

NEWS IN *brief*

Cultural personalities vow to resist communal, anti-liberation forces

DU CORRESPONDENT

Eminent citizens and cultural personalities yesterday vowed to resist all communal and anti-liberation forces through strengthening cultural movement across the country.

They made the pledge at a daylong programme, organised by Bangladesh Abritt Shamonnay Parishad, marking its 25th anniversary in the capital's Shahbagh.

Later they brought out a procession and marched towards the Gonojagoron Mancha and handed over 25 flags to Imran H Sarker.

Asaduzzaman Noor, cultural personality and president of the parishad, spoke among others.

Dhaka, Delhi to make film on '71

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Bangladesh and India will work towards jointly producing a film on the Liberation War of Bangladesh, which will also highlight the sacrifices made by Indian soldiers.

An official statement said Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu and his Indian counterpart Manish Tewari had agreed to finalise a proposal to that end shortly.

At the meeting, Inu requested Tewari to come up the names of the Indian soldiers who died in the historic event of 1971. He reiterated that the Bangladesh government would recognise their contribution, the statement read.

Nine return from Indian jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Nine Bangladeshi citizens have returned home after languishing in an Indian jail for three years.

The Indian immigration police handed over the people to Burimari immigration police at zero point of Burimari land port in Lalmonirhat yesterday.

Burimari Immigration Police Officer Abul Kalam Azad said they handed over the returnees to their relatives.

Quoting the people, Azad said the people were arrested by Indian Border Security Force from different border areas of Koochbehar district of Paschim Banga in India.

They entered Indian territory without valid documents to work as day labourers at brick kilns.

Burnt body found in Gazipur

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

The burnt body of an unidentified young woman was found in Gazipur Bhawal forest on Thursday night.

Police sent the body to Gazipur Sadar Hospital morgue for post-mortem.

Amir Hossain, officer-in-charge of Sreepur Police Station, said locals informed them about the body in the forest.

A case was filed in this connection.

Irrigation pumps get 2 more hrs of power supply

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has increased supply of power to irrigation pumps by two hours to help farmers produce paddy, said officials yesterday.

Now farmers will be supplied with electricity from 10:00pm to 8:00am every day compared to the previous supply from 11:00pm to 7:00am, said an official of state-run Power Development Board.

PDB gave the instruction to all power suppliers to increase electricity supply at a meeting in Dhaka on Thursday.



Tributes to Binod Bihari



Anti-clockwise from top, The coffin of anti-British movement hero Binod Bihari Chowdhury being taken away from the capital's Central Shaheed Minar where it lay in state for some time yesterday. People from all walks of life pay their tributes to the co-fighter of the Surya Sen. Police give a guard of honour for the revolutionary on the Shaheed Minar premises. Sammillito Sangskritik Jote lays flowers on the coffin.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN



RAMNA BLASTS CASE

Judgement likely in June

CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER WITH SHARIFUL ISLAM

The much awaited judgement in the case filed over killing 10 persons in the gruesome Ramna Batamul blasts on Pahela Baishakh 12 years back is likely to be delivered in June.

The prosecution said the cross-examination of CID Inspector Abu Hena Md Yusuf, the last investigation officer of the case, is now going on and it will take another five to six days to be completed.

Then a Dhaka court holding the trial would hear arguments from both prosecution and defence counsels before the judgement, Zahid Hossain Sardar, an additional public prosecutor said.

"We are trying to complete the trial of the case by June," said Zahid.

However, the trial of the other case

remains stuck since 2009 as the Supreme Court registrar is yet to give his opinion on whether trials of both cases could be held in the same court.

The Daily Star repeatedly tried to reach Registrar AKM Shamsul Islam over the cell phone for his comment on the matter, but he did not pick up.

So far, the court recorded depositions of 61 witnesses out of 84.

During the traditional celebrations of Bangla New Year 1408 (April 14, 2001) at the Ramna Batamul in the capital, the powerful blast claimed lives of 10 people, leaving 50 others wounded.

Following the incident, two cases -- one for murder and the other under the Explosive Substances Act -- were filed with Ramna Police Station.

Seven years after the incident, investigators found Harkat-ul Jihad (Huji) links in the blast.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) pressed charges in both the cases against 14 top leaders of the banned militant outfit on December 30, 2008.

The charge-sheeted accused are Mufti Abdul Hannan, Mufti Shafiqur Rahman, Moulana Yahiya, Mufti Abdul Hye, Moulana Shawkat Osman alias Sheikh Farid, Moulana Abu Bakar alias Selim Hawlader, Moulana Mohammad Tajuddin, Moulana Abdul Hannan Sabbir, Arif Hasan Suman, Moulana Akbar Hossain alias Helaluddin, Moulana Abu Taher, Moulana Abdur Rouf, Hafez Jahangir Alam Badar and Shahadat Ullah alias Jewel.

Of them, Hannan, Suman, Jewel, Abu Taher, Sheikh Farid, Sabbir and Rouf are behind bars while Akbar is out on a High Court bail. The six others are still at large.

AL MAN WIELDING FIREARM
Politicians give mixed reactions

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Politicians have expressed mixed reactions to reports of an Awami League leader brandishing a firearm when Hefajat-e Islam's Monday hartal was under way in Chittagong city.

Some described the open demonstration of firearms as a bad omen for politics, while others said a person had the right to use his licensed gun in self-defence.

Diderul Alam Masum, acting general secretary of AL Chittagong city's Lalkhan Bazar ward unit, was seen brandishing a shotgun in the hartal photos of different newspapers. Masum said, "I felt embarrassed to see the pictures." He claimed his gun to be licensed and that he "brandished it in self-defence". Masum also said he only fired blank shots.

On Monday, about 100 AL and pro-AL men were holding an anti-hartal rally at Ispahani intersection, about a quarter mile from Wasa intersection where Hefajat men were demonstrating.

At one stage, some 500 Hefajat followers with machetes and sticks arrived at Ispahani point and asked the AL men to leave the place. When they refused, the Hefajat men attacked the AL men, initiating a clash, which left about 14 injured, seven of them with bullets.

Masum told The Daily Star, "When they besieged us, I took out my licensed gun from my car and fired four blank shots to save my life and the lives of my political mates."

BNP Chittagong city unit President Ameer Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury termed the incident of wielding a firearm in the street "the worst signal for politics". Common people are scared to see the "AL cadres with firearms" in the thoroughfares, he said on Tuesday.

AL Chittagong city unit General Secretary Enamul Haque Danu said, "We do not want the use of any firearm in the street. We want peaceful coexistence with other political parties."

"But, if someone comes under attack, he has every right to defend himself and if he has a licensed gun, he has the right to use it in self-defence," he told The Daily Star.

AL lawmaker and Chittagong city unit Vice President Nurul Islam BSc said, "It is a crime to brandish firearms". Police should investigate whether the gun was licensed, he added.

Chittagong Metropolitan Police Commissioner Shafiqul Islam said, "We have confirmed that the gun was licensed for Masum. Now we are probing whether the firearm was used for self-defence or attack." Legal action will follow investigation, he said.

Advocate Mahbulul Alam, former general secretary of Chittagong District Bar Association, said if a person was guilty of using his licensed gun for "intimidation



Awami League leader Masum with his shotgun in Lalkhan Bazar area of Chittagong city on Monday.

and attack" other than defending his life, the district administration could strip him of the licence.

In the case of the unauthorised use of a licensed gun in killing and injuring anyone, legal action can be taken against the gun owner under the penal code, he told The Daily Star.

16,000 women sign up for jobs abroad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

More than 16,000 women have registered their names for foreign jobs since the government has launched the online registration process on April 7 for selecting qualified women job seekers.

The registration is going on at all the information service centres of local union parishad and ward in Chittagong and Khulna divisions from 9:00am to 5:00pm and will continue till Tuesday.

Yesterday 290 registered in Chittagong while 165 in Khulna. Earlier 14,976 registered in Rajshahi, Rangpur and Sylhet divisions from April 7 to 11.

The others of Dhaka and Barisal divisions will register from April 17 and 21.

The Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) will provide training to those selected for jobs in Middle Eastern countries, Singapore and Hong Kong after registration.

Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal splits up

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal (BSD), led by Khalequzzaman, has split up over ideological differences, stated Mubiniul Haider Chowdhury, leading the new faction, at a press conference in the capital's Dhaka Reporters Unity yesterday.

The new faction is determined to follow the ideology of Socialist Unity Centre of India (Communist) founding general secretary Shibdas Ghosh while the other wants to pursue the doctrines of Karl Marx and Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, BSD sources said.

The new faction will consider Shibdas the authority of the international communism movement and lead the party according to his ideals. "Most of the district committee and two thirds of the student and women front leaders joined us," said Mubiniul.

The faction formed a central convention preparatory committee with Mubiniul as convener and will hold a national convention within six months to form a new central committee, said Shubharangshu Chakrabarty, one of the six BSD central committee members.

Man found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

An unidentified man was found dead in an arable land at Asroygram village in Kulaura upazila of Moulvibazar yesterday morning.

On information from locals, police recovered the body from the land and sent it to Moulvibazar Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Let's Build A Beautiful Tomorrow



Owners of Land Plots Are Invited To Discuss Their Proposals

Dhanmondi, Gulshan, Banani, Old DOHS, Cantonment R/A New DOHS, Baridhara, Bashundhara, Lalmatia, Wari, Uttara Eskaton Garden & Other Prime Areas

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The Daily Star
Star Camps
LINKING YOUNG MINDS TOGETHER
COMING OUT TOMORROW
LINKING YOUNG MINDS

This week's Star Campus, a weekly publication of The Daily Star, has colourful articles celebrating Pahela Baishakh for the readers to enjoy. The Spotlight is on how this day of the year is the best time to let go of the ghosts of your past and look forward to a better tomorrow. The Campus Edibles celebrates the delicious feasts of Pahela Baishakh that include the likes of the ever-so-famous panta ilish. Sumaiya Ahsan Bushra brings back the tradition of puppetry and shares the sheer magic with the readers. The Star Chat is with young entrepreneur Sadia Islam as she shares stories about her childhood, life at school and her inspirations and aspirations. Do not forget your copy of Star Campus, as it hits the country tomorrow, Sunday. And, as always, have a great read!

HERE'S TO TOMORROW