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5 accomplices held: Arms recovered Khulna citizens' body to file cases against Shikdar's beneficiaries

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Nov 8: The Khulna Citizens' Committee is going to file cases against beneficiaries of Mafia baron Ershad Shikdar, said a committee source today.

He said officials of both police department and civil administration who were on Shikdar's payroll will be put on the dock because they aided and abetted him in committing the crimes.

Meanwhile, the three-member high-powered probe committee formed by the Home Ministry is likely to submit its report in the next 72 hours, said a source at Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP). The citizens' committee has demanded that the report be made public through the press.

In another development, the court has asked the CID to re-investigate the murder of advocate Fatik. Earlier, CID submitted a charge sheet accusing Shikdar and some of his accomplices for killing Fatik inside Swarnakomal on April 6, 1998 allegedly for having an affair with Khodeja Begum, the first wife of Shikdar.

Besides, supplementary charge sheets are being prepared against murder cases of Insaf, Kamal and Khaleque as some new information about the murders came out during the judicial confession of Noor-e-Alam, chief body guard of Shikdar. They were killed on May 26, 1997 at Skid Ghat in the port city.

The KMP authorities have decided to take action against the traders who are now refusing to file cases against alleged

Illegal structures along bank of Buriganga to be demolished

The government has started work of the Dhaka ring road around the capital city. Water Resources Minister Abdul Razzak told parliament yesterday, reports UNB.

The minister said illegal structures along the bank of the river Buriganga would be demolished. The river will also be cleaned up for use of people, he added.

"We have also taken plans to establish waterways surrounding the capital," he said replying to a supplementary question from Haji Mohammad Selim.

130 homemade bombs seized, 10 held in city

Dhaka Metropolitan Police yesterday arrested 10 alleged terrorists from different parts of the city and seized 130 homemade bombs from their possession on Sunday night and during hartal hours yesterday, reports BSS.

A team of Detective Branch (DB) of police seized 39 bombs from a rickshaw in Bijoynagar area at about 11-45 on Sunday night. The rickshawpuller said two young men were carrying the bombs towards BNP's central office but they left those sensing the presence of police, according to police.

DB police also arrested four alleged terrorists from Kafrul area on Sunday night. Police seized 10 bombs and three bullets from near Stadium under Pallabi area.

Demra police seized 20 cocktails and 110 blank pots from MK Das Lane and arrested five people for possessing the bombs early yesterday morning.

Mirpur police recovered four petrol bombs from Darus Salam Road at about 2 pm.

The same team arrested one Manju with a bomb at the Mirpur thana area.

Kotwali police recovered 56 cocktails from near Sramojibi Hospital at 1-15 am yesterday.

Live bomb found in Chittagong

CHITTAGONG, Nov 8: Police today recovered a live bomb weighing about one kg from near a shop at Bariyarkhat bazar, reports UNB.

The bomb was found near the shutter of a shop. People who detected it informed the police.

Police went to the spot and brought the bomb to the police station. Later they kept it under water in front of the thana without defusing it.

Any experts will be called in to defuse it, said thana sources.

BNP leader shot at Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Nov 8: A local BNP leader was shot and stabbed by armed terrorists at Chandidagati when he was returning home from mosque after prayers Sunday night, reports UNB.

Matiur Rahman, 42, was shot in the abdomen. The gunmen also stabbed him indiscriminately. The residents rescued him and held one of the gunmen, Jaynal Abedin.

Abedin was handed over to the police. But police did not disclose his political identity.

Dialogue

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the autocratic regime of Ershad.

If the prime minister actually wanted a dialogue, he would have instructed her administration, especially the (intelligence) agencies to behave accordingly," he pointed out. "In fact, it was not an offer in real terms."

The BNP leader however said his party had not yet discussed the offer, neither had he talked it over with party chief Khaleda Zia.

Jatiya Party's acting Secretary General, Mdulul Islam does not think that it is necessary to sit with the government to discuss its resignation. "The Constitution clearly states how a government can resign. And we hope the government will resign and transfer power to a caretaker administration."

Similarly, Jamaat-e-Islami Assistant Secretary General, Md. Kamruzzaman also does not see any need for a dialogue on the government's exit. "It would have been a necessity if there was no such provision in the Constitution."

The JP and Jamaat leaders' comments came at a press briefing at the Opposition leader's official residence at the end of yesterday's hartal, enforced to force the government quit.

Meanwhile, a top leader of ruling Awami League said they were eagerly awaiting Opposition response to the PM's offer of dialogue. "We're ready to begin talks as soon as we get a response," said AL Presidium member Amir Hossain Amu.

But in response to a Daily Star query, he did not confirm if his party would go for a formal invitation.



Police obstructing a BNP procession in the city during hartal yesterday.

—Star photo

Khoka, 3 other leaders shot

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pro-hartal activists set fire rubbish bins and old tyres and exploded home-made bombs.

BNP activists burst out of the BNP central office throwing home-made bombs and rocks at police, triggering a violent confrontation that continued for hours.

At one stage, some policemen fled the scene and took shelter in nearby buildings.

Police fired tear gas shells and rubber bullets. They pushed the BNP activists into their central office and laid a siege that continued until 5-30 p.m.

The OC of Motijheel thana allegedly directed the shooting. At one stage gunmen in civilian clothes arrived at the scene, some donning flask jackets with 'police' written in bold letters. They displayed their firepower with rapid firing pump action shot guns. One of them even brandished a semi-automatic rifle, witnesses said.

Police guarded almost all the streets around the BNP central office and those in Bijoynagar, Bangshal, Nayabazar, Jatrabari areas.

Over 6,000 policemen backed by BDR personnel were deployed in the city yesterday.

The number of rickshaws were more on city streets yesterday than on Sunday. Some BRTC buses and private minibuses plied some main roads under police escorts.

Banks and financial institutions except the nationalised banks did not transact business. educational institutions remained closed. Offices had limited attendance. Railway and Biman services were normal. Long-distance buses did not ply.

Those injured in the city included Sujit Das, a student of Dhaka University, Yasin, Altaf Hossain, Ziaur Rahman, Zulhaz, Billal and Juba League activist Shamsul Huq.

Two persons going by a motor cycle fired shots at Shamsul Huq and speed away. Huq and two of his friends were sitting on the Mirpur road after bringing out an anti-hartal motor-bike procession led by local MP Kamal Ahmed Majumdar.

GAIBANDBA
At least 31 people including five policemen were injured when pro- and anti-hartal activists clashed in the district town during hartal yesterday.

Citizens
From page 1
after city BNP convenor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, MP, had been shot in police action earlier on the day.

Once they gave the confirmed news from The Daily Star that in the wake of two subsequent general strikes for 12-hour each on November 7 and 8, the Opposition had called for yet another full-day hartal today, many expressed their anguish and frustration at the "worsening" political situation.

An anxious mother rushed to The Daily Star office in the evening to inquire whether and how could she take her young daughter to the examination centre to sit for her honours examinations during the hartal.

A businessman said that he had full sympathy for those who received bullet wounds but, "who will heal the wounds that is being inflicted upon us by imposing frequent, mindless hartals?"

In either of two office-goers told this correspondent that the members of her family have most been worrying themselves to death about the safe return of the family's bread-winners after the end of each day's hartal.

Many callers also complained that they had to cancel and reschedule many important business deals, family programmes, foreign trips and wedding ceremonies due to the sudden announcement of the series of general strikes throughout the country, and that, too, in an uncalculated succession.

One college boy, seemed equally annoyed by the activities of party-in-power and the main opposition parties, commented, "how long these politicians want us to be used as pawns for their power-game? Why they can't talk to each other and close their differences before taxing the innocent citizens any more?"

20 bombs, revolver recovered from Ctg city hotel
CHITTAGONG, Nov 8: Police recovered 20 bombs and one revolver with a bullet from a city hotel here during hartal hours today, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip-off, police searched room number 125 of hotel Martin in the morning and recovered the arms and ammunition. They, however, could not arrest the border Akhter Hossain as he was not present in the room during the raid.

Akhter, who hails from Feni, allegedly brought the arms and explosives for using those in the port city during hartal hours.

In another raid at South Halishahar in the Bandar thana, police arrested 8 terrorists, along with Chinese axe, sharp lethal weapons and bullets. They also arrested one Harunur Rashid, who was awarded 5-year imprisonment, from the port area.

12 vacation judges to deal with criminal cases

Twelve District and Sessions Judges and Additional Judges of the civil courts have been appointed vacation judges of the criminal courts, reports UNB.

The appointment was made in consultation with the Supreme Court to deal with criminal cases during the December 2-30 vacation of the court, said an official handout yesterday.

The names of the judges and the places where they will hold the criminal courts are:

District Judge of Khulna ATM Fazley Kabir — Dhaka, Gazipur, Munshiganj, Manikganj, Narayanganj and Tangail.

Special Judge of Dhaka Division M Fazlul Karim — Khulna, Bagerhat, Jessore, Magura, Satkhira and Narail.

District Judge of Narasingdi ANM Basirullah — Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Laxmipur, Feni and Noakhali.

District Judge of Rajbari Mohammad Shahidullah — Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Habiganj and Sunamganj.

District Judge of Bhola AFM Mostofa — Barisal, Patuakhali, Barguna, Bhola, Jhalakathi and Pirojpur.

Additional District Judge of Dhaka M Karer Newaz — Aridpur, Madaripur, Rajbari, Shariatpur and Gopalganj.

Additional District Judge of Tangail Abdul Rahman Masud — Sherpur, Jamalpur, Kishoreganj, Mymensingh and Netrokona.

Additional District Judge of Sunamganj Shah-E-Alam Chowdhury — Kusthia, Chuadanga, — Meherpur, Jhenaidah and Pabna.

Additional Sessions Judge of Dhaka City Molla Mostofa Kamal — Joypurhat, Sirajganj, Gaibandha, Bogra and Rangpur.

Additional District Judge of Kishoreganj Rashedul Hasan Patwari — Natore, Nababganj, Naogaon and Rajshahi.

Additional District Judge of Laxmipur Latif Ahmed Khan — Comilla, Chandpur, Narasingdi and Brahmanbaria.

Additional Sessions Judge of Dhaka City Syed Aminul Islam — Dinajpur, Panchagarh, Thakurgaon, Nilphamari, Kurigram and Lalmonirhat.

Woman shot dead in Feni
FENI, Nov 8: A woman was shot dead at village Kamarpurkuria under Dagonbhuayan thana early today, reports UNB.

Family sources alleged that members of a faction of local Chhatra League led by one Gias stormed into the house of Mithu, leader of rival faction, at about 2 am as a sequel to previous enmity.

They fired at Mithu's bedroom assuming that he was sleeping there.

Mithu's aunt Fatema Begum, 42, was shot as she was sleeping in Mithu's room.

She died instantly. Police recovered the body this morning and sent it to Sadar hospital for autopsy.

A case was filed with the local police.

Hartal today
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bullet-hit, including BNP joint secretary general Abdullah Al Noman, city BNP convenor Sadek Hossain Khoka MP, Joyanal Abedin Faruq MP and DCC ward commissioner and BNP leader Nabiullah Nabi.

Besides, he said, police confined more than 400 leaders and activists including a large number of women activists inside BNP central office for about five hours. A good number of MPs were also there. Police even prevented partymen from supplying food and water for those confined.

Islam said police fired shots and tear gas shells on BNP activists, forcing them to go inside the party office and then continue this targeting the office.

As a result, he said, many of the leaders and activists fainted and some women activists felt sick.

Shamsul Islam said killing of opposition activists and firing on senior leaders have clearly proved that the government does not believe in healthy politics and wants confrontation and conflict.

As in Dhaka, he said, police and AL terrorists launched attacks in different parts of the country.

He demanded immediate resignation of the government and handing over of power to a caretaker administration to pave the way for parliamentary polls prior to all elections.

The BNP leader also demanded exemplary punishment of those involved in killing and attacking BNP leaders and workers and adequate compensation for the victims.

The briefing was also addressed by Jatiya Party acting secretary general Mdulul Islam, Jamaat leader, Mohammad Kamruzzaman, Islami Oikya Jote leader Fazlul Haq Amin and city BNP joint convenor Abdus Salam. Other members of the liaison body and BNP leaders and MPs were present.

Ctg clash
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crackers. The agitators also pelted brick-bats at the police, witnesses said.

Another clash took place at Jalalabad between police and hartal supporters at 1 pm when police chased some unruly processionists.

The other clash occurred at Bahaddarhat crossing at around 9 am when police chased some pickets.

Besides, a tense situation prevailed in the port city this afternoon after crackers were exploded in Laidighi area, Nandankani, Agrabad and Chawkbazar, witnesses said.

Opposition activists held rallies and took out processions in the city. Pro-ruling Jubo League activists held an anti-hartal rally at New Market crossing this afternoon.

Some street urchins moving in front of an opposition procession this evening were seen looting bananas from footpath vendors, witnesses said. However, delivery of goods from port remained suspended during the hartal while shops remained closed and vehicles except rickshaws were off the streets.

Additional District Judge of Dhaka M Karer Newaz — Aridpur, Madaripur, Rajbari, Shariatpur and Gopalganj.

Additional District Judge of Tangail Abdul Rahman Masud — Sherpur, Jamalpur, Kishoreganj, Mymensingh and Netrokona.

Additional District Judge of Sunamganj Shah-E-Alam Chowdhury — Kusthia, Chuadanga, — Meherpur, Jhenaidah and Pabna.

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AL holds rally, brings out procession

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim said yesterday that the opposition parties including the anti-liberation forces led by Khaleda Zia were hatching conspiracy to create anarchy across the country to protect the killers of Bangabandhu, reports BSS.

"Conspirators are importing bombs to destabilise the democratic atmosphere," he said while addressing a big rally held at Paltan Maidan in the city 'to protest against illegal hartal, terrorism and anarchy.'

Presided over by City Awami League President Mayor Mohammad Hanif the rally was addressed by General Secretary of City AL and State Minister for Shipping, Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya (Bir Bikram), Riaz Uddin Ahmed and Siddique Rauf Khan.

Referring to postponement of elections of the three city corporations the minister questioned the justification of calling such hartals. For whose interest are they killings innocent people like the Imam of Mosque, innocent housewife and on-duty police personnel, he asked.

"Not a single terrorist or conspirator will be spared of justice," he said, adding we are committed to establish a peaceful and terrorism free society.

Mayer of Dhaka Mohammad Hanif said the city dwellers won't accept any undemocratic and unconstitutional demands of the opposition parties like hartal.

Earlier, thousands of people yesterday brought out a huge 'peace procession' in the city protesting the two-day hartal enforced by BNP-led Opposition alliance across the country.

City Awami League and its front organisations including Jubo League, Chhatra League, Awami Sechhasebak League, Krishak League, Sainik League, Mohanagar Awami Jubo League (South), Bangladesh Bastuhara Samity, Ghat Samik League, Hawkers League and Rickshaw Samik League joined the peace procession which padded through different city streets.

Home minister
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"Sikdar disclosed that he bought the former Speaker a car. He could buy ministers and MPs of Khaleda Zia but could not do so in case of Awami League leaders who are not sold for money."

In fact, the Opposition conspiracy against the government started from the day the verdict in the Bangabandhu Murder Case was pronounced, Nasim alleged. "Khaleda Zia wants to save the killers of Bangabandhu, Kazi Aref and 10 people at the Uddichi function."

Referring to granting of bail to Nurranabi, an accused in the Uddichi murder case, Nasim said it proved again what I said earlier. "Mr. Speaker, I leave it to the people of the country for justice."

He announced that if necessary, the government would set up special courts in Khulna, Khustia and Jessore districts for speedy trial of the terrorists caught by police.

Nasim urged the Opposition to return to parliament and raise its demands there. The government is ready to discuss any issue, Hartals or threats will fail to force the government step down, he said. "The government has no intention to resign before the end of its tenure on July 14, 2001... Hartals will do nothing but multiply peoples' sufferings."

"Yes, we will resign only after completing our tenure. Well, if the prime minister wishes, she can give early election. But you will not be able to compel the government to resign by killing an innocent housewife, an Imam (of a mosque) or burning a rickshawpuller to death."

One killed, 100 hurt in clash at Habiganj

HABIGANJ, Nov 8: One person was killed and over 100 people were injured in a fierce clash between two groups over fishing in a water body at Atukura village in Baniachang thana here today, reports UNB.

The dead was identified as Saidul Haq, 26.

Police and locals said the clash ensued between the supporters of a former UP member and one Abdul Hakim of the village at around noon following a war of words over fishing in Satal beel.

Strong earthquake shakes Islamabad
ISLAMABAD, Nov 8: A strong earthquake shook Islamabad tonight, but there were no immediate reports of damage or casualties, residents said, reports Reuters.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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