

## Indian cops arrest serial 'child-killer'

### Find 6 bodies

AFP, New Delhi

A suspected serial child-killer was arrested yesterday by Indian police following the discovery of the bodies of six children in a satellite city of New Delhi.

The suspect appeared to be a "mentally ill" man who confessed to police he had lured the children with chocolates and other candies and toys, senior Noida police official R.K.S. Rathore told TV reporters.

"He says he kidnapped the children for sex," Rathore said, adding that police were still questioning the man.

Residents called police after they detected a foul stench emanating from a house in Noida.

Skeletons and body parts of the victims — aged between six and 12 — were found hidden in the multistorey house in Noida, a hub for global software giants, police said.

Television footage showed policemen with shovels recovering bones, clothes and slippers of suspected victims from a drain just outside the property.

The remains, gathered into sacks, have been taken for DNA testing, police said.

Of the six victims, two were boys and four were girls, the Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency reported.

The victims were the children of migrant labourers living in shanty clusters near the house, reports said, adding some 40 children had been reported missing in the area in the past two years.

The house where the remains were found belonged to a businessman identified as Mohinder Singh, who has been detained for questioning.

The suspected killer, whom the police identified as Satish, was his domestic help and lived there, the PTI reported.

Satish was initially picked up for questioning in a case involving the disappearance of a 16-year-old girl, identified as Payal, from the neighbourhood, Rathore said.

"When he confessed to killing Payal, we questioned him about the children who were missing too. Then he confessed to kidnapping some kids after offering them sweets and candies, and then killing them.

"We then searched the house where he lived and found skeletons, body remains and some clothes of the children," Rathore said.

As news of the discovery of the children's remains spread, hundreds of irate relatives gathered outside the

## Cattle prices

FROM PAGE 16 especially for Eid-ul-Azha had to buy cattle food with almost double the price. Meanwhile, traders faced problems buying Indian cattle due to the strictness of officials at the borders with India, sources said.

They also said political leaders were hindering the transport of cattle to the capital. Besides, extortion on trucks loaded with cattle has also increased and it is playing a key role in the high price of cattle.

The DCC has fixed hasil (commission) at five percent against the selling price of each animal in the temporary markets and 4.25 percent in the Gabtoli permanent market this year. However, it was alleged that seven percent hasil was being charged at Naya Bazar in the capital.

Most of the inhabitants of Dhaka are expected to start buying their sacrificial animals from today. Meanwhile, goat traders were seen selling goats at different areas of the capital indiscriminately including on roadsides, in front of shopping malls and residential areas without the approval of the DCC.

The cattle markets in the capital are at Naya Bazar, Postogola, Agargaon slum ground, Talatala Bus Stand, Meradiya Haat, Uttara Azampur, Kamalapur Brothers' Union ground, Hussaini Dalan Road (from Chankharpu to Bakshi Bazar traffic signal), Dhupkhola ground, Rahmatganj playground, Jhigatala-Hazaribagh ground, Khilkhet Tanpara and Sunrise Sporting Club ground.

## Dense fog bedevils

FROM PAGE 1 created as nearly 1,000 vehicles got stuck on the two sides of the Padma river at Paturia and Daulatdia ferry terminals for seven hours, reports our Manikganj correspondent.

Bhasa Shahid Barkat ferry with several buses and trucks on board kept floating on the middle of the river from midnight to 11:00am, he said. Besides, 1,500 goods carrying trucks also remained stranded at the Paturia ghat as the authorities allowed the passengers carrying vehicles on priority basis. The fog disrupted the launch service also, our Manikganj correspondent added.

"My wife spent several hours in the bus at Paturia ferry terminal yesterday. As there was no arrangement for lunch there, my son had to fast the whole day," said Md Shariful Islam, a resident from Mirpur.

The dense fog disrupted the ferry movement in the last few days, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authorities Deputy Director General of Aricha zone Shahadat Ali told the

building.

"It's been over a year that my nephew has been missing and whenever we went to the police, we were told to register a complaint and look for the child ourselves," said a woman, identified as Kamlesh by NDTV news channel.

"We told the police (we) were suspicious of this man (Satish) but they did not listen to us," said Kamlesh, one of those who gathered outside the house with a photograph showing a boy dressed in a blue pullover.

Sunil, the father of a 10-year-old girl missing since April, said his daughter was last seen near Satish's house.

He complained that the police had taken his complaint casually, telling him his daughter would come back on her own, PTI reported.

## Asia Internet slowly comes back online

AFP, Hong Kong

Millions of frustrated Internet users across Asia slowly regained access to overseas websites yesterday, three days after an earthquake off the coast of Taiwan snapped several vital undersea cables.

Telecoms operators across the region re-routed Internet links to circumvent the ruptured lines off the southern part of the island, as engineers donned diving suits to assess the damage and begin repairs.

But customers in the Philippines have been asked to play their part too — by limiting overseas calls to family and friends over the New Year.

PCCW, Hong Kong's largest fixed-line operator, said it was seeing continuous improvement in Internet access through data re-routing and acquisition of alternative bandwidth.

"We are expecting substantial improvement of the service over the next 24 hours," it said in a statement.

A spokesman earlier said all international call and roaming services had returned to normal.

Hong Kong's telecommunications authority said five maintenance ships had been dispatched to repair six fiber-optic cables, which handle about 90 percent of telecommunications capacity in the area.

"Overall, there has been some improvement in access to the Internet today. However, most users will continue to experience slow access," it said in a statement.

It added some ships arrived at the scene Thursday, but the weather had obstructed survey and assessment work.

"Initial surveys indicated that damage to the submarine cables was substantial," it said.

The authority said it may take longer to repair the cables than the original estimate of five to seven days.

## Muslims pray

FROM PAGE 1 Saudi Arabia usually receive permits too.

The authorities say they will crack down hard on Muslims who try to sneak into Makkah without official permits — a phenomenon that can swell numbers by 500,000 to more than 2.5 million.

But at Mount Arafat on Friday there were few indications that the new measures had been successful. Roads and pathways were lined with beggars, traders and pilgrims without permits who had bought tents to sleep in and shelter from the sun.

"It's a pity we see so much disorder, things have not improved," Ruzqia Manouzi said.

A security officer standing beside a group of people camping with sleeping bags and cooking utensils said there was nothing the authorities could do about them.

## Youths

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and many other civil society members also expressed their solidarity with the initiative.

Several thousand youths attended the eight-hour long concert where around 30 singers—both bands and solo—performed.

"All our advancements since the independence have failed because of corruption and failing to establish good governance," TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said while inaugurating the concert.

He urged the young generation to come forward and stand against corruption. "The youths can play a vital role in the anti-corruption movement," he added.

Urging the youths to hate corruption, Daily Samakal News Editor Mojammeel Hossain Manju said the media can tear off the mask of the corrupt if the press is given complete freedom.

Sunil, the father of a 10-year-old girl missing since April, said his daughter was last seen near Satish's house.

He complained that the police had taken his complaint casually, telling him his daughter would come back on her own, PTI reported.

As part of its ongoing anti-corruption movement, the TIB organised yesterday's concert themed "the youths will resist corruption" to inspire the young generation.

Of the popular bands Feedback, Souls, Renaissance, Miles, Warfaze, Pentagon, LRB, Meghdal, Dalchuth, Face to Face, Arthohin, and Artcell performed in the concert.

Leading bauls from Kushtia, a team of Gambhira—a type of folk music of Chapainawabganj—also participated in the concert and appreciated its concept.

Solo performers of the concert included Azam Khan, Fahmida Nabi, SI Tutul, Hyder Husyn, Shahed, and Mehrin.

The Daily Star, Channel i, Radio Today, Radio Furti, and Bangla Vision cosponsored the concert.

The TIB initiated a project called YES (Youth Engagement and Support) to create awareness among the young generation and create leadership to prevent corruption in future.

YES emphasises on creating possibilities of democracy, good governance and anti-corruption values in the fields of education and professional life of the youths at national and local levels.

It arranges debates, essay-writing and cartoon competitions, and anti-corruption programmes with volunteer groups in 36 areas of six divisions of the country.

## AL man killed

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Activists of the two rival political parties exploded bombs and used lethal weapons during the clash that continued for an hour. Police rushed to the spot and dispersed the clashing groups.

Critically injured Saad was taken to Kushtia General Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries at 4:30pm.

The injured are undergoing treatment at Daulatpur Upazila Health Complex.

## BNP bins

FROM PAGE 1

"Seeing the programmes enforced by the 14-party, it seems that they would like to create constitutional crisis through creating obstacles in the way of election," he said.

Regarding the demands about Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), the BNP leader said police and Rab are trying to recover illegal arms for ensuring a peaceful environment for the election.

"They have declared such programmes only to create obstacles in the democratic process," he said.

Asked about their 'counter programme', he said the BNP does not believe in any counter programme and people will give the proper reply through the ballots.

"We don't think but people think," he said when a reporter asked him if he thinks the AL-led alliance's programme is linked with the Ershad issue.

"To criticise the court verdict or going for movement against it is tantamount to conspiracy as one can appeal if he is aggrieved," he said, adding that the High Court only confirmed the conviction of Ershad.

Mannan Bhuiyan said they would announce the candidature list on the day of nomination withdrawal.

Asked about the dissident leaders of the party, he said, "There is nothing called dissidents while we have a lot of competent candidates in every constituency. Those who will not get the party ticket will withdraw their nominations."

The party will take action against those who will not accept the party decision, he added.

BNP Vice-chairman MK Anwar, Joint Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan, Mayor of Barisal City Corporation Mujibur Rahman Sarwar were present, among others.

## DMP

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some unruly youths resort to objectionable activities in the name of pleasure, said a DMP release.

"It hampers the normal life of common people and also disrupts the law and order situation, which is undesirable," the release added.

The DMP has requested the city dwellers to extend their cooperation to the law enforcers in maintaining peace and discipline.

## AL's alliance

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the election Hasina said, "We have always wanted to go to the election and we still want to go. But where is the proper voter list?"

"How can we participate in the election, when our activists are being murdered by Rab without trial?" she asked demanding suspension of Rapid Action Battalion's (Rab) activities until the election. "Do they want to create a farce? Do they want to hold an eyewitness election?" asked Hasina.

The AL president said lajuddin does not want the people's participation in the poll, all he wants is to steal the people's votes so that he can bring his 'madam' [Khaleda Zia] back to the seat of power.

Asked about Ershad's statement earlier in the day that the grand alliance is not ready to go to the election without him, Hasina categorically dismissed the claim by saying, "It is his personal view."

The grand alliance's demands are resignation of the CA, rescheduling of the election and publication of the correctly updated voter list, she added.

She also called for rescheduling of the polling date for establishing a congenial atmosphere prior to holding the election, "Because," she said, "An election acceptable to the people and participated by them is more important than holding it on a fixed date."

"The people will neither accept nor allow an election where votes are stolen indiscriminately. The people want an acceptable election through which their verdict will be reflected. That is why all the voters' names will have to be on the voter list," said the AL chief threatening to go for a tougher movement to materialise the people's expectation for a constitutionally sound election.

She also called for publishing a rough voter list for the public, saying, the people have a constitutional right to know whether their names are on the voter roll. According to the electoral laws, 15 days have to be allotted for examining the rough list, she said explaining her demand for rescheduling the polling date.

The AL head also accused the Election Commission of misleading

her party by creating two voter lists, one of which, she alleged, was given to BNP and the presiding officers, while AL was given "the false one".

She also demanded voters' identity cards for all voters and transparent ballot boxes.

Saying many new polling centres have been created for the benefit of BNP-Jamaat alliance's candidates, she demanded that the previous polling centres be kept operational as per the electoral manual. Presiding and polling officers will have to be appointed following consultations with all candidates, she added.

Asked about the purpose of the January 7 and 8 blockades when numerous previous blockades and other attempts to pressure the caretaker government did not result in updating of the voter list to their satisfaction or in removal of lajuddin, Hasina replied that they have in fact gained a number of successes, more of which will continue coming in the future.

"We have prevented KM Hasan from becoming the chief adviser, and have gotten rid of MIA Aziz and SM Zakaria from the Election Commission through small but strong movements. We can keep achieving more through our movement for a free and fair election," she added.

## Ershad, B Chy

FROM PAGE 1

include resignation of President lajuddin Ahmed from the post of chief adviser, updating the voter list as per the high court verdict, and reform of the Election Commission.

Meanwhile, Badruddoza Chowdhury, president of Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), a major ally of the AL-led grand alliance, said it depends on the chief adviser whether the election will be held or not.

"Iajuddin will have to meet the people's demand for holding the next general election in a free and fair manner. This person will be held responsible if the election is not held," he told newsmen.

The two former presidents were present at the press conference where AL President Sheikh Hasina announced fresh agitation programme.

## Ershad appeals

FROM PAGE 1

EC sources also said Awami League (AL) leader Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir yesterday submitted an appeal to the EC for cancelling the nomination paper of BNP leader ANM Ehsanul Haque Milon on charge of dual citizenship.

Those who appealed yesterday against cancellation of their nominations include some high profile aspirants like Yusuf Abdullah Harun from Comilla-3 constituency, Nasrin Jahan Ratna (wife of JP General Secretary Ruhul Amin Howlader) from Barisal-6, SM Akram from Narayanganj-5, Laxmi Prasad Chakma from Rangamati, and Lovely Yasmin from Dinajpur-6.

As per the election laws, a candidate can appeal against rejection of his or her nomination papers within three days. The candidate can also move in the High Court if the EC rejects his or her appeal.

The EC starts disposing of the appeals from December 31.

On not accepting the appeals from different banks, EC Secretary Abdur Rashid Sarker yesterday told newsmen at his office that there is no scope for appeal to cancel nomination papers already accepted.

"There is no such law to cancel the nomination papers that have once been declared accepted by the ROs," he said.

When he was reminded that such appeals were accepted during the last election, Sarker said, "That was done from a different perspective."

He, however, said, "The ROs responsible could be brought to justice if it is proved that they had accepted nomination papers of loan defaulters despite having proper evidence in this regard."

On Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir's appeal, the EC secretary said, "His

appeal will be placed before the EC."

The ROs on Wednesday rejected 264 nomination papers on grounds of loan default and other disqualifying factors.

The ROs also rejected all the five nomination papers Ershad had filed for Dhaka-5, Rangpur-3, Lalmonirhat-3, Sylhet-3 and Habiganj-3 on grounds of the Supreme Court's rejection of his appeal against a High Court (HC) verdict. The HC had sentenced Ershad to two years in prison in a graft case.

"Ershad's nomination papers have been cancelled for political gain," JP Secretary General Ruhul Amin Howlader yesterday told newsmen after filing an appeal with the EC on behalf of Ershad.

"We did not get justice anywhere," he said, "We hope to get justice from the EC."

Ershad's lawyer Sirajul Islam also claimed that the ROs have rejected Ershad's nomination papers "illegally". "We will go to the higher court if we do not get justice from the EC," he said.

Golam Faruque Ovi, international affairs secretary of JP-Manjui, filed an appeal with the EC yesterday, challenging the validity of the RO's decision to reject his nomination paper for Barisal-2.

The RO rejected Ovi's nomination on grounds of loan default on December 27.

Ovi had filed nomination as an independent candidate on December 26 protesting his party's decision to join the BNP-led four-party alliance.

Advocate Humayun Kabir filed the appeal on behalf of Ovi, who is now in Canada.

## JMB Leaders' appeal

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Ahmed were killed in the suicide bomb attack at Purba Chadkati in Jhalakathi town on November 14 last year in the wake of a series of bombings carried out by Islamist militants across the country.

The High Court on August 31 upheld the trial court verdict that handed death penalty to the seven JMB men on May 29.

Although the convicts repeatedly said they do not accept the verdict of any "worldly court" and will not appeal against it, they eventually turned around following the HC verdict.

Abdur Rahman and Siddiqul Islam sent letters to the SC registrar, saying once again that it is justified to kill people for establishing Islamic rules and that the judges, who held their trial under Taguti (non-Islamic) laws neglecting the Shariah, themselves deserve death.

WHAT NEXT

After the copy of the SC judgment reaches the jails, the prisons authorities will convey it to the convicts. The jail authorities will also ask them to inform in seven

## Gangsters

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for the rivals of the immediate past government out of 'anger' at the four-party alliance.

"We worked for them (four-party alliance), but in reward, they prepared criminals' list after getting elected, compelling us to leave the country," said another expressing his indignation about the immediate past government.

Joy's men are active in the Mirpur, Mohammadpur, Moghbazar and its adjacent areas, he added, while Shuvro's goons operate in Motijheel, Ramna and its surrounding areas.

Several men of Shahadat Bahini, infamous in Mirpur area, stepped into Bangladesh a week back and are now busy organising the group that became scattered after Shahadat fled Dhaka to escape arrest.

Several businessmen from Mohammadpur, Mirpur and Moghbazar areas have reported of being threatened by the gang.

Sources also said another gang, known as the 'Kakrail Group,' has also regrouped and started their activities in Dhaka.

Contacted, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), however, denied any such entrance of the criminals in the country. The Director General of Rab SM Mizanur Rahman told The Daily Star last night that the anti-crime forces have kept vigil on the situation.

"There is no report of any such entry of the wanted criminals in the country. We have put our men on alert and are working on the matter," he said.

## 2 JMB militants

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Sirajul and Joyal around 12:30am yesterday after they got on the bus to check the passengers' luggage at a check post on Rabna Bypass on Dhaka-Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Extension Road in Tangail. The bus was heading for Dhaka from Meherpur.

"As the policeman and the other man got on the bus, two youths sitting in the front row of the bus pulled their firearms out and fired two shots at the them," Superintendent of Police (SP) of Tangail Israil Haoladar told The Daily Star quoting a passenger of the bus.

Hearing the gunshots, three traffic sergeants and a police patrol team rushed to the spot and encircled the bus. The criminals then fired at least three shots from inside the bus.

Later, police with assistance from the bus passengers managed to arrest Fahad and Saiful.

## AL leader shot dead

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left the scene. Babar died instantly.

The injured AL men—Sabur, Ruhul, Sonah Miah, Salim, Jabbar and Omar—are undergoing treatment at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH).

A case was filed with Ramu Police Station. Police arrested seven people, including local BNP leader Jabbar, in connection with the case.

Local Awami League staged demonstration at Ramu bus stand yesterday demanding exemplary punishment to the attackers.

## Iraq mosque

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confirmed the attack but gave a higher casualty toll, saying that 10 people had been killed and 15 wounded.

Khalis is a town in Diyala province 70km north of the capital in an area roamed by Sunni insurgents fighting under al-Qaeda banner and Shia militias linked to parties in Iraq's US-backed government.

The attack came as the Shia-led government prepared to execute ousted Sunni dictator Saddam Hussein, an event which is expected to further increase the already sky-high tensions between Sunni and Shia factions.

Meanwhile, US troops killed six people and destroyed a weapons cache Friday in separate raids in Baghdad and northwest of the Iraqi capital, the US military said.

American forces killed four people and destroyed two buildings in a morning raid in the village of Thar Thar, northwest of Baghdad, the military said in a statement.

Intelligence reports indicated that roadside bombs were being produced in the buildings, and US troops found 16 pounds of home-made explosives, two large bombs, a rocket-propelled grenade, suicide vests and multiple batteries, the military said.

"Upon entering the first building, coalition forces were engaged by armed terrorists. Coalition forces returned fire, killing four terrorists," the statement said. The military then destroyed the buildings in an airstrike.

In another raid, US troops killed two people and captured two others in a raid against purported al-Qaeda terrorists in Baghdad, the military said. Two Iraqis were also wounded. A cache of AK-47s was seized in that raid.

## Rejoinder, our reply

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have been initiated against any officer basing on mere anonymous letter. If there are specific allegations against any officer, departmental proceeding is drawn against him," said the rejoinder signed by Additional Inspector General of Prisons Col Md Sirajul Islam.

Opposing Amik's statement, it claimed no jail guard was sent to any jail without mentioning job description and that everyone working in the jail department is assigned with a specific job.

"The statement of collecting money from inmates' visitors at different jails in the name of 'Command Fund' is not correct," said the rejoinder.

OUR REPLY

In a letter to the home secretary on November 5, prisons officer Amik expressed his apprehension of harassment and being harmed for filing a writ petition against recruitment rules and seeking legal explanation and written orders after being asked to "comply with extra-legal circulars and improper orders over telephone".

After he challenged the legality of his transfer to Sunamganj, which he termed demotion in his petition, an HC bench on October 19 issued a rule asking the authorities concerned to explain why the order should not be declared unlawful and of no legal effect.

Although Inspector General of Prisons Brig Gen Zakir Hasan had described Amik as the most corrupt officer of the department, the rejoinder admitted that the prisons authorities had sent a proposal to the home ministry to promote Amik to the post of a deputy inspector general.

The jail authorities denied collecting money using the name 'Command Fund', but admitted of collecting Tk 2 as 'service charge', which is violation of home ministry's and previous prisons administration's prohibition on collecting any money from the visitors. A High Court bench on October 19 stayed for three months collection of Tk 2 from visitors "in the name of Command Fund".

## Somali PM enters

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