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## 2 killed as rival groups clash at Gandaria

By Staff Correspondent

Two persons were killed when rival groups clashed at Gandaria Ghuntighar Rail crossing on Dhupkhola Road in the city yesterday morning.

Of the deceased, one was identified as Ramzan, 25, an alleged musclem of the area and a gang leader, while the other one was a hawker, Kutub Ali, who died in the cross fire, police said.

When Ramzan and Kutub were brought to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital the attending doctors declared them dead, according to our medical correspondent.

The two groups used to clash quite frequently, with the latest taking place only two weeks ago, police said, adding, yesterday's clash ensued over trading of illegal alcohol.

Ramzan and Saiju were both wanted by police. Both of them were accused in more than six cases, including a murder case, police said.

Ramzan's father Mohammad Ali Gazi, a resident of Narinda, Begumganj under Sutrapur thana lodged a FIR accusing his rival Saiju and his accomplices for the murder of

his son.

None was arrested in this connection, police said.

Saiju group attacked Ramzan and his associates when they reached the Ghuntighar rail crossing at about 10:30 am yesterday. GRP police said quoting the FIR.

A bullet hit Ramzan on his chest, while Kutub was hit in his abdomen during crossfire, witnesses said.

The rival groups clashed with each other blasting crackers and firing gun shots, which lasted for about an hour. During the clashes tension mounted in the area and the road became deserted, witnesses said.

The area, in which clashes took place, falls under the jurisdiction of GRP. Police reached the spot hours after the incident when normalcy had already been restored in the area, witnesses alleged.

Ramzan's father claimed to have received a letter from Saiju warning him that his son will be physically eliminated. The GRP police said that they were not aware of any such thing.



BNP chairperson Khaleida Zia placing wreaths at mazar of late president Ziaur Rahman yesterday on the occasion of 'National Revolution and Solidarity Day.' —Star photo

## 'Action plan' to end political stalemate FBCCT's call to chambers trade bodies goes unheeded

The initiative taken by FBCCT to formulate an 'action plan' seeking an end to political stalemate resulting in frequent hartals has virtually failed in the absence of adequate response from its members, reports UNB.

On September 28, the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCT) decided to formulate an action plan for consideration of all concerned within next seven days.

But the Federation could not yet come out with its action plan as major chambers and trade associations, who attended the September 28 meeting that floated the idea of the action plan, practically stayed away from subsequent efforts.

Sources close to FBCCT said the committee formed to draft the plan could not sit for a single full-day meeting since the announcement five weeks ago.

Its call to chambers and

trade associations to send their suggestions regarding the action plan went unheeded.

FBCCT vice-president M A Mumin, however, said at least six meetings were held on the action plan and series of "group wise" meetings were taking place frequently with various trade associations and chambers.

"We are collecting their suggestions and consulting them," he said and hoped that a draft declaration might be finalised within a couple of days.

An executive of the Metropolitan Chamber said they did not receive any invitation to join any meeting of the committee regarding the action plan.

"You better ask the FBCCT about the fate of the action plan," he said.

Another executive of the Foreign Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) said they are out of the process

and left it with the local chambers and trade bodies.

The September 28 meeting also urged the opposition parties to withdraw the October 3 hartal and refrain from calling hartal for the sake of country's economy, specially for export business.

Earlier on September 23, five chambers and trade associations in a joint statement urged the government to respond positively to the opposition's two basic demands — resignation of Chief Election Commissioner and reorganisation of Election Commission — to ensure a hartal-free healthy political situation.

The joint appeal of DCCI, FICCI, BCI, MCC and BGMEA came following a meeting of BGMEA delegation with Leader of the Opposition Khaleida Zia on September 17 when she assured that they would refrain from enforcing hartal if the two demands were met.

## BNP alleges police raids, arrest of many leaders

By Staff Correspondent

Police raided residences of a number of leaders and activists of opposition parties late Friday night, BNP leader Anwar Zahid said yesterday evening during a briefing on today's hartal.

Abdul Latif, DCC Commissioner of ward no 51 and convener of Dhanmondi thana BNP and another leader of Mirpur thana BNP Kawser Ahmed were detained by plainclothes police during such raids, he said.

Police also raided houses of BNP leader Major (Rtd) Manjur Qader, city BNP joint convener Abdul Malek, Jatiya Party president member Kazi Firoz Rashid and Jagpa president Shafiqul Alam Prodhan, he said, adding that police also raided his own residence Friday night.

The Liaison Committee of the BNP-led opposition alliance at a meeting yesterday evening expressed deep concern saying the raids were conducted with a 'motive' to foil the hartal.

## Stern action against vandalism during hartal, warn police

Police yesterday warned that stern action would be taken against vandalism during hartal.

"Vandalism and rowdiness will be dealt with strongly to protect public and private property," a senior police official told UNB yesterday.

Police Commissioner A K M Shamsuddin briefed field officials at Rajarbagh Police Lines on the strategy to deal with opposition activities on streets.

The police superintends in all districts have also been advised to take steps to tackle any situation during the hartal.

In Dhaka City, more than five thousand police and BDR personnel will be deployed to ensure peace.

Police will be deployed at some market places to safeguard normal business, said the officials.

## 4 of a family burnt alive in Cox's Bazar

COX'S BAZAR, Nov 6: One woman and her three daughters were burnt alive and another suffered serious injuries in a fire that broke out in a house at Lambaripara in Ramu thana under Cox's Bazar district here last night, reports BSS.

Police and local people said the fire incident claimed the lives of four people of a same family when they fell asleep.

The fire originated from a kitchen of the house of one Ali Hussain soon engulfed the house.

The injured was admitted to Dulhajara Christian Memorial Hospital.

The fire continued for an hour and the house was burnt to ashes.

The dead were identified as Masuda Begum, 50, her daughters Hosney Ara, 16, Shamsunnahar, 8, and Reshmi Akhter, 6.

## Another accomplice held Shikdar's house at Uttara raided

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Nov 6: Plainclothes policemen raided another residence of Ershad Shikdar at Uttara, Dhaka on Friday where none but a maid servant was found.

Police searched the entire house, but failed to get anything to seize.

Police arrested another accomplice Altaf from Bhandaria in Pirojpur district the same night.

Khulna Citizens' Committee has filed a case with the court against beneficiaries of Ershad Shikdar, particularly in the police department. Discussions in this regard have been started among a group of lawyers to make necessary arrangements.

Police said that Jahangir Mahmud Liton, an activist of an outlawed party arrested from Shahpur under Dumuria thana on Wednesday last, is a

professional imposter.

Another reliable source said that he had joined an outlawed party after being expelled from jubo league. The source said that he was awarded seven years RI by Bagerhat court in 1994 on charge of extortion.

Since then he came in contact with Shikdar's underworld to evade arrest as a convict. He is now in police remand for six days for interrogation.

His wife Parveen is also on police remand. She was arrested while raising fund from Khulna bazar for release of Ershad. Both of them have disclosed the names of some other persons in the city who took share of the exported money.

KMP have, however, urged the people to come forward with definite information about victims of extortion committed by Jahangir.

## Export of power

From page 1

posals was originally intended to be located in Sirajganj. "The government is already pursuing a proposal of setting up gas pipeline up to Iswardi, which is not far away from Bheramara," said a BPDB official. "We can lay the remaining gas pipeline from Iswardi to Bheramara. From this plant, we can supply power to the National Grid or export it to India."

If power has to be exported to India through West Bengal, the plants must be built near the western border of the country to minimise loss of power during transmission, he noted.

Meanwhile, officials of American company Ocean Energy at a meeting with Petrobangla expressed their concern that new gas exploration in Bangladesh might not ensure recovery of their investment as the local gas market was not expanding rapidly. Ocean Energy has purchased UMC's concerns in Bangladesh.

Petrobangla authorities suggested Ocean Energy executives to begin exploration saying that the gas market would definitely expand greatly. Petrobangla confirmed to them that Bangladesh would not export gas but power.

A private power company representative quoting Indian officials in New Delhi said India is interested in importing gas from Bangladesh if it does not create any political problem here. "But what India is really interested in is importing the end products — power and fertiliser."

Another private company representative noted that, in case of pipeline export of gas, India was well aware of the political problems on both sides of the borders and possibility of subversive activities by extremists who might make the gas pipeline a target for political reasons. That was why, India never officially proposed gas import from Bangladesh, he said.

Supporting the ideas of exporting power instead of gas, a

gas expert said that pipeline export of gas might be profitable but it would not create substantial employment opportunities in the country. But setting up of gas-based power plants will create long-term employment opportunities for thousands of people and help expansion and development of the gas sector. This will create enough opportunities for oil companies to continue gas exploration in the country, he said.

In late 1996, the government had sent a team to India to see prospects of importing power from there and also made a study on the issue. At that time, India had proposed to sell 200 MW power to Bangladesh through West Bengal and purchase 100 MW from Bangladesh through Agartala point. These proposals were later shelved.

Power tariff in West Bengal is similar to that in Bangladesh, but it is much higher in western part of India.

## 7100 bombs

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bombs. Besides, five kg of sulphur, one kg of aluminium powder and two kg of explosive, 15 kg of smashed glass and brick chips and a large number of empty cans were recovered from the house, police said.

Those arrested from the house, sealed off by police later, are Omar Faruk, his brother Ziaur Rahman and their accomplice Shamsu Huq.

In another incident, two persons identified as Shawkat and Munir were arrested on charge of carrying 18 home-made bombs in Nayatola area under Ramu thana yesterday, police station.

Separate cases have been filed with Mirpur and Ramu thanas and the arrested would be produced before court today.

Police is conducting a drive in different areas of the city for recovery of explosives. Launched on Friday night, the drive is aimed at averting violence during the Opposition-called hartal on November 7 and 8, sources concerned said.

## Voters' ID card project Audit finds financial irregularities

Audit report on voters ID card project during January, 1995 to June, 1997 showed serious audit objections for alleged financial irregularities in the project, reports BSS.

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria placed the report at the House yesterday.

The report said that the voters ID card project was approved by ECNEC on April 18, 1995 at an estimated cost of Tk 3,000 crore. The project being implemented by Bangladesh Election Commission included registration of voters and making and distribution of ID cards to the voters.

The project cost included local component of Tk 83.4 crore and project assistance of Tk 216.97 crore.

### Feni hartal

From page 1

and transports were off the road during the hartal.

The pickets put up barricade on Dhaka-Chittagong Highway, disrupting traffic till 1 pm. The barricade was withdrawn at the request of district administration.

Swapan was buried at Takiabari graveyard after namaj-e-janaza.

The janaza was attended by Mahabubur Rahman MP, Mosharraf Hossain MP, journalist Gias Kamal Chowdhury and BNP, Jubo Dal and Chhatra Dal leaders and activists.

A case was filed with Feni Sadar thana accusing 17 Jubo League and Chhatra League activists of killing Swapan.

### Hartal

From page 1

Joynal Abedin Faruq and Ehsanul Haq Milon led the procession.

BNP also held rallies and brought out torch processions in different areas including New Market, Khilgaon, Mohakhali, Badia, Farmgate, Mohamadpur, Kafrul, Mirpur, Pallabi, Shampur, Uttara and Rampura.

Three other alliance components — Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami, Islamic Oikya Jote — and some other smaller like minded parties also held separate rallies and brought out torch processions in the city in support of the hartal.

Addressing separate rallies in the city, leaders of the parties called upon the people to intensify the out-governments movement and warned of paralysing life in the country if the government tries to hold the city corporation polls bypassing the opposition parties. The government is pushing the country towards a state of confrontation through unilateral announcement of the polls schedule, they said.

JP held a rally at Muktagan and brought out a torch procession that paraded streets at Bijoynagar. Kakrail before it terminated at Shantinagar. JP leaders Maidul Islam and Safiur Rahman led the procession.

JP Office Secretary Ahsan Habib Lincon claimed that the police baton-charged a party torch procession at Mirpur in the evening that left at least 20 people injured.

Jamaat and IOJ organised separate rallies and brought out processions from the North gate of Baitul Mukarram and Purana Paltan mosque premises respectively after the Asr prayer.

Jagpa held a rally at Bijoy Nagar and brought out a torch procession. BNP brought out torch processions at Mirpur and Demra and NDA in Paltan area in the evening.

The opposition parties also held rallies and brought out processions in other parts of the country in support of hartal, sources in the parties said.

## ALPP meets today

A meeting of the Awami League Parliamentary Party (ALPP) will be held today at 11:30 am at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhawan, reports UNB.

Leader of the House and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will preside over the meeting.

## Villagers gouge out eyes of 2 dacoits

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Nov 6: Angry villagers gouged out eyes of two alleged dacoits at east Sonakhali village under Amtali thana of Barguna district late last night.

According to police and local people, the villagers chased a gang of five dacoits and caught two of them while the others managed to flee.

They beat up the two mercilessly and gouged out their eyes.

Later, the villagers handed over them to the police.

The injured dacoits — identified as Abdul Latif, 33, and Ayub Ali, 27 — are now undergoing treatment at Barguna General Hospital under police guard.

### SC rejects

From page 1

tion schedule for the three city corporations and "notifications on delimitation" of Khulna and Rajshahi cities "shall not be declared to have been made "without any lawful authority."

Attorney General Mahmudul Amin and Assistant Attorney General Bazlur Rahman Chhanna appeared on behalf of the Election Commission while BNP leader Barrister Maudud Ahmed, Barrister Rokonuddin Mahmud and Dr. Rafiqur Rahman appeared on behalf of the ward commissioners during the single-bench Appellate Division hearing.

The independent election commission in a statement earlier said "as per the existing laws, the last date for holding elections to the Khulna, Rajshahi, Chittagong and Dhaka City Corporations would be December 28, 1999, December 30, 1999, January 4, 2000 and January 27, 2000 respectively."

The scheduled for the polls for the three cities were announced "due to legal bindings," while the one for Dhaka could not be announced "due to court" injections imposed due to boundary disputes of the corporations," the statement said.

LUCKY ESCAPE! A man helps a child come out of a 'school coach,' a cage-like flat-bed rickshaw, at Rajarbagh in the city yesterday. The van was hit by a bus and its gate had to be pried open to let children out.

— Star photo by Sheikh Enamul Huq

## Police interrogate Mammi's maid

From Our Correspondent

Narayanganj, Nov 6: Police today interrogated Reshma, a 10-year-old maid of murdered housewife Mahmuda Sultana Mammi, to ascertain whether anybody else other than her husband was involved in the murder.

The interrogation followed the judicial statement of Mammi's husband Abul Kalam Azad Ripon that he killed his wife.

Police told The Daily Star that charge sheet in the murder case would be submit in next two weeks.

A separate case will be filed against Ripon's father, mother, sister and two brothers for trying to conceal information regarding the murder, police said.

Meanwhile, jail authorities said that they were taking special care of Ripon as he became very despondent following his confessional statement on Friday. Mammi was murdered in the small hours on October 30.

## 11 Shibir men arrested in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Nov 6: Police arrested 11 Shibir activists here today in connection with an armed attack on police and setting fire to a city corporation vehicle on October 21, reports UNB.

They were picked up from a mess in the city's Debphara area, locally known as Shibir Mess at about 4 am.

On Tuesday, 14 Shibir activists were arrested from three messes in Chawkbazar area in the city.

## Major reason for loadshedding PDB blames DESA's weak power lines

By Staff Correspondent

The Power Development Board (PDB) wants to meet the requirement of DESA for maintaining smooth power supply to Dhaka metropolis and adjacent areas but the effort often fails due to lack of capacity of the power lines, said a PDB source.

"Though the PDB is ready to provide as much electricity as needed for the capital, the Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority (DESA) cannot draw power as per requirements because of weak power lines," the PDB source alleged.

The source further alleged that less capacity of drawing power from the PDB by DESA was one of the main reasons for power shortage in the capital resulting in frequent loadshedding in and outside Dhaka.

"We always try to keep the capital free from load shedding but often we fail because of lower capacity of power consumption by DESA," the source said.

Many electric lines under the command of DESA have become outdated and their capacity of taking load has declined. The electricity supply to many areas is being disturbed regularly for those reasons," the source added.

On the other hand, the DESA had been claiming that the PDB could not supply power according to their requirement. Against the demand of more than 11,00 megawatt, the PDB

allotted 860 megawatt for them. The DESA had to maintain 100 megawatt load shedding in the area under its command, the DESA source said.

The DESA source, however, admitted that they often had to halt supply of electricity to many areas due to disturbance in the power lines. As many as 12 supply lines were stopped on Thursday, owing to the inability to bear the load. The areas include Shiddhirganj, Narshingdi Postogola, Jinjira, Tongi, Fatullah and Lalbagh.

The supply lines were, however, resumed within half an hour, the source said.

The PDB source said that the estimated load shedding in the country was 173 megawatt yesterday. Out of a total requirement of above 2500 mw, the PDB power plants projected generation was to be 2305 mw.

Closure of some power generation units due to mechanical problems was the main reason of power-deficit in the country. Generation of power by some power plants also declined recently, the source said. And lowered production capacity of some units.

Power generation in Ghorashal unit -6, Rouzan unit-2 was discontinued yesterday. On the other hand, Ashuganj unit -2 and Fenchuganj unit -1 and 2 were generating lower quantum of power than expected, the source added.

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**Editor: Mahfuz Anam**

Published by the Editor from City Publishing House Ltd, 90 Kakrail, Dhaka-1000 on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motijheel C.A., Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmandi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 8616772-4, Commercial: 8616771, Fax No: 88-02-8613035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA. Internet edition address: http://www.dailystarnews.com and Email address: dstar@bangla.netaddress: dstar@bangla.net