



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visits victims of arson attacks during the recent BNP-led opposition's blockades and hartals at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday.

PHOTO: BSS

## ICT NOTICE ON ZAFRULLAH, MAHFUZ ULLAH 51 eminent citizens express concern

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fifty one eminent citizens yesterday expressed concern over the show cause notice served on Zafrullah Chowdhury, Mahfuz Ullah and others to explain why contempt of court proceedings should not be initiated against them for commenting on the trial.

International Crimes Tribunal-1 issued the notice on September 26 on five Channel 24 officials and three others, two days after the prosecution submitted a petition.

The petition drew attention to the September 18 episode of Channel 24's talk show "Muktobaak" where Zafrullah, trustee of Gonoshasthaya Kendra, and Mahfuz, secretary general of Centre for Sustainable Development, were present.

It said both Zafrullah and Mahfuz had claimed the rights of war crimes accused Salauddin Quader Chowdhury had been violated as the tribunal did not allow him to produce witnesses. The tribunal fixed December 24 to hear the reply.

In a joint statement, the eminent citizens opined that such initiatives by the tribunal are threatening to free thought, creativity and freedom of speech and the mass media.

They said they failed to comprehend why Zafrullah's speech was now being considered contemptuous as questions over not allowing Salauddin to produce witnesses were raised in some national dailies much earlier.

They observed that to keep the war crimes trial above all controversy, expressing "logical concern" over the trial's different aspects is a constitutionally recognised fundamental right of every citizen.

They stated to have noticed with concern that the tribunal, willingly or on the basis of petitions, had issued contempt of court proceedings against some persons in the last few months.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## Two on-duty Rtv journos arrested on charge of 'instigating bomb explosion'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two on-duty journalists of Rtv were arrested by police allegedly for provoking pro-blockade picketers yesterday into exploding cocktails in the capital's Kamrangirchar.

Kamrangirchar police arrested reporter Tamjid Rony and cameraman Prashanto Modok at Kurar Ghat where they went to cover a pro-blockade rally around 7:30am.

Police produced them before a Dhaka court with a ten-day remand prayer while it granted four days.

Officer-in-Charge Sheikh Mohsin Alam of Kamrangirchar Police Station said the duo were spotted by locals while they were inciting the picketers to explode cocktails.

Then the locals caught them and handed them over to police, he added.

Later, a local shop-keeper, Shah Alam, filed a

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## RANA PLAZA COLLAPSE

# Rescuer turned victim seeks way back to normalcy

ZYMA ISLAM

It was a spontaneous decision, coming to the aid of others in distress irrespective of the dangers involved. But never did he imagine that it would end up in a personal tragedy, crippling and turning him penniless, at the mercy of others.

The morning of April 24 was like of any other day for Mohammad Sohel. He was working as a knitting machine operator in a garment factory adjacent to Rana Plaza in Savar.

But as the clock struck 8:45am, the nine-storey Rana Plaza came crashing down, trapping thousands of workers employed in its five garment units.

A natural instinct to save his two cousins



Mohammad Sohel

working there kicked in and the 23-year-old sprung to action without waiting for firefighters.

Scaling the layers of floors, piled like pancakes, using protruding rods, he searched for the fourth floor where he thought their workstations were. He found one who miraculously survived the collapse pretty much unscathed.

Although the other cousin was nowhere in sight, Sohel knew he could not turn his back on others in need of help.

"There were other volunteers... together we pulled out one body after another, irrespective of whether they were dead or alive,"

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

## SQ Chy's lawyer denied bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday again rejected bail petition of Barrister AKM Fakhru Islam, a lawyer of convicted war criminal Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, in a case filed for leaking the draft verdict against Salauddin.

The case was filed against two tribunal employees -- cleaner Nayon Ali and office assistant Faruk Hossain -- and advocate Mehedi Hassan, an assistant of Fakhru.

A metropolitan magistrate on November 24 for the first time rejected a bail petition of Fakhru and placed him on a four-day remand in the case.

The draft verdict was leaked a day before the International Crimes Tribunal -1, on October 1, sentenced Salauddin to death for committing crimes against humanity and genocide during the 1971 Liberation War.

Nayon Ali and Faruk Hossain were arrested early November. They gave confessional statements before magistrates in which they mentioned Fakhru's name.

Detectives arrested Fakhru in the capital on November 20. The next day, he was sent to jail.



A dummy airplane burns during an emergency exercise the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh organised at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: COURTESY



Opposition activists hurl rocks at police (not in picture) in Ispahani Mor area in Chittagong city yesterday on the second day of the opposition alliance's blockade during which city BNP also enforced a dawn-to-dusk hartal demanding release of its leaders and activists.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

## Two bodies found in Khulna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Two bodies were found in Khulna city and Rupsha upazila of the district yesterday.

In the city's Goalkhali graveyard, police recovered the body of Jesmine, 20, with the legs tied with a rope, from a sack. The body was clad in a Borkha (veil).

Jesmine, daughter of Rashed Morol, of Rupsha upazila, went missing three days ago, said Khalishpur police.

Meanwhile, police recovered the body of Yasin Molla, 32, of Bagmara, with several injury marks from a waterbody at Pathorghata village in Rupsha upazila.

Yasin might have been strangled, Rupsha police suspect.

The bodies were sent to Khulna Medical College Hospital for autopsies.

Two cases were filed with the concerned police stations.

## Shahjalal airport tests emergency response

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An aircraft with 110 passengers crash lands at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, igniting a massive fireball and engulfing the whole scene with black smoke. Emergency teams extinguish the fire in 15 minutes, but by then 10 lives have been lost and 60 others are injured.

This accident and response was an emergency exercise the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (Caab) organised yesterday to test the airfield's ability to respond to a disastrous scenario through quick coordination among over 20 agencies.

The staged scenario was played out using dummies to simulate the passengers and the time to douse the fire on the mock airplane,

owned by an imaginary airline named DEF, and bring the "passengers" out as fast as possible was recorded.

International Civil Aviation Organisation made mandatory holding such controlled exercises in every international airport every two years.

After the exercise, Caab Chairman Air Vice Marshal Mahmud Hossain said although the exercise took 15 minutes, the emergency management teams, fire trucks and ambulances may take some more time to deal with an actual incident.

However, through this exercise 22 to 24 agencies working at the airport will be able to control such disasters in a more coordinated way, he added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## CONFINED IN IRAQ FOR NEARLY 10 MONTHS Debts now burden returnees

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Following nearly 10 months of confinement in an Iraqi labour accommodation, 11 of 27 Bangladeshis have finally returned home, but now face an uncertain future with large debts.

"It seems we can breathe fresh air under the open sky now," said Zakir Hossain, 41, one of the 11 who landed at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in the capital at midnight on Saturday.

He said their employer provided them no salary, but just the air tickets. The rest 16 are scheduled to be repatriated by December 10.

The 27 construction workers went to Iraq in February and March through four Bangladeshi recruiting agencies -- Morning Sun Enterprise, Meghna Trade International, East Bengal Overseas and Idea International -- spending Tk 3 to Tk 4 lakh.

The employing Iraqi company, M Kodja Co General Trading, which agreed to pay a monthly salary of US \$350, failed to start its construction project and kept the workers confined in the compound in Najaf, 160 kilometres off Baghdad.

Zakir, who hails from Barisal, said they stayed in the tin-shed accommodation in a desert where they faced extreme heat and cold while being served mostly lentil and chapatti all throughout the 10 months.

"We could endure everything had we been provided jobs. We repeatedly urged our embassy in Baghdad, but in vain," said Shaon Ali, another worker.

Now that they are home, they face the brunt of loans that they took from various sources to finance their migration.

Shaon said of the Tk 3.7 lakh that he spent to go to Iraq, he borrowed Tk 80,000 from the Probashi Kallyan Bank and the rest from relatives. Including the interest, the loan by this time has accumulated to around Tk 5 lakh.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## তুমি জাগলেই জাগবে বাংলাদেশ

আর দেশকে জানলেই জাগবে তুমি।

দেশকে জানতে নিয়মিত দেখো টিভি কুইজ প্রতিযোগিতা 'বাংলাদেশ ফাস্ট'।



-এ সোম ও মঙ্গলবার, রাত ৯.০৫ মিনিটে

এবার নিয়মিত খোঁজো

