangladesh, and Venezuela.

Koko left the country for Bangkok for treatment on July 19, 2008 after getting out of jail on parole. He was arrested in September 2007 along with his mother from their cantonment residence. His associate Saimon is on the run.

## Never against religion

FROM PAGE 1

country over the past few days. They also vandalised Shaheed Minars, burnt and tore national flags and damaged Gonojagoron Manchhas in different districts.

The protesters earlier issued two ultimatums to the government for Mahmudur's arrest.

Alleging that the Bangla daily acting editor instigated fundamentalists, protesters have been demanding the immediate arrest of Mahmudur for the last few days.

In his immediate reaction after getting the memorandum, Home Minister Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir said the government would decide on the matter in a few days.

Expressing solidarity with the demand for Mahmudur's arrest, the minister said the allegations raised by the activists of the movement were sufficient for taking legal action against him.

Later in the evening, as more and more protesters joined the movement on its 22nd day, organisers held a press conference to address the concerns and questions that had arisen over the past few days as a result of the "propaganda ruthlessly pursued by the anti-liberation forces".

The nonstop movement began in the afternoon of February 5, hours after Jamaat assistant secretary general Abdul Quader

Mollah was sentenced to life in prison for war crimes in 1971. Protesters demand capital punishment to Mollah and all war criminals.

Emphasising that it was a people's movement being participated by students, bloggers, political activists, cultural groups and the mass people, Imran told the press conference: "Gonojagoron Mancha has never done anything to implement any party's agenda."

From the beginning the movement received donations from individuals and institutions, and more and more people are coming forward with help, he said and went on to add that at the moment they were not in that much need of financial support.

Imran, a physician, said the anti-liberation forces did not stop spreading hateful propaganda, and that they instigated violence "misusing holy mosques" across the country.

They burnt prayer mats, threw shoes inside the mosques, thus insulting Islam, he said, adding: "Our question is: What sort of Muslims are they?"

"Bangladesh is on the verge of another Liberation War," said Imran to loud cheers from the crowd. "This is a struggle to create a war-criminal-free and truly secular country."

## BNP now ridicules Shahbagh protest

FROM PAGE 1

Alamgir said, "The youths' chants of hanging and slaughtering will not help build a decent society. We want to hear [from them] words of love and affection."

He said the government had been playing with fire and it would create a division among the people.

Mentioning some recent incidents of vandalism at offices, banks and insurance organisations owned by a particular party, Fakhru, also spokesperson of the BNP, said: "The honourable prime minister, please stop

this dangerous game. Don't have people pitted against each other."

Some leaders at the rally raised questions about the "steady and generous supply of funds" to the Shahbagh youths during their sit-in for 17 days in a row.

'RAJIB WAS DOOMED TO DIE'

Referring to the killing of blogger Rajib, BNP Vice-chairman Sadeque Hossain Khoka said, "An anti-Islam blogger like him was doomed to die. I wonder how he lived this long even

after writing against Islam and our dear Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)."

He threatened that if actions were not taken against the bloggers, there would be dire consequences for Sheikh Hasina and her government.

Ahmed Rajib Haider, an activist of the Shahbagh movement, was hacked to death near his house in the city's Pallabi area on February 15.

In its first formal reaction to the movement, the BNP on February 11 said it had all

## Assange fears of extradition a 'fantasy'

Says Australia

AFP, Sydney

Australian Foreign Minister Bob Carr has dismissed as "fantasy" claims by WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange that Sweden's case against him is a conspiracy to have him extradited to the United States.

Assange has been held up in Ecuador's embassy in Britain for eight months as he seeks to avoid extradition to Stockholm over allegations of rape and sexual assault, creating a stand-off between Quito and London.

Carr told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation late Monday that Assange, an Australian citizen, would be safer in Sweden than Britain.

"To suggest that the Swedes are after him as a CIA conspiracy to get him to Stockholm and allowing him to be bundled off to Langley, Virginia (CIA headquarters) is sheer fantasy," Carr said.

## Mahmudur

FROM PAGE 20

consider Amar Desh as their mouthpiece. They consider the other media as the mouthpiece of the rich and looters. Except for Amar Desh, all other media have corporate interests," Mahmudur told a press briefing at the daily Amar Desh office in the capital last night.

The briefing was held hours after the Shahbagh protesters submitted a memorandum to the home minister, asking for Mahmudur's immediate arrest for "instigating violence by disseminating propaganda against the Shahbagh movement".

Claiming that the Amar Desh editor has been provoking the religious fanatics, the Shahbagh protesters have been calling for his arrest for the last few days.

Slamming the journalist leaders who demanded his arrest at a rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday, Mahmudur said: "You are not journalist leaders; you are partisan people and politicians."

Several hundred news people from different media houses under the banner of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists and Dhaka Union of Journalists joined the rally. The gathering was organised to call for capital punishment to all war criminals and also to protest Friday's attacks on journalists by activists of Islamist parties.

According to Mahmudur, journalists have "failed to understand people's pulse" regarding the Shahbagh protests.

"You have become activists. I urge you to realise the difference between an activist and a journalist," said Mahmudur, who claimed to have five years' experience in journalism as an editor.

Terming Shahbagh "a state within a state", he said, "Who owns that state? Does the owner live within or across the border? If he lives across the border, then who is he? ... In my opinion, [our] state has collapsed."

He said his paper had begun a cultural revolution against Indian imperialism and culture, and the movement would continue even if he was arrested. "I am ready to be arrested."

Earlier on February 23, Mahmudur, also former chairman of the investment board, criticised a section of the media for what he said was blowing up the "insignificant" Shahbagh movement out of proportion.

along been giving positive statements about the sentiment and enthusiasm of the youths.

Some young bloggers and online activists took to Shahbagh intersection to demand death penalty for all war criminals including Abdul Quader Mollah on February 5, hours after the International Crimes Tribunal-2 sentenced Mollah to life in prison for crimes against humanity during the Liberation War. Soon hundreds of thousands from all walks of life joined in.