

'Fugitive' RU Shibir president attends rally, gives speech

Police say arrest avoided to avert violence

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

With 47 arrest warrants for him still active, the president of Islami Chhatra Shibir's Rajshahi University unit attended a rally in Rajshahi city for around three hours yesterday and then left unscathed, right under the nose of law enforcers.

Addressing the rally for around 20 minutes, Ashrafur Alam Imon, whom police previously claimed to be a "fugitive", even threatened "retaliatory steps" against police and Rapid Action Battalion over the death of a Shibir man.

The man, Rashedul Islam, 30, the pro-Jamaat student organisation's Motihar thana unit treasurer, died in a clash prompted by cocktails hurled by Jamaat-Shibir men at police in Kajla area on October 26.

The arrest warrants were issued over 47 cases filed over one murder and mostly over numerous attacks on law enforcers and Bangladesh Chhatra League men in the city since November 6, 2012.

That day Jamaat-Shibir men, demanding the release of Jamaat leaders, especially those being tried over war crimes charges, wounded 30 policemen, beating two of them with their own rifles, in the city.

That month the first case was filed and the first arrest warrant was issued.

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ILLEGAL BANGLADESHIS IN SAUDI ARABIA

Several thousands to be deported after Nov 3

BELAL HOSSAIN BIPLOB

Several thousand Bangladeshi workers, who migrated illegally to Saudi Arabia without valid documents and therefore were denied the chance to legalise their status, must return home after an ongoing amnesty expires on November 3, according to officials.

The number of such Bangladeshis who face deportation would not be more than 5,000 to 10,000, said Emdadul Haque, labour counsellor at Bangladesh Embassy in the Kingdom, talking to The Daily Star by phone recently.

Around 7 lakh Bangladeshis have received consular services taking the opportunity of the amnesty, he added.

Haque requested the Bangladeshis, who are still waiting to have their status legalised under the amnesty, to get registered to avoid punishment after the deadline. Those who have applied for legalising status would not face any problem, as the embassy is providing them with temporary documents, he said.

Last week, Deputy Labour Minister of Saudi Mefreh Al-Haqbani declared that the

expatriates seeking legalisation to continue to work in the Kingdom would be exempted from penalties and fines for violations that took place after April 6 this year.

In addition, expatriate labourers who have sought final-exit visas during the grace period will also be exempted from penalties, he added.

Haqbani, however, warned that the illegal migrants, who will fail to legalise status, must face punishment after November 3. Employers, individual sponsors and enterprises would also face extensive penal action for harbouring illegals, he added.

"The timely submission of paperwork is imperative to avoid deportation and being banned from entering the country," Haqbani told Arab News.

In early May, Saudi authorities set July 4 as the amnesty deadline allowing illegal migrants to legalise their visa status, transfer their jobs, or return home without facing penalty. Upon demands from foreign nationals, the amnesty period was extended till November 3 but Haqbani said there

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3 UK citizens enter Bangladesh illegally thru Sylhet border

Cops fail to trace them

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Three Bangladesh-born British nationals yesterday trespassed on Bangladesh territory in two jeeps through Sutarkandi Land Customs Station in Beanibaar upazila dodging the immigration and customs officials.

Kabul Mia, Askar Uddin and Antar Ali fled the scene in two jeeps, bearing registration number of the UK, without completing customs and immigration formalities about 9:30 am, said Nure Alam Mina, superintendent of police, Sylhet.

Nure Alam said police made drives at different places but could not trace them till filling of this report at 6:00pm.

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CTG ARMS HAUL CASES Statements collected through torture

Say two accused former NSI officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two former National Security Intelligence (NSI) officials, accused in the Chittagong arms haul cases, told a Chittagong court yesterday that they were forced to provide confessional statements under duress, tortured physically and verbally abused during remand.

The officials, former NSI director general Brig Gen (ret'd) Abdur Rahim and director Major (ret'd) Liakat Hossain, were allowed by Chittagong Metropolitan Special Tribunal Number 1 to have their say on the charges.

The two cases, one for smuggling firearms and the other under the arms act, were filed a day after seven truckloads of arms and ammunition were seized at a jetty of Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Ltd in Chittagong city on April 2, 2004.

Abdur Rahim said he was arrested at his Dhaka residence on May 15, 2009 without a warrant.

During remand, he was once blindfolded, tied up and hung upside down from a ceiling fan. Another time, he tripped and fell on wires in the darkness inside a Chittagong jail, where conditions were unhygienic, and hurt his eyes and required eight stitches around them, he said.

He started fearing for his life after overhearing several phone conversations the investigation officer (IO), Md

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Quader Mollah to be executed as per laws

Says law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed yesterday said the Supreme Court's death penalty verdict for Jamaat-e-Islami leader Abdul Quader Mollah would be executed as per relevant legal provisions.

The law would take its own course and the release of the verdict's full text was under process, he, without elaborating, told journalists after a closing ceremony at Hotel Ruposhi

Bangla in the capital.

The death sentence was passed on September 17, overruling the International Crimes Tribunal-2 judgment that awarded him a life term for committing crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War.

Without the release of the full text, the execution cannot be carried out.

Shafique said the International Crimes Tribunals have been holding

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O, A-level exams rescheduled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities concerned have rescheduled the O-level and A-level examinations which fell into the opposition sponsored 60-hour shutdown that ended on Tuesday.

British Council (BC) officials yesterday said the tests slated for Monday and Tuesday were rescheduled in consultation with Cambridge International Examination board.

The October-November session of O- and A-level exams under the board started in the first week of October. The exams, administered by the British Council in

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Mozena leaves for Washington to discuss Bangladesh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador Dan Mozena left Dhaka for Washington yesterday to brief the State Department officials about the ongoing political challenges ahead of the general election in Bangladesh, which is due in a few months.

Diplomatic sources said Mozena would also brief them about his October 23-26 visit to New Delhi where he had talks with Indian External Affairs Ministry officials, including Foreign Secretary Sujatha Singh, on Bangladesh's current political challenges.

The envoy is also expected to talk with US government officials regarding restoration of Bangladesh's trade benefits in the US market under the GSP facility which the

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Govt to create new welfare fund for journos: Inu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will create a trust fund to provide financial assistance to journalists in times of their need, Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu announced yesterday.

The trust fund will replace the current Journalists' Assistance Fund.

In this regard, a proposal will be placed in the cabinet meeting on Monday, he told a meeting with Sangbadik-Sramik-Karmachari-Oikya Parishad (SSKOP) at his office.

If approved, the proposal will be placed as a bill in the current parliament session for its passage into law, the minister said.

Inu said the government would provide a block allocation for the Journalists' Assistance Trust Fund but did not specify its size.

In his speech, the minister also said the government might declare the newspaper sector as an industry next week.

About the recent attacks on journalists and media houses, Inu said, "To me, attacks on the media are tantamount to attacks on democracy." Action will be taken against the attackers, he said.

Speaking on the occasion, Ruhul Amin Gazi, president of a faction of the Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ), urged the information minister to take an initiative to allow operation of the media which have been shut by the government.

Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul, president of another faction of the BFUJ, also spoke.

Court rejects remand for Tuku

He was shown arrested in two cases over May 5 mayhem

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected remand for former Chhatra Dal president Sultan Salahuddin Tuku and sent him to jail after he was produced before it in connection with a case filed against him on charge of assaulting police on October 21.

On October 21, police arrested Tuku from BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's convoy during a scuffle between police and the BNP chairperson's personal staff.

The court rejected a 10-day remand prayer in connection with the case filed on charge of attempting to murder a police constable during the scuffle.

Tuku was also shown arrested yesterday in two

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