

Star editor

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represented the Star editor.

The court had asked Mahfuz Anam to appear before it yesterday after advocate Siddiqur Rahman, treasurer of Madaripur Awami League, filed the libel suit on February 18.

It is one of the 82 lawsuits that have been filed against Mahfuz Anam in 56 districts since February 9. The cases include 17 pleas for bringing sedition charges against him.

The case spree began after the editor at a TV talk show on February 3 made an introspective comment about a lapse in his editorial judgment in publishing some reports, based on information given by the Taskforce Interrogation Cell during the 2007-08 caretaker government rule, without being able to verify those independently.

The cases have drawn condemnation from local and foreign journalists and their unions as well as human rights bodies.

Christian

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The body was sent to Kurigram Sadar Hospital morgue for an autopsy.

Nazrul Islam, resident doctor of the hospital, said Hossain's throat was cut and there were hacking marks in his neck and back.

He died of excessive bleeding, said the doctor.

SP Tabarak, who visited the spot following the incident, said police collected evidence from the spot.

Filing of a case was underway, police said.

Sirajul Islam, sub-inspector of Kurigram Sadar Police Station, said police picked up three people for interrogation in connection with the murder. He, however, refused to disclose their identities.

A guard of honour was given to Hossain in front of his home in the town by the police and the local administration around 5:45pm. Later, his body was sent to his village home at Sitaijhar for burial.

Father of two daughters and a son, Hossain converted to Christianity in 1999, said his family members.

It could not be immediately known whether Hossain had changed his family name after converting to Christianity. He was known to the locals by his Muslim name.

He had been living at his Garijpara house for the last two decades.

The victim's son Ruhul Amin Azad said he was clueless about who killed his father, as Hossain had no enemies.

Azad, however, said the family has disputes with locals over ownership of a piece of land.

He also said a person identifying himself as Abul Bashir rented a room of their house in the first week of this month.

Azad said Bashir told them that he was from Rangpur Mahiganj.

Although he initially said he would live with his family, he lived alone.

Bashir left the house a few days ago saying he would bring his family but had not returned, the victim's son said, adding that they found Bashir's mobile phone switched off.

On February 14, unidentified criminals hacked Abdul Razzak, 48, a Shia homeopathy doctor, to death in Kaliganj upazila of Jhenidah.

Razzak used to give religious sermons to some 20 followers at his pharmacy on Ganna Road in Kaliganj municipality, said police.

Just after dawn on February 21, criminals slit the throat of priest Jogeswar Dasadhikari of Sri Sri Shonto Gaurio temple in Debiganj of Panchagarh and fled the scene firing shots and exploding homemade bombs, which injured two devotees.

The attackers fled the scene on a motorbike.

Global terror outfit Islamic State (IS) claimed responsibility for the two incidents, according to US-based SITE Intelligence Group.

However, The Daily Star could not independently verify both the claims.

Our Kurigram correspondent contributed to this report.

New architecture

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The Public Works Department will implement the project.

Nasir said the idea was any person would be able to go to any prominent place inside the Boloy without facing any barriers.

The prominent places that will come under the Boloy include the national museum, public library, Faculty of Fine Arts, Nazrul's grave, central mosque and central library of Dhaka University, Raju sculpture, Swoparjito Swadhinata, Milon memorial, TSC, Bangla Academy, Shishu Academy, Old Arts Faculty Building of DU, historic Amtola gate, Central Shaheed Minar, Tin Natar Majar, Dhaka Gate, Jatiya Press Club, Shilpakala Academy, Institution of Engineers, International Mother Language Institute, Bailey Road Natok Saroni, Dhaka Officers' Club, Bangladesh Betar Bhaban, and Dhaka Club.

First case of Zika found

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transmitted to anyone.

Prof Mahmudur Rahman said they conducted dengue surveillance in 2013-14 after collecting 101 blood samples from IEDCR, Dhaka Medical College, Chittagong Medical College, Uttara Adhunik Medical College and Khulna Medical College.

As Zika virus has been spreading quickly in different parts of the world, mostly in the South American and Asia Pacific regions, the IEDCR tested the samples and one blood sample came positive for Zika virus on March 13, he told The Daily Star.

"We are not sure how and from where the virus got to Bangladesh," he said, asking people not to panic but to be careful about mosquito bites.

The Zika virus spreads through aedes mosquitoes, the same species that carry the viruses of dengue and chikungunya. It may also transmit from infected pregnant mother to child and through intercourse with infected male partner, the IEDCR says.

The most common symptoms of Zika virus disease are fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). The illness is usually mild and symptoms last from several days to a week, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of the US.

Zika fever in pregnant women is associated with microcephaly, but it is unclear whether the virus is the cause. In adults, an association with the

neurologic condition Guillain-Barré syndrome has been found.

According to the WHO, Zika disease usually requires no specific treatment. People sick with Zika should get plenty of rest, drink enough fluids and treat pain and fever with common medicines.

If symptoms worsen, the affected should seek medical care and advice. There is currently no vaccine available, it says.

"Prevention is the best way. In this case, the authorities need to take strong measures to destroy the breeding places of mosquitoes," Prof Mahmudur Rahman said.

People, especially pregnant women, need to be careful so that mosquitoes cannot bite them, the IEDCR warns.

Using mosquito nets at night, wearing long-sleeved clothes and trousers, using nets with doors and windows, using anti-mosquito spray and most importantly, destroying or removing any breeding grounds for mosquitoes are some of the preventive measures, it adds.

The city corporations and other relevant authorities need to work rigorously in this regard, Prof Mahmudur Rahman said.

Prof Deen Mohammad Noorul Huq, DG, Directorate General of Health Services, and Prof KAM Shamsuzzaman, director (Communicable Disease Control), DGHS, were also present at the press conference.

Game on '71 war

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downloaded over 2.5 lakh times in just three months since December 16 when it was released. It ranked top in the Google Play Store Bangladesh Zone with a 4.8 rating out of 5.

Developed by PortBliss, a BUET-based freelance game development unit, "Heroes of '71: Retaliation" has included woman guerrilla. The developer has the plan to take this game forward. Heroes of '71's 3rd version release is already in the production pipeline and is expected to be released on December 16 this year when people will be able to download the game from the Google Play store.

A group of 15 former and current students of Buet and Dhaka University, including Shafayat Latif, Masha Mustakim, Apratim Chakrabarty, Arifur Rahman, Rakibul Alam, and Abid Jahangir Razin developed the game aiming to educate the new generation on the Liberation War.

Talking to The Daily Star Razin said guerrilla warfare, the main phenomenon of the Liberation War, has been introduced first in this game. Moreover, inclusion of female guerrilla reveals the history that male and female working together liberated the country.

Latif said the main objective of building this game is to promote the spirit of the Liberation War among the new generation. They will think anew about the Liberation War of our country through playing and learning, he added.

He said the first game started with Pakistani occupation forces brutal killings, torture, rape and Bangabandhu's speech.

"We have a gaming community who are used to playing games. We thought of developing a game on the Liberation War to make people, who love to play games, learn and from that concept we developed the first game," said Latif, a former student of Buet.

Acceptable, peaceful

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"The union parishad polls were definitely acceptable as you [the media] have showed [everyone] long queues of voters at the polling stations," he told journalists at a post-polls press briefing at the EC media centre in the city.

"Your correspondents said the elections were free and fair."

Voters, including women, turned up at the polling centres to cast their votes in a festive mood, he mentioned.

Rakibuddin, however, admitted that there were some stray incidents of violence and the EC had to cancel voting at over 50 centres across the country for irregularities and ballot stuffing.

"...we had to suspend voting at some centres. I had to do that. If I had not done that, you would have asked me why I didn't take any action," he said.

The CEC blasted members of law enforcement agencies for not being able to stop ballot-stuffing at some centres.

He said ballot-stuffing took place at a few polling centres on the night before the polling day which is not acceptable.

Law enforcers opened fire in two places and made arrests in one. But in many areas they did not take any action, he added.

Asked about the BNP's demand for re-polling in 50 unions, the CEC said it is not possible for anybody to hide anything from the media as technology has advanced a lot.

He called upon people to come forward to stop electoral violence in the country.

Rakibuddin expressed concern for the victims of yesterday's violence. He said two election officers were shot while on their way to a polling centre in Hatिया of Noakhali. Besides, an Ansar member was killed in Barisal when his own rifle fired accidentally.

As many as 717 unions went to polls in the first phase yesterday. In the subsequent phases, elections are due in 643 unions on March 31 and in 681 unions on April 23.

Polls to around 2,200 unions will be held in three more phases until June.

POLLING SUSPENDED
EC officials yesterday said the commission suspended voting at 65 polling stations due to violence and irregularities.

Of the polling stations, 14 are in Satkhira while the rest in Khulna, Pirojpur, Laxmipur, Barguna, Bhola, Comilla, Noakhali, Patuakhali, Brahmanbaria, Cox's Bazar, Barisal

and Sylhet.

The commission last night decided to ask the police authorities to suspend the cops who were deployed at the 14 polling stations in Satkhira, said EC sources.

The EC will scrutinise the ballot papers of the 14 centres to determine which candidates' supporters stamped the ballots. Cases will be filed against those candidates whose supporters stuffed ballot boxes.

Tk 1.9 crore

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office drawer and accounts, the bank said in a statement yesterday.

In order to get back the rest of the money, the bank has taken an advance cheque from the banker and also the documents of a Rayer Bazar apartment purchased under his wife's name.

The bank suspended Hasan temporarily yesterday and filed a lawsuit with Motijheel Police Station against him, said the statement.

The crime is the latest to hit the country's state banks. Earlier, financial irregularities involving thousands of crores of taka at banks, including BASIC Bank and Sonali Bank, shook the country's banking sector.

Janata Bank Managing Director Md Abdus Salam said, "Clients will not be affected because of the embezzlement."

The bank's vigilance team detected the fraudulence and recovered most of the stolen money, he said.

Trial of Tareque

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lawyer Chandan Sarker, another victim.

There is no legal bar for the trial court to continue the proceedings of the cases against Tareque following the HC orders, Deputy Attorney General Shaikh AKM Moniruzzaman Kabir told The Daily Star.

Nazrul and his four associates, and lawyer Chandan and his driver were abducted from a Narayanganj road on April 27 in 2014. Their bodies were found floating in the Shitalakkhya river later.

Selina filed a case with Fatullah Police Station on April 28, 2014, and Bijoy lodged another case with the same police station later.

In February this year, Tareque submitted the petitions to the HC, praying to it to scrap the trial proceedings against him in the cases.

Polls free

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She also claimed that the election was 99.72 percent fair as voting of only 18 centres out of over 6,500 had been suspended. The AL leader thanked voters, law enforcers, and officials related to the elections for making the polls peaceful and fair.

Dipu Moni also came down heavily on the BNP for "resorting to falsehood" regarding the Election Commission.

Even though she claimed that voting of only 18 centres had been suspended, the chief election commissioner said voting of 56 centres had been suspended over allegations of irregularities.

BNP Joint Secretary General Rizvi Ahmed, while speaking at a press briefing at BNP's Nayapalton central office, said, "We're receiving information that most voting centres of 717 Union Parishads have been captured. We also have information about vote rigging, ballot box snatching, stuffing, driving out of our agents, and their assault, intimidation of voters, and other massive irregularities."

He said the first phase of the UP polls have once again proved that no fair election is possible under the current regime.

BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir said the government was holding a farcical election "under a partisan Election Commission" and was trying to make a fool out of the country's people and the world.

Fakhru, while talking to reporters after placing wreaths at the grave of late president Ziaur Rahman, said they took part in the union parishad elections as part of their "ongoing democratic movement".

He BNP yesterday demanded the EC holds re-elections in at least 50 unions. A party delegation, led by BNP Vice-Chairman Abdullah AL Noman and its Joint Secretary General Mohammad Shahjahan, placed the demand while meeting the CEC.

The BNP leaders told the reporters afterwards that if the EC held the re-election, the number of polling centre capture would reduce in the next phases.

Jatiya Party said AL men were engaged in vote rigging, capturing ballot boxes and driving away of their election agents from polling stations of over 35 union parishads and demanded the elections at those UPs be suspended immediately.

A JP delegation led by Senior Joint Secretary Rezaul Islam Bhuiyan filed a complaint with the Election Commission Secretariat in this regard.

"While meeting him, Election Commissioner Shahnaazwaz phoned the superintendent of police and returning officers of Barisal, Satkhira and Pirojpur. But the situation remained unchanged," SM Foysal Chisty, a JP leader present at the meeting, told The Daily Star.

Liberation War

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have been brought to justice in those countries, added the sources.

Meanwhile, a delegation of the Law Commission, led by its Chairman Justice ABM Khairul Haque, called on President Abdul Hamid at the Bangabhaban yesterday.

The commission handed over its annual report of 2015 and also the draft of the law to the president, commission member M Shah Alam told this newspaper.

Copies of the draft have been sent to the law and liberation war affairs ministries, he added.

The commission earlier distributed the draft among around 70 resource persons, including some researchers and jurists, requesting them to give their opinions on the proposed law, a commission official told this correspondent on Friday on condition of anonymity.

The draft was prepared after soliciting opinions from researchers and jurists, he noted.

Several pro-liberation organisations and war crimes researchers had long been demanding the government enact the law. The demand was renewed following the controversial comments of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia on the number of Liberation War martyrs.

Khaleda, also a former prime minister, at a programme in December last year said: "There are controversies over how many were martyred during the Liberation War." Her party colleague Goyeswar Chandra Roy also made similar comments.

On January 28, Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee submitted a 12-point demand to the government that included enactment of Liberation War Denial Crimes Act.

Talking to this newspaper on that day, Law Minister Anisul Huq said there should be a law against the denial of Liberation War related issues. "I have heard that the Law Commission has prepared a draft."

The ministry will look into the matter once the draft is available to it, he added.

To prevent distortion of history, 14 European nations enacted Holocaust denial act under which denial of the genocide figure of World War-II is a punishable offence. Even the countries including Austria and Germany, which were among the perpetrators of the Holocaust, have banned Holocaust denial, experts said.

Blasts rattle Brussels

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Belgian authorities had been on alert after Abdeslam, Europe's most wanted man, told investigators he had been planning an attack on Brussels.

An online news agency affiliated with IS said the group was behind the attacks.

"Islamic State fighters carried out a series of bombings with explosive belts and devices on Tuesday, targeting an airport and a central metro station in the centre of the Belgian capital Brussels, a country participating in the international coalition against the Islamic State," the Aamaq news agency said.

Hundreds of flights and trains were cancelled as security across Europe was tightened after the bombings, which Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel branded "blind, violent and cowardly".

"This is a day of tragedy, a black day," Michel said. His spokesman announced three days of national mourning.

VIOLATION OF ISLAMIC TEACHINGS
Sunni Islam's leading seat of learning, Al-Azhar, said yesterday's attacks in Brussels "violate the tolerant teachings of Islam," and urged the international community to confront the "epidemic" of terrorism.

"Al-Azhar strongly condemns these terrorist attacks. These heinous crimes violate the tolerant teachings of Islam," the Cairo-based Al-Azhar said in a statement.

"If the international community does not unite to confront this epidemic, the corrupt will not stop from committing heinous crimes against the innocent."

THREE SUSPECTS WANTED
Shortly after the airport blasts hit at around 8:00am (0700 GMT), a third explosion rocked Maalbeek metro station, in the heart of the city's EU quarter, as rush-hour commuters were making their way to work.

There are fears more suspects could still be at large in Brussels, home to the headquarters of both NATO and the European Union, Belgian Foreign Minister Didier Reynders warned.

Belgian authorities published surveillance camera images showing three male suspects pushing trollies with suitcases past the check-in area. Two have dark hair and one is wearing a hat.

Pierre Meys, spokesman for the Brussels fire brigade, told AFP at least 14 people had been killed at the airport, while Brussels mayor Yvan Mayeur said "around 20" died in the underground blast.

Witnesses described horrific scenes at the airport, with victims lying in pools of blood, their limbs blown off. There were chaotic scenes as passengers fled in panic.

"A man shouted a few words in Arabic and then I heard a huge blast," airport baggage security officer Alphonse Lyoura told AFP, his hands bloodied.

An army team later blew up a suspect package at the shuttered airport, with media reporting police had found an unexploded suicide vest.

Authorities later said a third bomb had failed to explode at the airport.

Airports across Europe swiftly announced they were boosting security, while across the Atlantic, New York and Washington ordered security personnel to crowded areas and train stations.

Britain is advising its citizens to avoid all but essential travel to Brussels, Prime Minister David Cameron's spokeswoman said.

'WHOLE OF EUROPE HIT'
Leaders across Europe reacted with outrage to the attack on the EU's institutional capital, urging closer counter-terror cooperation on a conti-

nent that has been on high alert for months.

"The whole of Europe has been hit," said French President Francois Hollande.

British Prime Minister David Cameron warned of the "very real" terrorist threat faced by countries across Europe, declaring: "We will never left these terrorists win."

US President Barack Obama said Washington stood with Belgium in the face of the "outrageous" attacks.

Security was also beefed up at Belgium's nuclear plants and at EU buildings in the French city of Strasbourg, home to the European Parliament.

It has been a week of drama and bloodshed in Brussels. Last Tuesday saw a shootout in the city's south that saw a Kalashnikov-wielding man killed and four police officers wounded.

DEBATE OVER AIRPORT SECURITY
Twin explosions in the departure hall of Brussels Airport prompted several countries worldwide to review or tighten airport security on Tuesday and raised questions about how soon passengers should be screened when entering terminals.

In the United States, the country's largest cities were placed on high alert and the National Guard was called in to increase security at New York City's two airports.

The Obama administration was expected to announce new measures to tighten US airport security.

A United Nations agency is already due to review airport security following the downing of a Russian airliner in Egypt by a makeshift soda-can bomb in October last year. Islamic State has claimed responsibility for smuggling the bomb on board.

Other recent incidents have also raised questions about how planes are protected. Last month, a bomber brought a device onto an airliner in Somalia and blew a hole in the fuselage. A year ago, a disturbed pilot deliberately crashed a Germanwings airliner killing 150 people, exploiting anti-terrorist cockpit defenses to lock himself at the controls.

But there has been less attention focused on how airports themselves are secured, before passengers check in for flights, despite a number of attacks.

"It strikes me as strange that only half of the airport is secure. Surely the whole airport should be secure, from the minute you arrive in the car park," said Matthew Finn, managing director of independent aviation security consultants Augmentiq.

European countries reviewed overall security at public locations after November's attacks by bombers and gunmen in Paris, in which 130 people were killed and hundreds injured, but made no specific changes to airport security.

The relative openness of public airport areas in Western Europe contrasts with some in Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia, where travellers' documents and belongings are checked before they are allowed to enter the airport building.

In Turkey, passengers and bags are screened on entering the terminal and again after check-in. Moscow also checks people at terminal entrances.

"Two terrorists enter the terminal area with explosive devices, this is undoubtedly a colossal failure," Pini Schiff, the former security chief at Tel Aviv's Ben-Gurion Airport and currently the CEO of the Israel Security Association, said in an interview with Israel Radio.

[From AFP, Reuters]

No room for terrorism

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She urged the Islamic scholars and country's people to take steps against those engaged in subversive and terrorist activities in the name of Islam. "Please stay alert and keep them away from such activities."

Hasina said it hurts her too much when she sees some countries often relate militancy to Islam. "For a handful of people, we've to endure this immense pain...this is really very painful for us."

Recalling the horrible days of burning copies of the Holy Quran in Baitul Mukarram area by "BNP-Jamaat and Hefajat activists", she sought cooperation from the Alem, Ulema and Mashayekh (Islamic scholars) so that nobody can again commit such evil activities in future.

Referring to her joining of some international events, Hasina said she herself took a strong stance against generalising Muslims as terrorists.

The PM said only she had condemned and protested the killing of Palestinian children and women by Israel.

Anti-state quarters always try to portray the Awami League as an anti-Islamic party despite it made huge contribution to expansion of religious education and welfare of Islam, she mentioned.

The politics of killing, coup and conspiracy began after the brutal assassination of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur

Rahman in 1975, the premier noted.

She said returning to power in 1996 after long 21 years, the then AL government took massive steps for the development and welfare of Islam following the path of Bangabandhu.

Hasina said her government brought 43 district offices of Islamic Foundation and all its manpower under the revenue sector and also formed "Imam-Muajjin Welfare Trust" for the welfare of religious leaders.

She called upon Imams and religious teachers to spread the real teachings of Islam among the students so that they could be groomed with moral values.

On the occasion, the PM inaugurated distribution of the Quran under the "Mosque-based Children and Mass-Education Programme 2015" by handing out copies of the holy book as prizes to some students.

Under the project, over 4.45 lakh copies of the Quran would be distributed among the students of the Quran education centres across the country.

Religious Affairs Secretary Abdul Jalil, Director General of Islamic Foundation Shamim Mohammad Afjal and Convener of the National Khatib Council Muhammad Jalaluddin al-Kaderi also spoke at the programme, with Religious Affairs Minister Motior Rahman in the chair.