

Obaidul Huq's death anniversary

STAR REPORT

Today is the 17th death anniversary of Obaidul Huq, a veteran journalist.



On this day in 2007, Obaidul breathed his last at his Banani residence, aged 96. He was the editor of the Bangladesh Observer for 12 years since 1972.

He was the first Bangalee Muslim to make a feature film "Dukkhhe Jader Jibon Gora" in 1946. He joined the Editorial Board of the Pakistan Observer (later The Bangladesh Observer) in 1951 as joint editor.

He was the chairman of Press Institute of Bangladesh and chairman of Dainik Bangla and Bangladesh Times Trustee Board. He was the chairman of Nazrul Institute.

Obaidul was honoured with the "Ekushey Padak" in 1983. He was also recognised with Bangla Academy Award in 1964.

6 burnt as fire breaks out in Gazipur factory

STAR REPORT

Six persons were burnt as a fire broke out from a gas explosion at Shinepukur Ceramics Ltd in Kashempur of Gazipur on Friday night.

The injured are Rezaul, 55, Md Farooq, 55, Tanveer, 37, Mohammad Rahat, 32, Abu Raihan, 32, and Rupam, 25.

They were admitted to Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery in Dhaka.

Abdullah Arefin, deputy assistant director of Gazipur fire service, said the fire broke out at the factory around 9:00pm following a gas explosion.

The incident took place when some "contractual workers" were repairing a gas cylinder, he said.

They have been kept under observation at the emergency department, he said.

Mamun Mia, an employee of Shinepukur Ceramics Ltd, who brought the injured to the hospital, said that all the injured were called for repairing the gas cylinder.

PRAYER TIMING

	Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-45	12-45	4-15	5-45	7-15
JAMAAT	5-20	1-15	4-30	5-50	7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Case filed, four held

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ongoing to capture the main perpetrator.

The temple's caretaker, Jyoti Chattopadhyay, has filed a case against unnamed individuals.

Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuiyan, the youth and sports advisor to the interim government, visited the Jeshreshwari Temple yesterday and instructed authorities to arrest the

thief and recover the crown as soon as possible.

The Indian High Commission in Dhaka has expressed concerns over the incident and urged Bangladeshi authorities to investigate the theft.

The crown was placed on the deity as a symbolic gesture by Modi during his visit to the temple, one of the 52 Shakti Peeths in Hinduism.

Abandoned for 31 years

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The Khulna Development Authority, along with the department of environment, has since declared the site unsuitable for industrial development due to the surrounding residential areas. As a result, BTMC has shifted its focus to creating a world-class theme park on the land.

The proposed park would be the first of its kind in Bangladesh, featuring a European-style virtual reality (VR) 3D amusement park, water rides modelled on the Sundarbans, a coconut garden, and a resort.

BTMC claims the park can be built without cutting down any of the existing trees, including the 375 coconut trees that surround a two-acre pond within the premises.

Despite these ambitious plans, residents remain skeptical. Many question whether the authorities will follow through, pointing to past failed projects.

Contacted, BTMC project director Kazi Firoz Hossain said, "A new proposal has been taken to build a world-class theme park with separate entertainment zones, replacing the earlier plan for a textile village."

We refused to retreat, even with bullets

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done. His ear was severely infected. Forced to leave without completing treatment, he now lives with the lasting effects of that day.

For others like Sayem Khan, an East West University student, the July protests were just as traumatic.

Living near Jatrabari, the biggest flash-points, Sayem saw the brutal crackdown first-hand. "I saw around 60 people die," he said.

The sounds of gunshots reverberated through his house, as his mother sat in constant fear, always wondering if her son would be the next youth to return home in a coffin.

He recalls visiting families of martyrs, witnessing their grief, as funeral processions became a common scene in Jatrabari.

"The police even sent the bodies to be buried outside Dhaka," he added.

The uprising's final days were no less harrowing. Sayem stood on the front lines again in early August, just as police opened fire.

"A bullet missed me but hit the person in front. He fell instantly," he recalled. Hafez Kamrul Hasan Khan from Madinatul Ulum Madrasah, narrowly escaped death when the police opened fire under the Jatrabari flyover on August 4. "Two people collapsed on top of me after being shot. They died."

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I pushed the bodies aside and screamed -- I didn't die! I didn't die! Allah saved me!"

Dhaka University student Fahim Shahriar, who was targeted by the Chhatra League and later by state intelligence agencies, also shared his experience.

"On July 24, when Nahid

frequently," he added.

The story of Momtaz Soma, a student from Begum Rokeya University, echoed the experiences of many others.

She is a friend of Abu Sayed, whose death sparked the mass uprising.

The day Sayed was killed, even female students were not spared, she said.

I was boarded on a rickshaw van by fellow protesters. But then they realised, the rickshaw puller was already dead after sustaining a bullet at some point. Then, one of the protesters took it upon himself to pedal the rickshaw and bring me to Uttara Adhunik Medical College Hospital.

ABDUL AZIZ
JU Student

Then a van arrived to collect the bodies. They were piling up all the bodies inside it. They picked me up too, thinking I was dead. Once the van had driven far enough from the police, I pushed the bodies aside and screamed -- I didn't die! I didn't die!

KAMRUL HASAN KHAN
Madrasah hafez

Islam was admitted to Gonoshasthaya Hospital after being brutally beaten, I was tasked with collecting Tk 20,000 for his treatment. As I left the hospital, I realised intelligence agents were following me," he said.

"I had to change locations

A group of them, along with two male students, sought refuge in a roadside abandoned toilet, but when they came out, they were attacked again.

"The violence never seemed to end; even those already injured were not spared," she said.



On the occasion of Durga Puja holidays, tourists flocked to Cox's Bazar for a vacation with their friends and families. The world's longest sea beach, seems appropriately filled with thousands of people in just this one frame. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: MOKAMMEL SHUVO

Where prayers and puja meet

Moulvibazar mosque, temple coexist in harmony for 43yrs

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Moulvibazar's Juri upazila is home to a somewhat unique religious site. On a shared courtyard, built on deep mutual respect, the Bhuai Jame Mosque and Bhuai Durga Puja Mandap have been a beacon of communal harmony and coexistence for years.

A fragrant ambience prevails on the premises, with incense sticks burning on one side, while perfume wafts in the air from the other.

Both the mosque and the temple have been maintaining each other's respective prayer schedules, thereby preventing any conflict or discord.

After Fajr, once devotees leave the mosque, those at the temple begin their puja activities for the morning at the mandap. Both holy buildings continue their activities, uninterrupted by the other.

In this way, people from both faiths have continued to coexist and celebrate their respective religious festivals for the past 43 years, without any disturbance.

"Hindus and Muslims practice their faith here peacefully. The sound of drums and bells during

Durga Puja never caused any issue since both mosque and mandap committees coordinate their religious activities," said Mostakim Ahmad Babul, a member of Bhuai Jame Mosque committee.

Jhalak Dey, a local resident and member of the Hindu community, said, "The observance

imam of the mosque.

Pijush Kanti Das, president of the puja mandap, said, "We have the mosque's prayer schedule. That helps us coordinate our puja times, allowing us to celebrate our traditions while respecting others."

While inspecting the puja



of religious festivals with harmony and dignity on a shared ground attracts visitors from near and far, especially during Durga Puja."

"I have been serving as imam here for 16 years. On this shared yard, people from both faiths are able to perform their prayers without hindering each other's rituals," said Maulana Siraj Uddin,

mandap, MKH Jahangir Hossain, superintendent of police in Moulvibazar, said police are always active to prevent any untoward incident during the Durga Puja.

The SP lauded the mosque and the mandap's coexistence on the same yard as a shining example of religious harmony in Bangladesh.

Man, daughter killed in hornet attack

STAR REPORT

A man and his eight-year-old daughter were killed after coming under attack by a swarm of hornets in Mymensingh's Dhobaura upazila yesterday afternoon.

The victims are Maulana Abul Kashem, 50, and Labiba, of Dudhnoi village. Kashem was the imam of Dudhnoi Bazar Jame Mosque, reports our Mymensingh correspondent quoting police.

Quoting locals, Al Mamun Sarker, officer-in-charge of Dhobaura Police Station, said Kashem along with his daughter, a madrasa student, was collecting firewood in a nearby jungle around 1:30pm, when a swarm of hornets started stinging them, injuring them critically.

Hearing their screams, locals rescued and took them to Dhobaura Upazila Health Complex from where they were referred to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

They died on way to the hospital, said the OC.

On information, police recovered the bodies and handed them over to the family members without autopsy.

ISLAMIC SONG AT MANDAP Two sent to jail in Chattogram

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A court in Chattogram yesterday sent two people, who were arrested on charges of singing a song calling for an Islamic revolution at JM Sen Hall puja mandap in Chattogram city, to jail.

They are Shahidul Karim, 42 and Nurul Islam, 34. They were produced before a court of metropolitan magistrate with a five-day remand prayer. The court fixed Monday (October 14) for a remand hearing, said Officer-in-Charge Fazlul Kader Chowdhury of Kotwali Police Station.

Chattogram Metropolitan Police said they were investigating whether there was any ill intention behind performing such a song during a cultural programme at the puja mandap.

Six activists of Chattogram Cultural Academy sang an Islamic song during Durga Puja celebrations in Chattogram city on Thursday. A viral video of the incident caused widespread outrage across the country.

Later, police said the six singers reported that they were invited to perform the song by Sajal Dutta, a leader of Bangladesh Puja Udjapon Parishad -- the group that organises Durga Puja at JM Sen Hall.

Sources said Chattogram Cultural Academy is affiliated with Jamaat Shibir, however leaders of Jamaat Shibir refuted the allegations in an official statement.

Police later detained two of the singers for hurting religious sentiments of the Hindu community.

Another leader of the Bangladesh Puja Udjapon Parishad filed a case on Friday, accusing the six singers and Sajal Dutta of hurting religious sentiments.

Sajal Dutta was also permanently expelled from the parishad.

The central committee of Puja Udjapon Parishad on Friday night also relieved Chattogram chapter President Ashish Bhattacharya and General Secretary Hillol Dey of their duties for failing to perform their responsibilities adequately.

Foreign secy meets

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Jaasim Uddin and John Bass discussed ways to build on and deepen Bangladesh-US bilateral collaboration.

"We discussed the vital importance of US-Bangladesh cooperation for regional security and prosperity," Bass wrote on X.

Jaasim Uddin termed his meeting with Lindsey Ford "very insightful and candid" on diverse issues, including the interim government's reform agenda, democratic transition, economic and security issues, regional stability, Rohingya crisis

and labour law.

With Brendan Lynch, the foreign secretary discussed the aspects of mutual cooperation to diversify export, duty-free and quota-free access of Bangladeshi RMG products produced from cotton imported from US.

They spoke on simplification of registration and reduction of registration fees for pharmaceutical products, labour law reforms, and access to funds from the US International Development Finance Cooperation.

Low morale, lack

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A joint operation launched on September 4 to recover stolen weapons and apprehend the attackers has made little progress, and regular policing activities such as arrests, investigations, and

executing warrants have been suspended since August.

A sub-inspector from Chandgaon Police Station warned that without full-scale operations, the law-and-order situation in the port city could worsen.

Scenic wonders

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The forest department is currently managing these fountains through appointing contractors and allowing visitors for a fee of Tk 20 from each.

The incidents of accidents and deaths have raised concerns among tourists and tour operators regarding safety measures taken by the authorities concerned.

According to stakeholders, lack of awareness is a major reason behind the accidents.

"Enthusiastic visitors to the waterfall often venture in for a bath without knowing the condition, leading to drowning," said Surjo Das, who regularly visits waterfalls during monsoon.

He also alleged that the forest department only put up some signboards on the spots with instructions for tourists, which has not been enough to ensure safety.

"They should make it mandatory for tourists to hire guides for visiting these dangerous spots," he added.

Hasan Murad, owner of Zoom Wild, a tour operating company, regularly visits these waterfalls with his clients.

"Accidents are constantly happening in waterfalls due to lack of awareness among tourists and negligence of concerned state agencies," he said.

Forest department can prevent these accidents by

imposing strict rules for visiting the sites, he added.

Contacted, Harunur Rashid, assistant conservator of forest of Chattogram Forest Division (north), said "We request tourists to hire guides, but they ignore our requests most of the time."

"We are trying to raise awareness among tourists regarding the dangers through signboards and banners. However, only a responsible mindset among the visitors can turn the waterfalls safe for them," he added.

Gang posing

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cupboards and vandalised the furniture, and looted the money and gold ornaments, victims claimed.

Talking to The Daily Star, Officer-in-Charge of Mohammadpur Police Station Iltekkar Hasan said, "A robbery case was filed with the station in this connection."

Earlier, Inspector (Investigation) Md Hafizur Rahman of the same police station said, "There was CCTV surveillance in the building, and we have already collected the footage. The video shows a group of people dressed in army and Rab uniforms entering the house."

"Further details will be provided following an investigation," he added.