



Families' fight takes teen's life

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Rony Hawladar, an SSC candidate from Gopalganj Sadar upazila, just returned home after attending private classes yesterday morning when a clash ensued just in front of his house.

Minutes later, when the 16-year-old boy stepped out to see what was going on, a bullet ripped through his chest.

The bullet was shot by Azizur Sheikh, a former member of Karpara union parishad in the upazila, after his family rivals attacked his house.

It all began with a scuffle between Rahim Sheikh, a follower of Azizur, and Natun Mollah over sitting on a bench at a tea stall in Bongram Purbopara village around 9:00am, said locals.

"Sheikh" and "Mollah" are the titles of two families which have been in a long-standing row over establishing supremacy in the locality.

A few days ago, supporters of Azizur beat Natun. As a result, Natun engaged in an altercation as soon as he saw Rahim yesterday.

The altercation turned violent in no time as supporters of two families arrived at the scene wielding lethal weapons.

At one point, Natun's supporters launched an attack on Azizur's house across the road. Enraged, Azizur fired shots in the air to intimidate the attackers, but one of the bullets hit Rony, who had no involvement in the incident whatsoever, witness and police said.

Rony, son of Anwar Hawladar, was a student of Azharia High School and elder of two brothers.

A shroud of sorrow pervaded the area after the death news spread.

Ten others were injured during the clash, said Monirul



Rony Hawladar



A toddler learns to write the alphabets from a Hindu priest in front of an idol of goddess Saraswati -- a ritual that inaugurates the schooling of a child. The photo was taken at Dhaka University's Jagannath Hall on the day of the Saraswati puja yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

All-round U-19s through to WC semis

SPORTS REPORTER

An all-round performance by the Bangladesh Under-19s helped the young Tigers secure the semifinal spot in the ongoing ICC Under-19 World Cup as they thrashed hosts South Africa by 104 runs in Potchefstroom yesterday.

Bangladesh will now face New Zealand at the same venue on February 6 in their second-ever semifinal of cricket's biggest age-level event.

Left-arm spinner Rakibul Hasan shone for the young Tigers yesterday. He returned figures of five for 19 in 9.3 overs as Bangladesh bundled South Africa out for 157 runs in 42.3 overs after posting a challenging 261 for five. All the six bowlers used by Bangladesh on the day were economical with Towhid Hridoy being the exception, giving away seven runs in one over.

The challenge for the young Tigers, who saw rain

Three killed in 'shootouts' in a single day

STAR REPORT

Three people, including two alleged muggers, were killed in "shootouts" in the capital Dhaka and Jashore early yesterday.

Two alleged muggers, who were killed in a "gunfight" in the city's Khilkhet area, are Nazmul and Shahin. They stood accused in at least four cases, including murder and mugging, police said.

A police team on Wednesday arrested a mugger who was accused in private university student Mizan murder case. Based on his information, the team raided different areas to detain his accomplices, police said.

The "gunfight" took place when a police team set up a checkpoint at Dumni around 3:45am, said Biplob Bijoy Talukder, deputy commissioner (Tejgaon division) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

When the team signalled a CNG-run auto-rickshaw to stop, the criminals opened fire from the vehicle. The law enforcers retaliated, leaving Nazmul and Shahin injured.

The two were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared them dead.

Police claimed to have recovered a firearm and seized the auto-rickshaw used

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH

Bangabandhu's nation-building challenges



Robert S. McNamara, president, World Bank, calls on Bangabandhu at the PM's official residence (January 31, 1972).

JANUARY 31, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

MUJIB-MCNAMEARA TALKS

In a 45-minute-long meeting with Bangabandhu at the Prime Minister's official residence, the World Bank President Robert S. McNamara urges Bangladesh to become a member of The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and IMF. The World Bank chief shares his plan to extend technical and financial support to the war-ravaged Bangladesh. A spokesperson of the Prime Minister's

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From today we start a new series recounting, day-by-day, the challenges Bangabandhu faced during first year in office. We hope our humble effort will help to educate the younger generation of the dexterity with which he led us into realising the Sonar Bangla of our dreams.



UPDF man shot dead in Khagrachhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

A United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF) member was shot dead when UPDF men and their rivals were involved in a gun battle in Matiranga upazila yesterday morning, said police.

The victim is Arjun Chakma, 40.

Shamsuddin Bhuiyan, officer-in-charge of Matiranga Police Station, said the two groups traded bullets at Aachai Para around 9:00am.

Arjun was found dead on the spot.

On information, police recovered the body and sent it to Khagrachhari Sadar Hospital for an autopsy.

In a statement later, the UPDF alleged that their rivals carried out the attack without specifying who the rivals were.

No case had been filed as of filing of this report at 7:30pm yesterday evening.

Reward for plucking tyre off croc's neck



AFP, Jakarta

Indonesian authorities are offering a reward to anyone who can rescue a saltwater crocodile with a motorbike tyre stuck around its neck.

The contest will see one brave croc hunter land an unspecified amount of cash, but it will mean coming face to face with the 13-foot (4-metre) reptile Palu, the capital of Central Sulawesi.

Local conservation authorities have been trying -- and failing -- for several years to find a way to untangle the croc after video showed it gasping for air.

That sparked worries the tyre was slowly killing the beast.

After a recent sighting, the province's governor instructed his resource-strapped conservation agency to figure out how to end years of fruitless attempts.

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62,537 acres of khas land grabbed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Grabbers occupy around 62,537 acres of khas land across the country, Land Minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury told parliament yesterday.

Of the land, the highest 24,859 acres are in Chattogram division, 15,054 in Dhaka division, 7,388 in Rangpur division, 5,165 in Sylhet division, 4,070 in Barisal division, 3,446 in Khulna division, and 1,162 in Rajshahi division, he said.

The minister came up with the statistics in

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PRAYER TIMING JANUARY 31

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5:35 12:30 4:15 5:46 7:15
JAMAAT 6:10 1:15 4:30 5:50 7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

TRUMP IMPEACHMENT

Senate may acquit Trump today

Democrats' push for witnesses falters; White House moves to bar Bolton book over 'top secret' material

REUTERS, Washington

A Democratic push to force Republicans to accept witnesses at President Donald Trump's impeachment trial in the US Senate appeared to be flagging on Wednesday, raising the possibility he could be acquitted as early as Friday.

As senators questioned both the Trump legal team and the Democratic managers of the trial, Trump lawyer Alan Dershowitz offered an expansive defense of presidential power that provoked astonishment among Democrats.

"If a president does something which he believes will help him get elected in the public interest, that cannot be the kind of quid pro quo that results in an impeachment," Dershowitz said, referring to the charge that Trump abused his power by using congressionally approved security aid as leverage to get a foreign power to smear his political rival, Joe Biden.

Democratic Senator Mazie Hirono told reporters: "That was one of the most bizarre things I've ever heard as a response."

Senator John Barrasso, the third-most senior Republican, said it was possible the trial could end on Friday without witnesses

being called, as Democrats want.

"The momentum is clearly in the direction of moving to final judgment on Friday. That vote will be Friday. We still have a couple of members who said they want to listen to the answers to questions, but that's where the momentum is," Barrasso said.

Asked when the vote might take place to settle the debate over witnesses and move to either acquit or convict Trump, Barrasso said probably Friday afternoon or late that day.

Other Republican senators were predicting a similar outcome in conversations with reporters during breaks in Wednesday's proceedings.

The Democratic-led House of Representatives approved the two articles of impeachment being heard in the Republican-controlled Senate in December. Democrats have sought to persuade at least four Republican senators to vote with them in favor of witnesses to assure a majority vote in the 100-seat chamber.

Democratic Senator Chris Coons was asked during a break if the Democrats' fight for witnesses was lost.

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Although there is a small population of Western Swampheens in Bangladesh, the beautiful purplish birds can often be seen in the haor areas. It is illegal to catch or kill the birds. The photo was taken at Tanguar haor in Sunamganj last week.

COURTESY: ALI ASHRAF BHUIYAN