

Two killed in two days in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Two people were murdered while the limbs of another victim were severed in Pabna during the past two days.

This takes the death toll in the district within the past 10 days to eight.

One victim has been identified as Mohammad Raja, 30. He was hacked to death in Alokdia village in Dhulauri union under the Sathia Police Station in the early hours of Saturday.

Raja's head was severed and dumped in a nearby pond. It was later found floating.

Police suspect that enmity with leaders of an outlawed party may have been the cause behind the murder.

In another incident in South Freekholpara in Shahidullahpur under sadar upazila, Khura Pramanik, 28, was hit on the head with an iron rod. He was rushed to a hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

Police said land dispute with neighbours might have led to the incident.

In yet another incident, miscreants severed the right hand and leg of Abdus Sattar, 28, on Sunday morning in Badalpara village in Sadar thana.

Sattar is now hospitalised and said to be in critical condition.

RMC reopens tomorrow

BSS, Rangpur

Rangpur Medical College (RMC) will reopen on Tuesday after remaining closed for 20 days, said an RMC press release yesterday.

All resident students have been asked to return to their hostels before the classes start.

The RMC was closed on April 22 after 50 people were injured in clashes between two rival student organisations over occupation of a seat at Pinnu Hostel.

RMC interns also observed strike protesting the ransacking of their rooms at Pinnu and Mukta hostels and closing of the hostels.

Under the new provisions, all students, doctors and staff should have to bear identity cards and no outsiders will be allowed on the campus after 10pm. Police will be posted to avoid any untoward incidents.

Cyclone

positioned at about 1460 km south-southwest of Chittagong Port, 1380 km south-southwest of Cox's Bazar coast and 1385 km south-southwest of Mongla Port.

"It is a seasonal cyclone of the bay. At this point it is too far from the country's coastal zone to predict where it may hit," said Samarendra Karmaker, director of the met office.

However, the sea will remain very rough, he added.

Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to lower distant cautionary signal number two.

All fishing boats and trawlers over north bay and deep-sea have been asked to be near the shore till further notice.

"The situation is not so critical as yet as to ask people to move from coastal regions. Actually, we do not know whether it is going to hit or not. It may head towards Chennai," one met official told The Daily Star.

Land ports

Divisional Customs Commissioner Ali Ahmed denied the allegations of tax evasions.

C&F Association Vice-president Sohail Ahmed Polish said the customs authorities have the power to provide them a discount of at least 20 per cent on fruits. He questioned the authority of the BDR to seize goods five miles from the border, which they said was beyond the paramilitary force's authorised territory to take action.

Meantime, the 15 Indian truckers, arrested with 'smuggled' jute seeds at the Benapole land port, were rejected bail yesterday. The four customs officials also arrested with the truckers on the same charge were however granted bail.

This may once again worsen the situation at all three land ports of the south-western zone as release of the Indian truckers was one of the pre-conditions for calling off the indefinite strike by customs staff.

The BDR also did not withdraw its case against the alleged smugglers as promised by the government.

Goods movement through the Bhomra land port did not resume yesterday despite the postponement of the strike.

The C&F Agents Association and the Foreign Exchange Association of Khojadanga in India yesterday unanimously decided not to let any traveller cross the border at Benapole unless the

Cops nab one outlaw after firefight at Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Abul Kashem alias Tipu, 35, an activist of outlawed Biplabi Communist Party (BCP) was arrested after a firefight with police at Gokhali village of Salkupa upazila, Jhenidah in the early hours of Sunday.

Three policemen were also injured during the fight that lasted over an hour.

Cops recovered a Pakistani-made gun and 22-round ammunition from the possession of Kashem.

Acting on a tip-off, a contingent of police led by Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) of Bhatia Police Camp Ismail Hossain raided the house of Motleb Mollah at about 2 am.

The armed outlaws started firing on police as soon as they had sensed the police presence.

They fired at least 50 shots while police replied with 25. The other associates of Kashem managed to flee, police said.

The injured cops including ASI Ismail and the arrested outlaw were rushed to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital.

5,500 jobs

1989 to merge the two offices got the necessary legal coverage.

The parliament also heard a point of order raised by Krishak Samik Janata League leader Abdul Kader Siddique on the government's stance on Iraq.

Siddique criticised the government as the parliament did not listen to the main opposition Awami League's plea for inclusion of deaths of Iraqi Muslims in the US-led war on Iraq in the obituary reference.

In response, Law Minister Moudud Ahmed and Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker Delwar Hossain Saidee said there was no confusion over the government's firm position against the killing of Muslims in Iraq.

Deputy Speaker Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui, who was chairing the session, observed that the opposition could move a fresh proposal to condole the deaths of Iraqi Muslims. But there was no scope to include any fresh condolence in the obituary reference taken on the inaugural sitting on Thursday.

Meanwhile, leaders of the Chittagong Union of Journalists and the Chittagong Metropolitan Union of Journalists talked to the officer-in-charge (OC) of the Double Mooring Police Station with which the abduction case was filed.

OC Quamrul Hasan assured the journalists that he would try to rescue Khosru as soon as possible.

Mahmudul Haq arrested on charge of extortion on May 6 was placed on a two-day fresh remand Saturday, said the officer.

Double murder

Sumon and 16 others are in custody. Fifteen others are absconding.

Special Public Prosecutor Abdul Latif Talukder appeared for the state, while advocates Nazrul Islam, Mahmudul Haq, Khondaker Abdul Mannan, AFM Abdul Wadud and Emdadul Haque Lal defended the accused.

Anti-corruption

Hundreds of trucks with goods are stranded at the Haridaspur border. Three-hundred rail waggons with goods from India are yet to get clearance for unloading at the Darshana rail yard due to strike by customs officials and employees.

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Movement on for 6th wage board for newspaper

BSS, Dhaka

Leaders of Sangbadik Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SSKOP) yesterday urged the government and newspaper owners to take immediate steps to implement their 7-point demand including announcement of the 6th wage board for newspapermen.

"Announcement of a new wage board for the newspaper industry is very urgent as newspapermen are very much affected by the unusual price hike," the leaders said while addressing a rally of journalists, press workers and general employees of newspapers and news agencies in front of the Daily Janakantha here.

Presided over by President of Dhaka Union of Journalist (DUJ) Elahi Newaz Khan, the rally was addressed by SSKOP leaders Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Akhter Ahmed Khan, Omar Faruque, Abdus Shahid, Fazley Imam, Afsar Uddin Khan, Abul Hashem and Motiur Rahman Talukder.

The leaders criticised the Janakantha management for not allowing its journalists, press workers and general employees to carry out trade union activities.

They also urged Janakantha authorities to implement the 5th wage board award in every section of the newspaper and remove discriminations.

A large number of journalists, press workers and general employees from different newspapers and news agencies attended the rally with banners and festoons.

SSKOP leaders thanked the journalists, press workers and general employees for attending the rally by observing symbolic work stoppage for two hours from 11am to 1pm in different newspapers and news agencies.

The leaders urged them to attend the SSKOP's next rally to be held in front of the Daily Jugantor on May 20.

Parks

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) and the Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (RAJUK) to complete the process of demarcation of all open spaces within six months.

It also asked them to submit reports in every two months stating the progress achieved in implementing the time-bound direction of the court.

The rule has been made returnable within four weeks.

The petition was moved by Advocate S. Rizwana Hasan and she was assisted by Advocate M. Iqbal Kabir.

Hilshas

About 290 fish traders have invested Tk 150 crore as 'advance' given to the fishermen.

As the catch of the fish is extremely poor, traders are worried about getting back their money, let alone making profit. The fishermen are in deeper trouble - many of them have not yet been able to pay back the loan taken last season and are in no position to pay it this year.

According to the information received from the fishermen's cooperative society of Kalapara upazila under Patuakhali district, many trawlers go out to sea every day in search of hilsha, but most of them are coming back empty.

Sea-going trawlers are finding it difficult even to meet the expenses of the fuel consumed. Same is the position of the trawlers and fishing boats engaged in catching hilsha in the river mouths.

Leaders of the Kalapara cooperative society informed that about Tk 90 crore has been given to fishermen this year as advance. "But there is little hope of getting the money back," said the leaders.

According to the fisheries department office at Barisal, indiscriminate catching of 'jatka' is responsible for the present crisis.

But fishermen believe that due to formation of shoals near the seashore, the fish might have changed their course of movement and have gone to the deep sea, outside the fishing zone of trawlers.

The crisis has pushed the price of hilsha (medium size) to Tk 10,000 per maund, while it was around Tk 2,500 last year.

Hilsha export to India has also been stopped. According to an exporter, the available quantity of hilsha is not enough to export the fish to India.

Insulin trouble

However, many of them denied that they were selling smuggled insulin. The price of imported insulin is Tk 580, while the same brand of smuggled insulin is selling between Tk 400 and 500.

The widely used brands of insulin in the country are Mixtard HM, Actrapid, Insulaterd, Lente and Novopen imported by the DAB and some companies.

Dr Hazera Mahtab of BIRDEM said the patients should avoid taking insulin not preserved properly.

"The patients may face complications if they use such insulin," she said. "Patients suffering from type-1 diabetes need insulin and their number is small."

According to the DAB, the number of diabetes patients in the country is around 50 lakh.



Leaders and activists of the left-leaning 11-party alliance parade down Dhaka streets in a procession, demanding a motion of censor on the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq in the ongoing session of the House.

Govt, UNOCAL showcaused on supplemental agreement

BSS, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday issued a rule asking the government and UNOCAL to show cause why the supplemental agreement between them on November 25, 1998 should not be declared illegal.

The Court asked the respondents to explain why a direction shall not be issued upon them to cancel and rescind the supplemental agreement.

The Court also asked them to show cause why UNOCAL should not be directed to stop exploration before payment of compensation for the resources destroyed at Magurchhara gas field in the light of the inquiry report on July 30, 1997.

A division bench comprising Justice Mohammad Abdur Rashid and Justice Siddiqur Rahman Miah passed the order upon a writ petition moved before the court.

Engineer M Shamsul Alam, Professor and Head of the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering and Coordinator for Energy Technology of Bangladesh Institute of Technology (BIT) filed the writ petition challenging the supplemental agreement between the government and Occidental of Bangladesh Limited, now represented by UNOCAL of Bangladesh.

Businessman

Virginia Kice, a spokeswoman for the Department of Homeland Security, told the Times.

Thumary held a diplomatic post in the consulate's Islamic and cultural affairs section. He also served as a prayer leader at the King Fahd Mosque in Culver City, one of Southern California's largest Muslim houses of worship.

"I don't have any comment right now on that," a State Department spokeswoman told AFP.

Ties between the United States and Saudi Arabia have been strained since September 11, 2001, terror attacks on the United States. Saudis accounted for 15 of the 19 people who hijacked four US passenger jets and turned them into suicide weapons, killing more than 3,000 people.

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3 held in Ctg for setting house ablaze

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police yesterday arrested two persons and remanded them for seven days on charge of burning alive three members of a family in Banskhali.

Arati Bala, her school-going daughter Champamoyi and her mother Jhunu Bala were burnt alive when miscreants set fire to their house with kerosene. The incident occurred at Nathpara of Chambhal union under the Banskhali Police station on Friday.

One Jahangir, a neighbour, was suspected to have been involved in the crime.

Police later arrested Ram Dulal and Tuntu Devnath, two neighbours, and Dilu Jahan, wife of the prime suspect Jahangir, on Saturday morning.

Dulal and Tuntu were produced before the court with a 10-day remand prayer yesterday morning. However, the court granted seven days, police said.

Police believe the killers might have killed the three family members to grab their property. Sukumar and Sanjib, two sons of Arati Bala, were feeling insecure, sources said.

Hearing

opposed the government plea and said the issue is very crucial. Since the High Court gave a historical judgement about abuse of the Section 54 and 167 (applied to remand a person) of the CrPC, it should be placed before the full bench, he maintained. He also argued that full bench should hear the appeal petition, not the stay prayer. The judge agreed with him.

The High Court in a 15-point directive on April 7 had set out to ensure that human rights of a person under arrest or detention or on remand are not curbed. It had observed that some of the provisions of the Section 54 and Section 167 were not consistent with the fundamental rights of the citizens.

It had asked the government to amend the relevant sections of the CrPC within six months from the date of the ruling.

The High Court ruling had also made it mandatory for a police officer to produce a person before the nearest magistrate within 24 hours of his/her arrest.

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Diarrhoea kills four in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Diarrhoea has broken out in Barisal at an alarming rate claiming four lives in the last two days, sources at hospitals and office of the civil surgeon said yesterday.

Three of the four victims were children who died at the Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH).

Sources said 42 children with diarrhoea were admitted to the SBMCH yesterday raising the number of such children at the hospital to over a hundred.

On Friday, 70 children with diarrhoea were admitted to the hospital.

Twenty-six people were also admitted to the Sadar Hospital yesterday for treatment of diarrhoea.

The office of the civil surgeon said 32 diarrhoea patients were admitted to different thana health complexes yesterday.

SBMCH interns postpone strike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Striking interns of the Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH) yesterday postponed their strike for 10 days asking authorities to meet their demand within that time, hospital sources said.

The interns, who launched an indefinite strike on May 3 protesting non-payment of their three months' salary, however threatened to resume their strike if the arrears are not paid by May 20.

Hospital authorities however claimed that a month's salary had already been paid to the interns.

Azad Chy

FROM PAGE 12

"He came before me and pointed a revolver at me when we came out of the lounge," said the ex-VC. "I got hold of the boy's hand but he managed to slip away and fired two shots. Fortunately I escaped," Prof. Chowdhury said on the phone when contacted last night.

He said he had no idea about the attacker and the reason behind the attack.

Prof. Chowdhury now lives in France. He came here few days ago and was planning to stay for some days, family sources said.

Driver dies

FROM PAGE 12

The man is in his mid-twenty and was clad in trousers and striped T-shirt.

Employees of the ICD found the body on the sunshade and called police who recovered the body and sent to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Police suspect the killers took the victim to the roof of the building and threw him from there. There were marks of injuries on his body.

A case was filed with the Motijheel Police station.

113 motions

FROM PAGE 1

and Shamsur Rahman Sharif of AL and Golam Mohammad Kader and Masirur Rahman Ranga of the Jatiya Party moved the motions.

Their notices also covered the issues of law and order situation, price hike of essentials, looting of arms and ammunition from law-enforcers, non-formation of parliamentary standing committees, repeated ferry accidents, acute power crisis, separation of the judiciary, exchange of fire by BDR and BSF on the frontiers and a spate of violence by outlaws.

Explaining reasons of cancellation of the notices, Abdul Hai, one of the panel chairmen, said those either lacked evidence or were not related to recent issues, the basic characteristics of adjournment motions.

"Therefore, I cannot accept these notices," he said.

Gas, power price

FROM PAGE 1

The ministry, under pressure from the donors to increase price, has already started working on a revised formula that is likely to be placed before the council for approval within a few weeks, sources said.

State Minister for Energy Mosharrar Hossain later told journalists that the council had a look at the proposed pricing but made no decision. The ministry would work on it further and come up with a revised pricing formula, he said.