

2 outlaws killed in 'shootouts'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Two underground operatives were killed during "shootouts" between the law enforcers and their accomplices in Jhenidah early yesterday and on October 23.

They were identified as Ishaq Ali, 42, of Viana Union under Harinakundo upazila, and Moazzem Hossain, 40, of Manikdih village under Kotchandpur upazila.

Police arrested Moazzem Hossain alias Masud, area commander of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-Janajuddho) at his village at around 11:00pm on Thursday.

On his confessional statement, police took Masud to Manderbaria at about 3:30am yesterday to recover hidden firearms and arrest his accomplices. When they reached the area, Masud's cohorts opened fire on the law enforcers, prompting them to retaliate.

Police said Masud received bullets during the shootout and died instantly. They said the outlaw was an accused in six cases including three for murder.

One locally made gun and six bullets were recovered from the spot.

Detective Branch (DB) Police arrested Ishaq Ali at Bakchua village on the night of October 22.

On his statement, police took him to Viana village to recover hidden firearms and his cohorts in the early hours of October 23. Sensing the presence of the law enforcers, Ishaq's accomplices opened fire on the policemen, forcing them to retaliate.

Police said Ishaq was shot during the encounter and died on the spot. He was wanted in seven cases including four for murder, they said. Police recovered one pipe gun and three bullets from the scene.



BNP served a blow

FROM PAGE 1 among them, resigned from BNP led by its standing committee member Col (ret'd) Oli Ahmad, a veteran freedom fighter who was also a close aide to late president Ziaur Rahman.

Later the launching of a new political party named Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) led by former president Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury and Col (ret'd) Oli Ahmad was announced at a rally in front of Saffron Garden Restaurant in Banani on Thursday afternoon. LDP leaders and activists also brought out a procession at Gulshan and Banani areas following the rally chanting slogans against Khaleda Zia and her son Tarique Rahman.

Never before did BNP face such a high profile defection from the party in the last 15 years. During the last general election a few dissident leaders revolted against the party but finally the party high command managed to quell the revolt successfully.

BNP sources said Party Chairperson also Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in a party standing committee meeting held on Thursday night expressed her dissatisfaction over the defection of the party lawmakers and asked loyal party leaders to 'manage' the defectors and the remaining dissident leaders quickly.

LDP leaders told reporters that Oli Ahmad had been trying to organise dissident BNP leaders over the last six months. A large number of ministers, lawmakers, senior BNP leaders, and former lawmakers agreed to form a new political party under the leadership of Badruddoza Chowdhury and Oli Ahmad.

Among the defectors are former speaker in parliament Shaikh Razzak Ali, State Minister Alamgir Kabir MP (member of parliament), Deputy Minister Moni Swapan Dewan MP, PM's Adviser on Primary and Mass Education Ministry Prof Jahanara Begum, former state minister Maj Gen (ret'd) Anwarul Kabir Talukder MP, Barrister Ziaur Rahman Khan MP, Redwan Ahmed MP, Mohammad Kabir Hossain MP, Syed Monjur Hossain MP, Abdul Karim Abbasi MP, Mohammad Abu Hena MP, Ali Qadar MP, and Mohammad Ali Jinnah MP.

Earlier on May 8, 2004 former president AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury formed Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh and soon afterwards erwhile BNP lawmakers Major (ret'd) Abdul Mannan and Mahi B Chowdhury joined him.

On Wednesday night the defecting ministers, lawmakers and leaders gathered secretly in a private hotel at Baridhara and on Thursday morning Syed Manjur Hossain MP, Ziaur Rahman Khan MP and Prof Jahanara Begum joined them. Manjur Hossain came out from his constituency on a helicopter and Zia went to the hotel directly from the airport after his arrival from London.

Mahi B Chowdhury MP and former BNP leader Shahadat Hossain Selim received the lawmakers at the hotel. Later they joined the first rally of the nascent political party led by AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury and Oli Ahmad.

LDP President Badruddoza Chowdhury and its Executive President Col (ret'd) Oli formally announced at the rally the formation of the new party and its avowed mission of fighting against corruption, terrorism and poverty.

Before the formal declaration came, the defecting ministers and MPs had submitted resignation letters to their hitherto chairperson Khaleda Zia. In the resignation letters, the contents of which were the same, the defecting leaders said, "Corruption of some ministers, MPs and leaders, led by your son Tarique Rahman, has broken all previous records. This has tarnished the image of the party. It is not possible for any person having a sense of personal dignity to continue in the party anymore. The BNP established by late president Ziaur Rahman is now controlled by Razakars (anti-liberation force), autocrats and corruptionists. Against the principle of democracy, Tarique, without having any protocol, has been abusing state power."

"The present BNP under the autocratic leadership of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and her son Tarique Rahman is the champion of extreme corruption and inefficiency," Oli Ahmad

said at the rally explaining the reasons for their defection from BNP.

He told journalists that the PM's 'family' is involved in corruption and meddled in the affairs of the state and the party.

He said some '14 members of Khaleda Zia's family amassed enormous amount of wealth in a very short time and frustrated administrative moves to curb corruption.'

Despite repeated allegations of corruption against cabinet members, the incumbent government took no action because a share of the ill-gotten money was given to the 'family', he said.

The former army officer also an ex-minister mentioned that the government failed to curb price hike, inflation, crises of power supply, diesel and fertilizer. It also failed to deal with deteriorating law and order situation, terrorist bombings and to disclose the sources of illegal arms and the names of terror financiers, he added.

Oli, who was a close aide to late president Ziaur Rahman when they revolted against the Pakistani army to fight the liberation war in 1971, also fulminated against the 'induction of anti-liberation elements into the government.'

Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury, another founder-leader of BNP said a new journey has begun in the fight against corruption, terrorism and poverty through the formation of LDP.

He alleged that 14 members of the prime minister's family garnered hundreds of crores of taka through corrupt means.

B Chowdhury -- who had been made to make an unceremonious exit from the presidency during this government's tenure -- observed that the PM's family is 'corrupt' and 'misappropriated' national wealth affecting 'most of the cabinet ministers'.

State Minister Alamgir Kabir, a veteran freedom fighter who was accused of patronising militant leaders led by Bangla Bhal, alleged that corruption these days 'surpassed all previous records since the country's independence.'

"Thousands of crores of taka was siphoned off the country. This is poor people's money and the people must realise that money back," he said. "Who are the masterminds of Islamist militancy in the country?" the dissident minister asked adding that the 'secret' must be disclosed.

Former speaker in parliament Shaikh Razzak Ali said, "The nation expelled this from us as it wants to resist those who want to destroy democracy."

"We urge the people to join the movement against corruption and the failure of the government," Redwan Ahmed said.

Former state minister Anwarul Kabir Talukder said, "We will fight against corruption and the dynastic politics in Bangladesh."

Prof Jahanara Begum, Abdul Karim Abbasi, MA Jinnah, Ziaur Rahman Khan, Ali Qadar, Syed Manjur Hossain, Mahi B Chowdhury and Shahadat Hossain Selim also addressed the rally.

Huji commander Hannan, brother remanded

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Mufti Abdul Hannan, operations commander of banned Islamist outfit Harkatul Jihad (Hujji), and his brother Huji member Mahibullah alias Mafizur Rahman on a five-day fresh remand in connection with a murder case.

On October 22, the two brothers were shown arrested in the case that was lodged with Sutrapur Police Station in connection with the killing of Arif alias Dil on November 5, 2001.

They were placed on a four-day remand. On completion of the four-day remand with the help of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) produced them before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court, Dhaka yesterday afternoon.



Dr Yunus calls on Japan to emulate 'micro-credit'

AFP, Tokyo

Bangladeshi economist Dr Muhammad Yunus called on Japan to emulate his idea of "micro-credit," or loans to the poor without collateral, which won him the Nobel Peace Prize this year.

"Micro-credit would be a very important vehicle through which they (Japan) can address their question of poverty," he told a news conference after his arrival on a six-day trip to Japan.

"We had a lot of trouble trying to bring this idea to the notice of policy makers in this country," he said, noting Japan was a major donor to the third world, according to Kyodo News.

"What makes me so happy is that finally we don't have to waste hours and days and months just to get five minutes attention," he added.

Yunus, 66, was awarded the prize on October 13 for his work at the Grameen Bank, which he set up in 1976 to provide access to credit to people too poor to qualify for traditional bank loans.

"My life is no longer the same as it was before the 13th of October, and nor is the life of micro-credit," Yunus, known as the "Banker to the Poor," was quoted as saying.

He proposed creating "social business enterprises," a new type of business that aims to do good rather than make profits, Kyodo said. "Human beings are a much bigger creation than just money-making machines," he said.

"We can create a lot of social business enterprises, addressing social issues, poverty, empowerment, children, nutrition, the environment," he added. He said he was willing to collaborate with Japanese companies to launch such social businesses.

While in Japan, Yunus is scheduled to visit the ancient city of Kyoto and Hiroshima, which was devastated by a US atom bomb attack in the closing days of World War II and serves as a centre of the country's peace movement.

He will also hold talks with Japanese government officials and attend a symposium at the United Nations University in Tokyo.

33 killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

At least 33 people were killed in road accidents across the country during the Eid vacation.

Our CU Correspondent reports: Three people of a family were killed and another injured in a road accident at Madam Bibir Hat on Dhaka-Chittagong highway yesterday afternoon.

The victims were identified as Mohammed Shahrir, 40, his wife Yasmin Akhter, 35, and their son Faman, 4. Name of the injured child of the same family could not be known immediately.

Sources said the accident occurred when a Feni-bound coach of Star Line Service and a Chittagong-bound microbus collided head-on at Chairman Ghat under Sitakunda Police Station at around 3:00pm.

Shahrir, also owner of the microbus, died on the spot while Yasmin and Faman died on the way to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

Police seized the bus, but the driver managed to escape.

Our Correspondent from Gaibandha adds: Three people were killed and 10 others injured when a microbus rammmed a rickshaw van at Boalia on Bogra-Rangpur highway on Thursday night.

The deceased were identified as van passengers Amir Hossain, 60, Haripad Das, 50 and his son Chaitanya, 15, all hailed from Amgaon village.

Sources said the accident took place at Boalia when the microbus driver lost his control over the steering, killing Amir on the spot.

Van passengers Haripad and Chaitanya were admitted to Govindaganj health complex where they succumbed to their injuries.

Our Correspondent from Sirajganj adds: At least six people were killed and 47 others injured in a road accident on Sirajganj-Kazipur highway near Gozaria Bridge at Kazipur upazila of Sirajganj district on Sunday.

The deceased were identified as Sharif, 27, Sultan, 32, Minu, 26, Monju, 28, Golap, 35, and Fulchand, 29.

Police said the accident occurred at 9:30pm, when a Kazipur-bound bus with some garment workers on board skidded off the road and turned upside down.

UNB from Comilla adds: Seven people, including six expatriates, were killed and 25 others injured in a road accident on Thursday on Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Chandina on their way home after their long stay abroad.

Sources said that a minibus was carrying 13 expatriates to Comilla and Chittagong from Dhaka after their return from Qatar and Dubai.

"A Dhaka-bound bus of S Alam Service, coming from the opposite direction, rammmed the minibus at about 1:00pm," says a policeman, quoting witnesses.

33 killed in road accidents

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One of the deceased was identified as Aminul Islam, 30. Aminul might be the driver of the minibus, police said.

One injured expatriate, Shakhawat Hossain of Brahmanpara in Comilla district, said they reached Zia International Airport by a flight of Qatar Airlines at 7:00am on Thursday from Qatar and Dubai.

UNB from Gazipur adds: At least 10 people were killed and 28 others injured in a head-on collision between two buses at Nayapur of Sreepur upazila in the district on Monday.

Police said the deceased were identified as Belal Hossain, 25, Bidya Mia, 24, Mohsin, 19, Khairul, 20, Sohag, 19, Shahidul, 23, Atiqul, 37, Khokon, 22, Qazem, 26. The other dead, a woman, could not be identified.

Four of the deceased - Belal, Bidya, Mohsin and Khairul - were workers of Nawab Abdul Malek Jute Mills at Kanchpur in Narayanganj district.

Witnesses said the accident took place on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway at about 10:30am when a Dhaka-bound bus of Dream Paribahan from Mymensingh collided with a Sherpur-bound bus that was carrying the workers.

UNB from Cox's Bazar adds: Three people were killed and 15 others injured when a microbus rammmed six rickshaws on Kolatoli bypass road near the sea beach on Thursday night.

Locals said a pedestrian and a rickshaw puller died on the spot when the accident took place at about 10:30am.

Rickshaw passenger Aminur Rahman 28, died after he was taken to Sadar hospital. Aminur Rahman along with his nine associates went to visit Cox's Bazar sea beach from Uttar Bashabo of Dhaka.

UNB, from Habiganj adds: A college student was killed and two others were injured in an accident at Alampur on Nabiganj-Habiganj road on Wednesday morning.

The deceased was identified as Ashiam, 18, a 1st year HSC student of Brindaban Government College.

Witnesses said a motorcycle, carrying three classmates, fell into a roadside ditch after hitting a rickshaw at about 10:00am, injuring them critically.

Injured Ashiam, Uzzal, 18, and Shakil, 17, were rushed to Habiganj Sadar Hospital in critical condition.

Later, Ashim succumbed to injuries while being transferred to Dhaka.

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Dr Aminul Islam new SUST VC

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dr M Aminul Islam, a professor at physics department of Rajshahi University, has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) for a four-year term, says a press release.

Dr Islam, former president of Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers' Association, also served as Pro-VC of National University from 2002 to August 2006.

A noted nuclear physicist, Dr Islam worked on advanced research in the famous Oak Ridge National Laboratory twice on their invitation as a visiting scholar.

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Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

M Matlub Hossain, father of Ziaul Huq Swapan, joint news editor of The Daily Star, passed away at his Ukilpara residence in Nilphamari town yesterday morning at the age of 90.

M Hossain, a retired auditor of Bangladesh Railway, left behind five sons and four daughters and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

He was buried at Circuit House Graveyard after a namaz-e-janaza on Court Masjid premises after Maghrib prayers.

Staffs of The Daily Star have expressed condolence at his death.

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