

Shariatpur 'Razakar' sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
International Crimes Tribunal-1 sent to jail a war crimes suspect, Suliman Mollah, whom police arrested in his Shariatpur sadar upazila residence on Sunday and produced yesterday around 3:00pm. Following a prosecution petition, the tribunal issued two arrest warrants on Sunday morning, one over Suliman's alleged involvement in crimes committed in Shariatpur during the 1971 Liberation War. The prosecution declined disclosing the other suspect's identity apprehending he might go into hiding. The tribunal also directed the prosecution to submit on July 30 a report on the progress of investigations against the two, initiated by the tribunal's investigation agency in April.

The prosecution says Suliman was an organiser of Shariatpur Peace Committee and Razakar Bahini, the Pakistani occupation army's auxiliary forces. The other suspect was a Razakar Bahini member in Shariatpur. **BAGERHAT RAZAKAR'S CASE**

Earlier, a prosecutor started placing closing arguments on four of five charges, including genocide and killing, against alleged Bagerhat Razakar Sheikh Sirajul Haque. Prosecutor Sheikh Mosfeq Kabir said four witnesses, including two eyewitnesses Mallik Khalilur Rahman and Moniruzzaman, described how Razakars led by Sirajul killed seven Hindus at Chulka Bazar on October 14, 1971.

The prosecutor also claimed that the defence could not discredit the testimonies during cross-examinations.

The three-member tribunal led by Justice M Enayetur Rahim with members Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim and Justice Anwarul Haque adjourned proceedings until today when the prosecution would resume placing arguments.



A border is put up warning drivers of piling work going on for the construction of Moghbazar-Mouchak Flyover in the capital. The work has narrowed down the roads and created potholes causing immense sufferings for commuters which has worsened during the rainy season. The photo was taken yesterday at Rajarbagh Police Lines in the capital.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

AUG 21 GRENADE ATTACK 4-party ministers were involved

AL MP testifies to speedy tribunal
COURT CORRESPONDENT

Awami League lawmaker AFM Bahauddin Nasim yesterday testified to a Dhaka court that Hawa Bhaban and several ministers of the then BNP-led four-party government were involved in the grenade attack on August 21, 2004.

He said the attack, on an AL rally on Bangabandhu Avenue, was solely aimed at killing his party president Sheikh Hasina, then opposition leader, and other leaders.

It killed 24 people, including senior AL leader Ivy Rahman. BNP leader Tarique Rahman discussed the attack with militants at Hawa Bhaban, often called the then alternative powerhouse of the four-party alliance, while a minister met with militants at his government residence, he said.

The then state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar was involved as an "instigator", Nasim said. He said several grenades exploded while he was listening to Hasina's address, protesting then government's "terrorism".

"I was also seriously injured in the grenade attack," Nasim said, adding he had hundreds of splinters lodged in the body. Later, he had most of them removed in New Delhi but still there are over 40 splinters inside his body, he said.

Nasim said he went to Motijheel Police Station to file a case on October 20, 2004 but it was recorded as a general diary. "I learned the grenade attack was state-sponsored."

Another victim, Kazi Shahanara Yeasmin, also testified. The Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 is set to resume hearings today.

Checking excessive pesticide use urgent

Nutritionists, food safety experts tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Excessive use of pesticides in crops, mainly vegetables and fruits, is a matter of grave concern that requires the authorities' urgent attention, said nutritionists and food safety experts at a discussion yesterday.

"While certain pesticides need to be sprayed twice or thrice on mangoes, farmers often spray it 12 to 15 times," said Syed Nurul Alam, head of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute's (BARI) entomology division.

The mean frequency of pesticide use was reported to be highest in summer country bean, summer tomato, summer brinjal, summer cabbage, okra, string bean and chilli, he said.

Nari Oikkyia Parishad organised the discussion on Bangladesh's food safety scenario in the capital's Moni Singh-Farhad Trust Bhaban.

Nurul said after mango, the frequency was highest on litchi, banana

and papaya, led by farmers of Jessore followed by those of Narsingdi, Comilla, Bogra, Pabna and Rajshahi.

Recent BARI research found 91 percent of chilli samples contaminated with pesticide residues, especially of organophosphorus, above the permissible level in 80 percent of samples.

Of dry fish samples, 63.3 percent was similarly contaminated above permissible levels, especially with banned chemicals DDT and Eldrin, said Nurul.

Many studies link chemical pesticide exposure to infertility, cancer, birth defects and brain and nervous system damage while allergies and asthma can also be exacerbated, he said, adding that pesticide poisoning causes around two lakh deaths annually.

Prof Nazma Shaheen of the Institute of Nutrition and Food Science, Dhaka University, said their studies found excessive levels of lead in mango and vegetables.

She observed the number of children

with autism to have risen in recent years, very likely to have been caused by chemical use in food products.

Dr Shah Monir Hossain, senior adviser, UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), said use of ripening agents like calcium carbide also threatened public health.

He said strong monitoring of pesticide companies was an imperative to check misuse and that FAO was working on how sanitary inspectors could play an effective role in checking food adulteration and contamination.

Speakers also suggested development and expansion of bio-pesticides, promotion of beneficial insects that kill harmful insects and raising massive awareness among farmers to prevent overuse of pesticides.

Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution Director Kamal Prasad Das and Nari Oikkyia Parishad President Lutfun Nesa Khan also spoke.

AL leader shot over DSCC polls rivalry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An Awami League leader was shot yesterday allegedly by some Jubo League men in the capital's Bangshal over rivalry centring Dhaka South City Corporation election.

Md Ripon, 38, organising secretary of ward no-35 unit, was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

His brother Lavlu said, "Some 15 Jubo League men led by the unit's General Secretary Ashikur Rahman Ashik carried out the attack in Malitola at the behest of DSCC Councillor Abu Sayeed, who was an AL rebel candidate in the election, in revenge for our campaign in favour of AL nominated candidate Golam Mostafa."

Mostafa admitted that Ripon was among his hundreds of campaigners. Sayeed and Ashikur could not be reached over phone despite several attempts.

NEWS IN brief

2 to die for killing man in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A Rangpur court on Sunday sentenced a man and his son to death in a case filed over killing his elder brother in 2003.

The convicts are Osman Ali, 72, and Mohsin Ali, 35, of Ekbarpur village in the district. Mohsin is on the run.

According to the prosecution, Osman and Mohsin hacked Nabi Uddin, 75, to death over a land dispute.

Ihsanul made PM's press secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ihsanul Karim, former press secretary to President Abdul Hamid, was appointed the new press secretary of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for one year.

Karim, the chief editor and managing director of the state-run news agency Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS), will replace AKM Shameem Chowdhury, said PM's Assistant Press Secretary Asif Kabir.

Yoga Day to be observed June 21

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre in collaboration with the United Nations in Bangladesh, and Bangladesh Yoga Association will observe the first International Yoga Day on June 21 in the capital's National Museum.

Gowher Rizvi, international relations adviser to Bangladesh's prime minister, will attend the event as chief guest, said an Indian High Commission press release. Entry to the event starting at 5:00pm is free.

Seminar on future of secularism held

CITY DESK

A seminar on Future of Secularism was held at Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) in the capital yesterday.

Prof Ali Riaz of politics and government at Illinois State University, USA, was the key-note speaker at the seminar, organised by Bangla Academy, School of Liberal Arts and Social Science of IUB and Mahmuda Khatun Siddiqua, Abdul Ahad O Hamida Khatun Smriti Parishad in memory of Late National Professor AF Salahuddin Ahmed.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Shabbuddin Ahmed Chowdhury, father of Niketon Society's President Shamsul Arefin Chowdhury, died of old age complications on Sunday night. He was 86.

Shabbuddin, the first Bengali general manager of Karnaphuli Paper Mills, retired as a general manager from Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation in 1990.

He left behind his wife, and three sons and three daughters. A doa mahfil will be held today at Miabari in Feni's Ahmedpur.

AL, BNP hope for stronger ties with China

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Both ruling Awami League and BNP yesterday hoped for stronger ties with China, after leaders of the two parties met with a visiting delegation of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in Dhaka.

The six-member team, headed by CPC Vice-minister Guo Yezhou, arrived at the invitation of AL.

Terming China a close friend, AL general secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam said Dhaka wanted to deepen the relations with Beijing.

"Though there was some sort of setback in the relation between Bangladesh and China during the Liberation War, a friendly relation now exists between the two countries," he told reporters after meeting with the Chinese delegation at the Sonargaon hotel.

After the team met with BNP chief Khaleda Zia at her Gulshan residence, BNP standing committee member Abdul Moyeen Khan said China expected political stability and peaceful atmosphere in Bangladesh for the sake of its democratic progress and overall development.

Worker dies from electrocution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cg

A worker died after being electrocuted at an under construction building at Boubazar Masterpool in Bakalia area of Chittagong city yesterday.

The deceased Saddam, 25, of Meycesinghad was working when he came in contact with a leaked electric wire around 10:00am, said fellow workers. He was declared brought dead at Chittagong Medical College Hospital.



Participants of "Protecting Human Rights Program: Gender-Sensitive Reporting-Role of Journalist" organised by USAID, Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association, and Plan International Bangladesh at Tawfiq Aziz Khan Seminar Hall, The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

ZIA ORPHANAGE CASE Khaleda seeks expunge of IO's deposition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia on Sunday filed a petition with the High Court seeking directives on the lower court to expunge the deposition given by the investigation officer of the Zia Orphanage Trust graft case in her absence for six days.

Mentioning the rules which stipulate taking witnesses' depositions only in presence of the accused, Khaleda also prayed to the HC to record a fresh statement of the IO, Harun-or-Rashid, also ACC's director, in her presence. She requested the HC to stay the case proceedings until disposal of the rule. The ACC in 2009 filed the case for embezzlement of over Tk 2.1 crore.

Get child workers back to school DU sees another day of protests

FROM PAGE 3
on average works 14 hours per day and earns Tk 509 per month, it said.

Speakers stressed the need for a safety net for the urban poor, updated data on child labour, and a separate directorate for children. Munira Sultana, project coordinator, ILO, however, said ILO and BBS would publish survey results on the issue at the end of this year.

Abul Kashem, joint secretary at the labour and employment ministry, emphasised increasing awareness about child labour and taking legal action against individuals and

institutions who employ children.

"People employ children because their labour is cheap and they cannot bargain," said lawmaker Israfil Alam, adding poverty, social norms and practices and lack of education were the main causes of child labour.

The MP asked NGOs to work with the government to bring out the 6.5 lakh children who work in nine sectors in Dhaka under hazardous conditions, which include leather and chemical factories, stone breaking, motor garages, welding, hotels and restaurants, and book binding.

FROM PAGE 4
submitted both at the PMO and provided to the home minister till date.

Demands have mainly centred around bringing to justice the Pahela Baishakh assaulters, a staff allegedly responsible for molesting a class I student of Mohammadpur Preparatory School on May 4 and those who gang-raped a Garo woman in a moving microbus in the capital's Kuril on May 21.

On their part, police have declared cash awards after releasing

photos from CCTV footage of some of the Pahela Baishakh assaulters but are yet to arrest the accused school staff. Over the gang-rape, two men arrested by Rapid Action Battalion have confessed.

Yesterday, the 50 or so demonstrators staged a sit-in after their procession from Aparajeya Bangla was stopped by police at Shabbagh around 1:30pm.

Prof Akmal Hussain who recently retired from DU's international relations department urged all to con-

tinue protests, accusing state authorities of being negligent in dealing with such offences.

The sit-in speakers also alleged that such crimes were on the rise for a culture of impunity along with a lack of accountability on the law enforcers' part.

Assistant Prof Afroza Bulbul of mass communication and journalism, Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal (Marxist) leaders and Nari Mukti Kendra President Eva Mojmutter also spoke.

1,244 women elected to reserved

FROM PAGE 4

continued.

One of the injured persons was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital in critical condition.

Khalilur Rahman won the poll, said officials.

spondent reported.

Besides, the Election Commission (EC) suspended election to one seat in Habiganj sadar upazila due to complexities over ballot papers. The election to the posts of one chairman and two vice chairpersons in each of the country's 783 upazila parishads was held between February last year and early this year for the fourth time in Bangladesh.

But formation of the upazila parishads remained incomplete, as the member posts reserved for women were vacant.

Nahid to consider univ teachers'

FROM PAGE 3

secretaries, the same salary, allowance and other benefits have to be provided to senior teachers. "Similarly, professors will enjoy the status, salaries, allowances and other benefits enjoyed by the secretaries," the delegation said.

The salary of associate professors, assistant professors and lecturers will have to be fixed in that order, said Prof

Maksud, Dhaka University Teachers' Association general secretary.

FBUTA President Prof Farid Uddin Ahmed said the government should keep its Vision-2021 promise to provide them a separate pay structure.

He said, "The teachers should either be duly respected or completely excluded from the warrant of precedence. We will not say anything if we

are excluded."

Nahid said the issue had put him in a quagmire.

"It is not the government's final decision. The finance and public administration ministries are reviewing the matter," he said, urging not to launch any movement. He assured informing President Abdul Hamid, chancellor of all universities.