

Madrasa teachers beat up 3 journos

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Three journalists were attacked and injured at a madrasa in Kushtia yesterday as they went there to gather news of a student tortured by a teacher.

The victims are Milon Ali of Independent TV, Touhidi Hasan of Prothom Alo, and Neyamat Ali of Channel i.

Superintendent of the madrasa, Abu Daud, got angry as the journalists wanted to know about the beating of a student by a teacher at Ashraf-ul-Ulum Qawmi Madrasa in Mongolbaria on the outskirts of Kushtia town, witnesses said.

He called his colleagues who encircled the journalists and beat them up with bamboo sticks.

Locals took Milon and Neyamat to Kushtia Medical College Hospital (KMCH).

The unruly teachers also snatched away the cameras from Milon and Neyamat, and

damaged those.

Earlier, in the morning, madrasa teacher Tanvir Rahman beat up Abdullah, 12, a student of the madrasa, as the latter did not attend Fazr prayers, leaving him seriously injured.

Abdullah was brought to KMCH with injuries in his legs, right hand and in the back, police said.

In the afternoon, local journalists put up barricade on the Kushtia-Rajshahi highway, demanding arrest of the madrasa teachers who were behind the attack on journalists.

They withdrew the barricade after Kushtia Superintendent of Police Mofiz Uddin Ahmed assured them of action against the people responsible for the incident.

In a late-night development, madrasa teacher Tanvir Rahman was suspended for beating up the student.



Col Sarker Muhammad Shamsuddin, sector commander of Rajshahi BGB, hands over Indian government's compensation cheque of Rs five lakh to Shah Alam's wife Beauty Khatun at an event at sector headquarters yesterday. Alam was killed in BSF firing near Alaipur border three years ago.

PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Is AL shake-up soon?

FROM PAGE 16

Talking to this correspondent, several party leaders spoke critically of what they called Syed Ashraf's aloofness from the government and party activities. They also disapprove of Ashraf's "disconnect" with party leaders and workers.

Over the past four and a half years, Ashraf has hardly been regular in his ministry office, according to the ministry sources.

Should Ashraf be dropped from the party post, Tofail Ahmed or Obaidul Quader may replace him. But chances of Quader's getting the job is high, added the sources.

After returning from her recent visit to Belarus, Hasina sought the opinions of party leaders, ministers and MPs about changes in the party and the cabinet.

The reshuffle issue came to the fore following the stunning defeats of the AL-backed mayoral candidates in the polls to the five city corporations -- Khulna, Rajshahi, Sylhet, Barisal and Gazipur.

On Thursday night, Hasina spoke with Ashraf

and expressed her frustration over his role in the city polls and his being absent from the ministry and party offices.

Rumours did their rounds following this that Ashraf had resigned from the party post, although Ashraf ruled this out yesterday, saying a vested quarter was spreading it.

Sources said Ashraf may go on leave on July 27 for at least two weeks to attend the wedding of his daughter's friend in London. He was initially supposed to leave for the UK yesterday.

Some other leaders, including a few presidium members, one joint general secretary and some organising secretaries, might be replaced by some old and new faces.

Tofail, Amu and Suranjit were dropped from the AL presidium, the highest policymaking body of the party, in the 2009 council for their "reformist" roles during the military-backed caretaker government.

Party lawmaker Saber Hossain Chowdhury, who was a political secretary to Hasina, and several former

organising secretaries, including Abdur Rahman, Abdul Mannan and Sultan Mohammad Mansur Ahmed, may get new posts, party sources said.

About the likely changes in the AL, party Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif said the party chief had been leading the organisation for 32 years, twice bringing the party to power.

"So whatever decision she makes to lead the party to power again, we all will accept that," he added.

He said top leaders would start touring districts across the country immediately after Eid-ul-Fitr, which is likely on August 9 or 10, to hold meetings to strengthen the party before the national polls.

"To do so, we will divide the country into different parts and engage our leaders. Apart from focusing on our government's successes, we will talk about the opposition's propaganda and counter that with logic and information to dispel confusion among the public," said Hanif, also a special assistant to the prime minister.

Jamaat goes berserk

FROM PAGE 1

day the tribunal delivers a judgment in any war crimes cases against its party leaders. However, Ghulam Azam has been inactive in politics since 2000.

On the eve of the hartal, Jamaat leader Abul Ala Mohammad Iqbal, 45, died at Mohakhali Metropolitan Hospital. But the cause of his death could not be confirmed independently.

The Jamaat claimed that police picked up Iqbal from a procession that was brought out in the Tejaon Industrial area demanding Ghulam Azam's release. He was later taken to the hospital from the police station after he fell sick, said the party.

However, Moniruzzaman, officer-in-charge (OC) of the police station at the Tejaon Industrial area, denied detaining Iqbal, and said, "We heard the news from journalists and went to the hospital where we heard the doctors had declared that he died from a stroke."

In Paltan, pro-hartal pickets swooped on Alamgir Hossain, OC (investigation

of Paltan Police Station, said Mehedi Hassan, additional deputy commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (Motijheel Division).

He was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with head injuries, said Hassan.

Pickets set alight a police microbus around 2:15pm in Paltan and vandalised vehicles in Dhanmondi, Malibagh and Kakrail. They also torched a truck near Asad Gate around 10:00pm.

In Moghbazar and Shahzadpur, pickets exploded homemade bombs from pro-hartal processions brought out from alleys.

Meanwhile, members of Border Guard Bangladesh were deployed in the capital around 8:00pm to ward off any untoward incident, said Mohsin Reza, public relations officer of BGB.

In Sathkhira, pickets blocked the Jessore-Sathkhira highway by placing logs across the road, and vandalised two buses and blasted at least eight homemade bombs.

In Chittagong, at least 15 crude bombs went off, as Jamaat activists brought out a procession on Station Road around 5:40pm. They vandalised 12 vehicles, including two police motorbikes, and hurled a crude bomb at Sergeant Kabir Hossain.

He is now receiving treatment at Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

Jamaat-Shibir activists also vandalised at least 15 vehicles, including the car of a joint district judge, leaving at least 10 people injured in Feni.

Shibir activists exploded at least a dozen crude bombs from pro-hartal processions last night in different parts of Rajshahi city.

They also damaged a microbus and an autorickshaw at Talaimari intersection around 8:00pm, said Asit Kumar Ghosh, OC of Motihar Police Station.

Police fired rubber bullets to disperse them, with the Shibir men blasting three homemade bombs before fleeing, he said.

Shibir men also blasted crude bombs at RDA Market gate, Seroil bus terminal and Shalbagan intersection around 8:30pm.

IN COURTROOM
International Crimes Tribunal-1 began its proceedings at around 10:45am.

Justice ATM Fazle Kabir, chairman of the tribunal, said the judgment in the war crimes case against Ghulam Azam had been prepared, and fixed today for delivering the judgement in the case.

The tribunal asked the prison authorities to produce the 91-year-old Ghulam Azam before it today.

Chief defence counsel Abdur Razzaq, also assistant secretary general of Jamaat, urged the tribunal not to deliver the verdict in the presence of Ghulam Azam, considering the poor state of his health.

But the tribunal did not entertain his request, and said it was the right of an accused to hear the pronouncement of a judgement.

Complainant tells court of murder

FROM PAGE 16

Shafiuallah of Speedy Trial Tribunal-4 when and how he came to know about the incident.

He cited reports published in different print and electronic media while narrating the incident of killing before the court.

During the day's hearing, eight accused, now in jail, were present at the court while 13 other accused are on the run.

In his deposition, Jalal said he along with his forces was on duty in front of Madina Market at Dholaikhal in the capital's Sutrapur since 6:00am on December 9.

About 9:15am, he came to know from passers-by that a group of demonstrators were stabbing a youth at the northern side of the Victoria Park. He along with his forces

went to the spot.

He came to know from people there that an anti-blockade procession, led by a group of students of Jagannath University, and a procession of pro-BNP lawyers had a face to face encounter at Shankharibazar intersection, and a cocktail exploded there.

At that time, a man named Bishwajit, who was going to a petrol pump, was chased by the anti-blockade activists. They hit him with iron rods and stabbed him with machete indiscriminately.

To save himself from the attackers, the victim went to a veranda of Intensive Dental Care but the attackers went there and stabbed him again, SI Jalal told the court.

When people from

nearby places had rushed to the spot, the attackers left. A rickshaw puller, named Ripon, took Bishwajit to a hospital where he died.

After completing his duty, he returned to the police station and came to know that the victim's body was taken to his village home after an autopsy.

On that day, Jalal, the witness, filed a murder case against unnamed people in connection with the killing.

But, he saw on television that several people were stabbing the victim. Besides, electronic and print media ran reports on the incident.

Later, the witness came to know from the investigation officer that a total of 21 people including Shakil, Nahid, Shaon, Kibria, Rajon and Emdad were involved in the killing, Jalal added.

After recording his depo-

sition, defence lawyers of the accused cross-examined the witness.

The court fixed July 21 for next hearing of the case. It also summoned two more witnesses to appear before it on that day.

On June 30, the case was sent to the speedy trial tribunal from the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court in Dhaka as per a home ministry decision.

The Sessions Judge's Court framed charges against 21 activists of Jagannath University unit of BCL in the case on June 2.

Inspector Tajul Islam of Detective Branch of police, who is investigating the case, submitted the charge sheet before the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka on March 5.

4 times more passed

FROM PAGE 1

SMA Faiz, former chairman of the PSC, said the candidates selected through the revised results would have been deprived had the commission not carried out a review.

The first result indicates that the PSC was more focused on filling up posts under the quotas, he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Around 2.21 lakh applicants filled up forms online to sit for the first-round objective type of tests at 174 centres across the country on May 24 to contend for 2,052 posts in different cadres, with more than 1.93 lakh taking the exams.

The PSC in a press release yesterday said the commission at a special meeting on Saturday reviewed the results of the 34th BCS exams and related issues.

The commission did not disclose how it had prepared the revised result, scrapping the earlier one. A PSC source said the last qualifying mark selected for quota candidates was considered as the benchmark for success in the exam.

However, at least four candidates who were on the previous list told The Daily Star over phone that they had been dropped from the revised result. This newspaper was yet to get an official version on this issue from the PSC.

Currently, 56 percent of

government jobs are reserved under quotas, leaving only 44 percent for merit-based recruitment.

The quota provision was applicable in the final results after written tests and viva in earlier BCS tests, but the commission this time introduced it at preliminary exams, triggering widespread commotion among the unsuccessful candidates.

Joined by students, the agitated candidates in Dhaka and elsewhere took to the streets on Wednesday. They blocked the Shahbagh intersection for more than 11 hours on Wednesday, demanding a cancellation of quotas. Their demonstration turned violent on Thursday.

In the face of the agitation, the PSC announced on July 10 it was reconsidering the results, but failed to pacify the demonstrators.

Students at Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chittagong and Jahangirnagar universities continued their demonstrations against the quota system and called a strike at all educational institutions yesterday.

At Dhaka University, a group of demonstrators locked the main entrances of Curzon Hall, Arts Building, Lecture Theatre Building and Education and Research (IER) Building early in the morning to enforce the strike.

But the university authori-

ties unlocked the gates at around 8:00am, said DU acting proctor Amzad Ali, adding that regular classes and examinations were being held at the university.

Activists and leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra Union and Progressive Students' Alliance brought out two processions on the campus demanding quota reforms. Over 2,000 students of Rajshahi University blocked the Dhaka-Rajshahi highway, boycotting classes to observe the strike, causing traffic gridlock for around 45 minutes.

Students of Jahangirnagar and Chittagong universities held a rally on their campus demanding that the quota provision be cancelled.

Meanwhile, a writ petition was filed with the High Court (HC) yesterday challenging the legality of quota provision at BCS examinations.

Two BCS examinees -- SM Asaduzzaman and Md Harun -- filed the petition seeking an HC directive on the government to suspend the existing provision of 56 percent quota in the BCS exams.

The cabinet secretary, education secretary and Bangladesh Public Service secretary have been made respondents to the petition.

Advocate Eunus Ali Akond, a counsel for the petitioners, told The Daily Star that the HC might hear the petition today.

Solid rain!

FROM PAGE 16

The water absorbed by the polymer can be stored for up to a year without evaporating - the only time it is extracted is when it is by the roots of plants when the can be added to soils to produce water for plants.

Solid Rain was created by Mexican chemical engineer Sergio Jesús Rico Velasco.

He initially wanted to find an absorbent material that could be used in nappies to absorb lots of liquid in a small space.

Velasco later realised that his potassium-based polymer could be used as a way to cure Mexico's drought problems.

A whole litre of water can be absorbed in just 10 grams of Solid Rain, which then converts into a thick, translucent gel.

The liquid retained in this gel will stay there for a year without evaporating or seeping out.

It can only be extracted when its added to soil and comes into contact with the roots of plants.

Solid Rain sells for around \$25 per pound.

According to magazine Modern Farmer, the Mexican government conducted a one-season sample study on farmers using Solid Rain in the semi-arid state of Hidalgo.

Farm plots showed up to 300 per cent increases in crop yield when Solid Rain was used.

Solid Rain recently won the Ecology and Environment award from the Fundación Miguel Aleman, and it's been used in Mexico for a decade.

TI clarifies

FROM PAGE 16

(GCB), the largest-ever global survey on people's experience and views on corruption in 107 countries, including Bangladesh.

While the global launch was undertaken by the TI Secretariat in Berlin, Germany, national chapters, including TI Bangladesh, launched the survey results in their own country.

"Our survey asked respondents to rank levels of corruption in 12 institutions on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means 'not at all corrupt' and 5 means 'extremely corrupt'.

"Any category other than 1 must be understood to be corrupt in lesser or greater degree," the clarification said.

One way to interpret this data is to look at what percentage of respondents thought institutions were strongly affected by corruption by combining categories 4 and 5, as has been done by the TI Secretariat.

Another way is to look at how many respondents regard the respective institution as "corrupt" by combining categories 2, 3, 4 and 5, as done by TI Bangladesh.

Both presentations of the responses are correct ways of presenting the survey data, it added.

Yunus 11th

FROM PAGE 1

The founder of Grameen Bank and pioneer of microcredit and social business concepts that are being followed around the world was ranked 11th in the 2013 list of business-thinkers.

Paul Krugman, Nobel prize winner in economics, topped the list. He was followed by Joseph Stiglitz, Bill Gates, Michael Porter, Thomas Friedman, Eric Schmidt, Richard Branson, Malcolm Gladwell, Robert Reich, Jack Welch, Prof Yunus, Niall Ferguson, Michael Dell, Howard Gardner and Jimmy Wales in the order.

The results were based on Google hits, media mentions and academic citations, according to The Wall Street Journal.

The findings show how much the business-guru landscape has changed since the previous ranking in 2008.

The 2008 list that was done using a similar methodology had author and consultant Gary Hamel as the no. 1 business-thinker.

Tom Davenport, a professor at Babson College, compiled this year's ranking with Jeffrey Cronin of Harvard Business School.

"I call the new list the invasion of the celebrity economists," Davenport said.

The financial crisis has made economic insight valuable to businesses and consumers alike. "People are casting about for what caused the crisis. That's one of the reasons economists did so well in the rankings," Davenport noted.

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India pays Rs 5 lakh

FROM PAGE 1

His family says Shah Alam was cutting grass for cows in Bangladeshi territory when some BSF members came and started grilling him. At one stage, they shot him and he died there and then.

His three sons, aged between 10 and 22, and his relatives were present at the event yesterday.

Beauty, who sobbed

when receiving the cheque, told reporters that she had worked as a housemaid to keep body and soul together since the death of her husband. She could not afford their education.

Speaking on the occasion, Col Shamsuddin said it was the first time that the Indian government had compensated a border kill-

ing, adding that the relations between the countries could improve.

"We do not want compensations, as the cost of a life cannot be measured by money. We want an end to border killings," he said.

It was a solace that the Indian government had realised at least one of their mistakes, he observed.