

Incidents like Phulbari to continue if 4-party govt remains in power

Say 14-party leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Awami League (AL) led 14-party opposition combine yesterday said unfortunate incidents, such as Phulbari killings where police shot seven people dead, will continue across the country as long as BNP-Jamaat alliance government remains in power.

Blasting the BNP-led four-party alliance government for the Phulbari killings, they said the police and BDR opened fire on the demonstrators at Phulbari in Dinajpur according to the blueprint of the alliance government.

"Mass killing at Phulbari was not an isolated incident. Khaleda-Nizami government orchestrated this killing to satisfy the Asia Energy, a US-based company, as leaders of the alliance government want to gobble up crores of money from the company," said AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil, while addressing a protest rally in front of the AL central office at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city.

He urged the people to strengthen movement against the government and cast votes for 14-party in the next general election for safeguarding the nation from the grip of the alliance government.

"BNP-Jamaat leaders became certain that they cannot come to power in the next general election and that's why ministers, legislators and leaders are now desperate to grab money from all sectors even by killing people," AL Joint Secretary Obaidul Kader.

Dhaka City unit of 14-party organised the rally protesting Phulbari killings.

Dhaka City AL General Secretary Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya presided over the rally where AL presidium members Amir Hossain Amu, Motia Chowdhury and other leaders of 14-party also spoke.

After the rally, they brought out a protest procession that marched different streets of the city.

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The rule, returnable in three weeks, came upon a public interest litigation writ petition filed by AKM Khaledul Islam, commander of 34 Ansar Battalion, challenging the legality of the appointment.

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BSF returns bodies of 2 Bangladeshis in Thakurgaon

BSS, Rangpur

Border Security Force (BSF) of India returned bodies of two Bangladeshi young farmers through a Company Commander level flag meeting held on Dharmagarh border under Ranishankoil upazila of Thakurgaon district on Saturday night, officials said yesterday.

Earlier, BSF troops illegally intruded into the Bangladesh territory in the early hours on Saturday and shot the farmers dead while they were irrigating their drought hit T-Aman fields near pillar no 373/2S, close to Dharmagarh outpost of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR).

After killing the Bangladeshi farmers, BSF troops immediately took away their bodies into the Indian Territory, the officials added.

BDR jawans of Dharmagarh outpost rushed to the spot and lodged a strong protest against the unprovoked killings of Bangladeshis and asked BSF for returning the bodies immediately through a company commander level flag meeting. BDR also sent a protest letter to BSF.

BSF agreed to return the bodies and brought those to the zero line at about 7:00pm on Saturday when a Company Commander level flag meeting was held between BSF and BDR there. Satvita Company Commander of BSF and Paria Company Commander of BDR led their respective sides in the half an hour-long meeting.

The BSF side apologised during the meeting as BDR had raised a strong protest against such unprovoked killings of innocent Bangladeshis and assured BDR that such incidents would not be repeated in future.

The BDR side categorically asked BSF not to kill any innocent Bangladeshis anytime in future in the greater interest of maintaining law and order and friendly relations between the two neighbouring border guards.

Later, Indian Police handed over the bodies, of Abu Taleb, 20, son of Bohiuddin of frontier village Chikni Chakma and Azmal Hossain, 24, son of Kabir Hossain of the same village under Ranishankoil upazila to an official of Ranishankoil Police Station in the presence of BSF and BDR officials at about 7:45pm.

Ranishankoil police later handed over the bodies to their parents after completing some legal formalities. They were laid to eternal rest at their respective family graveyards that night, the officials added.

SUICIDE OF SCHOOL GIRL Parents seek justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Parents of a school going girl yesterday appealed to the authorities concerned for the trial of those who forced their daughter to commit suicide on June 9.

"We have lost our daughter Shakila but we want exemplary punishment of the gang so that no body dares to commit such crime again and no parents lose their daughter in this manner," said father Shafiq Uddin at a press conference at Crime Reporters' Association office in the city.

He said Shakila, a student of class nine of Waziuddin School at Kamrangirchar, committed suicide due to repeated teasing and harassment by a group of local miscreants on her way to school and whenever she went out of her house.

Shafiq alleged that no charge sheet has been framed against the members of the gang although a case was filed with Kamrangirchar Police Station three months back.

"Since then the guardians of the accused kept on threatening us to withdraw the case," he added.

"In the face of their continuous threats I had to file a general diary (GD) with Kamrangirchar Police Station," Shafiq said.

Shamsunnahar, mother of the victim, said, "The guardians of the accused had been threaten-



Shakila

ing us saying if we do not withdraw the case, they would file a counter case against our only son to force us to withdraw the case to save him from being imprisoned."

She also questioned the sincerity of police in arresting and submitting the charge sheet against the accused.

Meanwhile, the High Court (HC) yesterday granted anticipatory bail to all the seven accused in the case till the submission of the charge sheet.

When contacted, Investigation Officer of the case Sub-Inspector Farid said, "I tried my best to arrest the accused, but if the HC grants bail what I can do. Still, I would try to submit the charge sheet as early as possible."

Regional meet on trauma victims begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The inaugural session of a four-day regional meeting of International Rehabilitation Centre for Trauma Victims (IRCT), started in the city yesterday aiming at making a powerful regional strategy in Asia for developing law and justice process at national level.

Bangladesh Rehabilitation Centre for Trauma Victims (BRCT) and IRCT jointly organised the meeting at a city hotel.

Barrister Rakan Uddin Mahmud inaugurated the meeting and spoke on Article-2 of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

Representatives of 12 countries took part in the meeting. Akram Hossain Chowdhury, founder general secretary of BRCT, performed as the main resource person on behalf of Bangladesh.

He presented a survey-based report titled 'Challenges, problems and prospects' on the first day.

Basil Fernando of AHRC Hong Kong, Miriam Annkathrin Wernicke of IRCT, Copenhagen Denmark and Dr S D Singh of TOP India Trust spoke at the meeting.

Strike in all educational instts today

DU CORRESPONDENT

Pragatishil Chhatra Jote, a combine of left-leaning student organisations, yesterday called a student strike in all educational institutions across the country for today.

The combine called the strike to protest the killing of innocent people by law enforcement agencies at Phulbari in Dinajpur district on August 26.

The Chhatra Jote also took out a procession and held a rally on the DU campus.

At least seven people were killed and about 300 others injured as police and BDR opened fire on the demonstrators who were proceeding towards the office of Asia Energy Corporation (Bangladesh) Pvt Ltd in Dinajpur to protest its extraction of coal through open-pit mining.



PHOTO: STAR

Home Secretary Safar Raj Hossain and his Indian counterpart VK Duggal exchange documents after signing an agreement to examine the possibility of quickly instituting a bilateral mechanism for combating terrorism at a home secretary-level meeting at State Guest House Meghna yesterday.

'Militants issue death threats under govt shelter'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seventeen eminent personalities of the country have strongly condemned the death threats to Prof Hasan Azizul Haque of Rajshahi University (RU) and Dr Muhammad Zafar Iqbal of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST).

In a joint statement yesterday they said although such threats against educationists are unthinkable in a democratic country, these are taking place as the militants are getting shelter from the government.

The eminent citizens urged the authorities concerned to take immediate measures to ensure the security of the literateurs, intellectuals and teachers who are the target of the militants.

They demanded of the government to take stern action against the militants who issued the threats.

The signatories to the statement are Kabir Chowdhury, Khan Sarwar Murshid, Barid Fazul Karim, Foyez Ahmed, Zillur Rahman Siddique, Wahidul Haque, Serajul Islam Chowdhury, Anisuzzaman, Qaim Chowdhury, Murtaza Bashir, Syed Shamsul Haque, Rizia Rahman, Bibi Rasel, Rafiqun Nabi, Ramendu Majumder, Mafidul Haque and Nasiruddin Yusuf.

In a separate statement, Sheikh Shahidul Islam, secretary general of Jatiya Party (JP-Morjua) condemned the threats to university teachers.

Our Rajshahi University correspondent adds: Progressive Teachers' Society (PTS) yesterday took out a procession on the campus protesting the death threat to eminent litterateur Prof Hassan Azizul Haque by the activists of Islamic Chhatra Shibir on August 24.

They also condemned the death threat to Muhammad Zafar Iqbal of SUST.

Several hundred teachers, students, cultural activists and journalists took part in the procession that paraded the campus roads.

The PTS also held a rally in front of the Senate building where the speakers said the fundamentalist forces have made a 'blueprint' to suppress the secular movement and kill democratic-minded intellectuals, progressive teachers and litterateurs one by one.

Blaming the RU authorities for not taking any action against those who gave the threat to Prof Haque, they demanded immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of the Shibir activities and measures to ensure security of the teachers.

PHULBARI INCIDENT

Cop action condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different organisations yesterday condemned police attacks on Saturday's National Committee to Protect Oil and Gas rally in Dinajpur that left seven killed and 300 injured. They also urged the government to cancel the Phulbari Coalmine Project deal in Dinajpur with Asia Energy Corporation (Bangladesh) Pvt Ltd.

Political activists, NGOs, environmentalists, labourers, women and students' organisations yesterday held protest rallies at different places in the city and asked to compensate the families of the dead and injured victims.

The demonstrators asked people to make the countrywide half-day hartal on August 30 a success, while different student bodies have called strike in all educational institutions today.

The parties that staged demonstrations are Communist Party of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Workers' Party, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh, 5 left parties, Gono Mukti Andolon and Parbatya Chattagram Jonosanghati Samity.

Other organisations who protested the attack are Supreme Court Bar Association, Bangladesh Parishad Andolon, Green Voice, Sammilita Sanskritik Jite, Ain o Salsik Kendra, Odhikar, Nagorik Udoyog, Chattagram Bandar Rakkha Sangram Parishad Bangladesh Khetmojur Samity,

Gono-Sanskriti Front, Gono Sanghati Andolon, Bangladesh Chhatra Maitree, Bangladesh Students' Union, Bangladesh Chhatra Federation, Campaign for Good Governance and Bangladesh Nari Mukti Sangsad.

RU Correspondent adds: Different organisations yesterday staged demonstrations on Rajshahi University (RU) campus, condemning the killing of seven people, including a RU student, by police and BDR during a protest rally at Phulbari in Dinajpur.

Expressing solidarity with the agitators, they demanded proper investigation into the incident, immediate trial of the culprits, compensation to the victims' families and proper treatment of the injured.

They also conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family members of Tariqul Islam, the RU student who died in the incident.

The organisations that staged demonstrations are Greater Dinajpur Students' Association (GDSA), National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Port, and Progressive Students' Alliance (PSA).

Progressive Teachers' Society and Anti-Imperialism Teachers' Forum in separate statements also condemned the attack and demanded compensation to the victims and injured family members.

HC RULE ON GOVT

Explain why appointment of two DCs not illegal

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday issued a rule asking the government to explain why the appointment of deputy commissioners (DC) of Barguna and Chapainawabganj as district magistrate on May 18 should not be declared illegal.

The rule, returnable in three weeks, came upon a public interest litigation writ petition filed by AKM Khaledul Islam, commander of 34 Ansar Battalion, challenging the legality of the appointment.

The petitioner submitted that the action was illegal as the government did not take approval of the Supreme Court in appointing DCs as district magistrates.

After hearing the petitioner, a division bench of the HC issued the rule.

CHOWBARI KILLINGS

One suspect arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The three-member committee comprising Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and Detective Branch (DB) yesterday started investigation into Chowbaria five murder case taking in consideration the outlaws' motive for a revenge against crossfire killings and BNP's internal feud.

"The primary investigation has so far provided two motives—the outlaws took revenge of the killings of their party leaders in crossfire and they have links with a previously killed BNP leader," said Shahidur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Manda Police Station in Naogaon.

Purbo Banglar Communist Party outlaws slaughtered four policemen and shot dead a BNP leader at a crowded cattle market at Chowbaria of Manda upazila in Naogaon on Friday. The killers also looted the arms of the policemen.

The police are yet to trace the looted arms but arrested a suspect named Golan.

DU examinations postponed

DU CORRESPONDENT

All academic activities including examinations and classes of Dhaka University (DU) scheduled for today have been postponed due to unavoidable circumstances.

The fresh date of the postponed examinations will be announced soon, says a DU press release.



Chevening Society executives

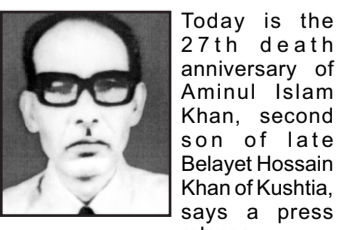
Afifa Raihana, coordinator of Knowledge Centre of SEDF, IFC World Bank Group, has been elected president and Abu Naser Rajib, lecturer of Media and Communication at Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), general secretary of Chevening Society of Bangladesh (CSB) for the next two years, says a press release.

The CSB is a forum of Bangladeshi scholars who studied in the United Kingdom in different disciplines under Chevening scholarships provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, UK. Members of the new executive committee were selected amicably and unanimously at a meeting recently held at a city hotel.

Other office-bearers are Vice-President: Fazle Rabbi, Deputy Commissioner of Gazipur, Assistant General Secretary: Mia Mahmudur Rahim, Senior Assistant Registrar of Bangladesh Supreme Court, and Treasurer: Barrister Abdul Halim.

Members of the executive committee are M Asiuzzaman, assistant professor of Journalism and Media Studies at University of Liberal Arts and Huraera Jabeen, lecturer of Environmental Science at Brac University.

Death anniversary



Today is the 27th death anniversary of Aminul Islam Khan, second son of late Belayet Hossain Khan of Kushtia, says a press release.

A doa mahfil will be held at his daughter's residence at Dhanmondi in the city after Zohr prayers today.



PHOTO: STAR

Convener of Jatiya Oikya Mancha Dr Kamal Hossain distributes leaflets among the people at Kakrail in the city yesterday as part of his party's mass contact campaign.

President condoles death of peacekeepers

BSS, Dhaka

President Dr Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday expressed deep shock at the death of six Bangladeshi peacekeepers in a road accident in Ivory Coast.

In a condolence message, the President said the Bangladesh Army has a glorious role in international peacekeeping. The sad demise of the Bangladeshi UN peacekeepers in Ivory Coast will be remembered forever at home and abroad, he said.

"The countrymen will also remember them with deep respect for their sacrifices to brighten the image and reputation of the country in the international arena" the President added.

He prayed for peace of the departed souls and conveyed deep sympathy to the members of the bereaved families.



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Chittagong, Barisal and Khulna divisions and at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls are also likely at places during the period, Met Office said in a forecast.

Country's highest temperature 35.1 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakunda and lowest 24.8 degree Celsius at Rangamati.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:21pm today and rises at 5:39am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.5	27.3	78	56
Chittagong	33.4	26.2	75	89
Rajshahi	33.3	26.4	90	85
Khulna	34.6	26.8	81	74
Barisal	33.2	26.6	76	84
Sylhet	35.0	25.5	73	64
Cox's Bazar	33.0	25.7	72	80