



PHOTO: STAR

From left, Prof Harun-ur-Rashid, Prof Rehman Sobhan, Prof Emeritus Anisuzzaman, Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman and Dr Kamal Hossain hold copies of a book, "Bangladesh: Quest for Freedom and Justice", written by Dr Kamal and launched in the capital's Brac Centre Inn yesterday evening.

MAHMUDUR RAHMAN'S ARREST Journo factions to go on token hunger strike tomorrow for release

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A faction of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and another of Dhaka Union of Journalists will stage a four-hour token hunger strike before the capital's Jatiya Press Club from 10:00am tomorrow demanding unconditional release of Mahmudur Rahman.

The acting editor of Amar Desh was arrested by Detective Branch of police from the Bangla daily's Karwan Bazar office last Thursday in connection with three cases.

In one of the cases, Mahmudur was charged with sedition by publishing Skype conversations between Justice Md Nizamul Huq, then chairman of International Crimes Tribunal-1, and Ahmed Ziauddin, an expatriate Bangladeshi legal expert.

Tomorrow's programme was announced by the BFUJ faction's President Ruhul Amin Gazi on the second day of a sit-in before the press club yesterday, organised by the unions over the same demand.

Road crashes kill seven

METRO DESK

Seven people were killed and three others injured in separate road accidents across the country yesterday.

Our Gazipur correspondent reports, a police constable was killed as an oncoming bus of Jalil Paribhan rammed his motorbike on Dhaka-Tangail highway in Kaliakoir bypass area.

Jahangir Hossain, 35, worked in Joydebpur Police Station.

Meanwhile, in Board Bazar area, an unknown man died after a car hit him on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway in Gazipur, said Nawjar Hingway police.

Our Moulvibazar correspondent adds, two people were killed when a bus collided head-on with the jeep carrying them on Habiganj-Moulvibazar highway in Kakiya Bazar area.

The victims are Amjad Ali, 40, of

Sreemangal upazila, and the jeep driver Hosain Miah, 25, of Moulvibazar Sadar upazila.

A case was filed with Sreemangal Police Station.

Our Chittagong correspondent reports, two people were killed and three others injured when an oncoming bus rammed the CNG-run auto-rickshaw carrying them on Chittagong-Khagrachhari road in Mirsarai upazila.

The deceased were Minhaj Uddin, 30, and Daudul Islam, 30, of the upazila.

Of the injured, two were rushed to a local hospital while the auto-rickshaw driver was taken to a hospital in Feni.

Our Benapole correspondent adds, a transport trader, Md Ali Jinna, 58, of Benapole, was killed after a truck hit him while he was crossing Link Road in Benapole Port area.

Secularism a paradox in constitution

Says Justice Habibur Rahman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman, chief adviser to a former caretaker government, yesterday said secularism was paradoxically abolished from the constitution although it was one of the four state principles.

"We had made Pakistan on the grounds of religion and we had broken Pakistan on the grounds of language. We could not have had our country without the help from India and Soviet Union," he said, adding that nobody learnt from history.

Justice Habibur Rahman was addressing as chief guest a meeting marking the launching of a book, "Bangladesh: Quest for Freedom and Justice", written by eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain in the capital's Brac Centre Inn in the evening.

Congratulating Dr Kamal for writing the book, Justice Habibur said Dr Kamal, while working for the 1971 Liberation War, had the unique experience of meeting heads of states and diplomats and holding negotiations.

Dr Kamal said the debate on the moment of proclamation of independence was very unexpected and unfortunate although Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman himself had never claimed to have proclaimed the independence.

He lamented the absence of a Liberation War martyrs' list.

After the ceremony, Dr Kamal told journalists that he was not hopeful of a free and fair parliamentary election under the present Awami League government although he worked and voted for Awami League.

"We have seen in 1986 and in February 1996 that the elections were not held in a free, fair and peaceful manners under political governments," he said.

A good number of eminent citizens attended the book launching ceremony.

Two Adivasi youths jailed for possessing Cheetah hide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court yesterday sentenced two Adivasi youths to three months in prison and fined them Tk 50,000 each for illegally possessing a Cheetah hide.

If they default on the fine, they have to serve three months more in jail, said Executive Magistrate AHM Anwar Pasha, who delivered the verdict after their arrest at a rented house in the capital's Kuril.

The youths, hailing from Madhupur upazila, Tangail, are Johnny Manthin, 26, a masters' student of Jagannath University, and Richard Mri, 25, an honours student of Dhaka College. They brought the hide from Haluaghat in Mymensingh and were trying to sell it for Tk 70,000 to black marketers in Dhaka.

Rapid Action Battalion-1 arrested them on information yesterday.

SAU students vandalise Suhrawardi hospital

Two canteen staff injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two staff of the Shaheed Suhrawardi Medical College and Hospital doctors' canteen were injured in an alleged attack by students of the adjacent Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University (SAU) in the capital yesterday.

The injured manager, who filed a case with Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station against 30 unnamed students, and the assistant manager of the canteen were undergoing treatment.

Witnesses said a brawl and then a scuffle ensued between three SAU students and the canteen staff when the former tried to barge into the kitchen over delay in being served breakfast around 8:15am

during the morning rush hour.

Being informed by the three, around 30 students, armed with sticks and rods, arrived, attacked the staff and vandalised the canteen's furniture and glass doors of the hospital and doctors' room, they said.

Claiming that the attackers also looted Tk 50,000 from the cash register, one canteen staff, Mahin Patowari, claimed that SAU students, on occasions, paid less than what the bills actually were.

Inspector Maruf Ahmed of the police station said the SAU students would be identified from footage of CCTV cameras inside the canteen.

SAU Proctor Mofazzal Hossain said the attackers were students of an institute adjacent to SAU, not SAU students.

Construction worker dies falling from roof

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A construction worker died after falling from the roof of an under-construction building in Kazir Dewri area of Chittagong city yesterday.

The deceased, Didarul Alam, 27, hailed from Patiya upazila.

Quoting the victim's co-workers, sources at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) police camp said Didarul suddenly fell from the roof while working around 12:40pm.

He was rushed to CMCH where doctors declared him dead.

Rotarians meet at Savar

METRO DESK

Around 1,200 Rotarians from across the country took part in an annual gathering at Savar on the outskirts of the capital yesterday.

The Rotary Club of Uttara hosted this year's assembly at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BAPTC), said a press release.

During the daylong programme, leading Rotarians discussed the future plans of rotary clubs in Bangladesh for the socio-economic development in the country in line with the Rotary International's slogan, "Engage Rotary, Change Lives".

District governor-elect Ghulam Mustafa, incumbent district governor Dr Ishfaq A Zaman, Uttara Rotary Club president Salauddin Ahmed, leading Rotarians Safina Rahman, SAM Showket Hossain, and Salim Reza also spoke.

Rotary clubs in Bangladesh are engaged in leadership building and helping people.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT Budgetary allocation alone not enough

Says Dr Debapriya Bhattachariya

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rather than focusing on having a gender responsive budget with a lot of allocation for women, the aim should be to make women emerge as a powerful social group, said Dr Debapriya Bhattachariya, a distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

"Increasing the budgetary allocation is not enough. Holding social programmes like rallies and being vocal about women's issues is crucial," he added.

He was speaking at a discussion on gender responsive budget organised by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad at the CIRDAP auditorium yesterday.

He expressed satisfaction that women are increasingly becoming involved in the economic activities of the country. "In fact, women have a larger share in our economic growth," he said.

Sharmin Nilormi, associate professor of Jahangirnagar University's Department of Economics, made few recommendations for a gender responsive budget for the next fiscal year.

Her recommendations included preparing gender responsive budget in all ministries and taking measures to implement it.

"There is no reason to be excited about the success of girls in literacy and enrolment," she said.

Although more girls than boys enrol in primary schools, Nilormi informed that fewer girls complete their schooling as the dropout rates among girls are very high.

She added that hostels and residential facilities for female students and professional women should be prioritised.

Koica to train vocational instructors

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Korea International Cooperation Agency (Koica) will provide training to Bangladeshi instructors on Korean technical and vocational education.

Under a project titled "Enhancing the Vocational Training Program of TTC, Chittagong", 18 instructors will take part in a 42-day invitational training in Korea. The training will begin today, said a press release.

The training aims to share the know-how of Korean technical and vocational education, training models and development experience that will help the participants to provide new standardised performance based vocational training courses.

Under the project, Chittagong TTC will be promoted as an advanced technical training centre where competence based high quality training and modular based courses will be introduced.

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*Conditions Apply