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RANGS GROUP

5 beaten to death since Eid day

By Staff Correspondent

Five people were beaten to death in separate incidents in the city and other parts of the country since Eid-Day.

Two alleged muggers were beaten to death and two others seriously injured by an angry mob when they tried to flee after snatching in front of Ideal School in the city's Motijheel area Monday afternoon.

The dead were identified as Jamal, 30, son of Enta Mattabar and Hannan, 18, son of Ahsanullah. Both are from Keraniganj thana of Dhaka district.

The other two, aged about 19 and 30, were also admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with critical injuries. Their identity could not be known till filing of this report.

Hospital sources said that the incident took place at about 2 pm when the gang tried to flee the area hurling crackers. Local

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Muggers kill LGRD joint secretary

By Staff Correspondent

A top government official was stabbed to death by muggers on the Dhaka University campus yesterday morning for not having more than Tk 100.

Nikunja Bihari Debnath, 55, Joint Secretary of Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD) Ministry gave his identity, offered the muggers 100 taka he had and begged apology.

But the muggers were not convinced and stabbed him in the abdomen near the Swadhinata Sangram (Struggle for Independence) sculpture at the road intersection between SM Hall and Jagannath Hall.

Police sources later acknowledged that a mobile police team was nearby when the incident took place.

On arrival from Chittagong by train, Debnath was return-

ing to his Azimpur Government Staff Quarter residence from Kamalapur Railway Station in a rickshaw at about 6:30 am, police and witnesses said. He had returned to the city to attend office yesterday after spending Eid holiday with his wife and daughter.

When the rickshaw reached near the Swadhinata sculpture, a gang of about 10 snatchers intercepted them, started beating the rickshawpuller, Matin, and asked Debnath to hand over whatever he had.

He said he had only 100 taka and offered them the amount. The muggers shouted at him saying why he had such a small amount being such a high official. Debnath begged apology, and as the rickshawpuller pulled the vehicle to escape, the muggers stabbed him in the ab-

domen. There were some people nearby, but none came to his help, witnesses said.

The rickshawpuller took fatally injured Debnath to his residence. He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where doctor declared him dead.

He left behind his wife, son Nirupam Debnath Sumon, a third year student of BUET and daughter Manisha, a second year student of Sir Salimullah Medical College. He was the son of late Akhil Chandra Debnath.

A pall of gloom descended at the Secretariat yesterday as his colleagues, friends, admirers and other Secretariat staff paid their last respect when the body was taken there after autopsy at the DMCH.

LGRD sources said he was an

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Relatives of Joint Secretary Nikunja Bihari Debnath (inset) wail after receiving the news of his death. —Star photo

PM's appeal Let us love and trust each other anew

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Saturday night urged opposition politicians to eschew the violent course of election boycott, hartal and bloodshed and resolve problems through discussion, reports UNB.

"On this holy Eid-ul-Fitr night, let us love and trust each other anew, repose confidence in each other... Let us steer the journey of democracy into 21st century unitedly and bring smile in the faces of common people," she said in her opponents in a televised address to the nation.

The Prime Minister also urged the people to remain alert against those who want to snatch their franchise.

Hasina said since her government's assumption to power, the opposition had been issuing threats to change the government through undemocratic and unconstitutional way.

"I seek cooperation from the countrymen... You will have to protect your own rights. You, the people, are the source of

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50 rounded up 3 shot dead during Eid holiday in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 11: Three people were shot dead by unidentified assailants, here in the last three days, police said.

One person, identified as Md Yusuf, 18, was shot dead at West Madarbari at around 11-45 pm last night, police said.

The assailants fired at Yusuf while he was returning home. He died on the spot.

One Ahmed Ali, 24, a vendor, was shot dead at Motiarpool in the city's Moghailui area at 4-30 pm on Eid Day, police said.

The assailants killed Ali as a sequel to previous enmity, police added.

Another person, identified as Jasim Uddin, 30, was shot dead by his rivals at West Madarbari at around 5 pm on January 8, police said.

Jasim came under attack while he was walking on the road in West Madarbari area.

Police said, Jasim was killed due to a rivalry over illegal toll collection in Barisal colony area.

Jasim was one of the listed terrorists, police added.

Meanwhile, police in a special raid against the backdrop of three incidents murder arrested 50 'terrorists' from West Madarbari, Moghailui and Barisal colony today.

CBI foils Biman hijack bid in Calcutta?

Star Report

Indian intelligence officials in Calcutta have claimed to have specific reports of a plan by an international group to hijack a Bangladesh Biman flight to free the convicted killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the BBC radio said last night.

The radio quoting an unnamed joint secretary of Indian Central Bureau of Intelligence (CBI) said last night that 11 passengers of a Dhaka-bound Biman flight (BG 092) from Calcutta were barred from boarding the plane (Airbus 310) yesterday.

Intelligence agents said they detained the 11, all holding Iranian passports, for ques-

tioning.

But CBI officials believe that the detained were actually Afghan refugees who had settled in Iran several years ago.

The plan was to hijack the plane on Indian soil 'to disrupt relations between the two friendly countries', the Indian joint secretary was quoted as telling BBC.

The radio also quoted Mohammad Shahjahan, Biman station manager at Calcutta, to have acknowledged that he had been warned by the Indian authorities earlier of possibilities of hijacking the Biman aircraft.

Biman officials in Dhaka did not make any comment.

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British, Indian ministers due this month

By Diplomatic Correspondent

The British State Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Indian State Minister for External Affairs are due to visit Bangladesh this month.

British State Minister Keith Vaz will arrive on January 29 on a two-day official visit during which he will also go to Sylhet and look into seriously the prospect of opening a Visa and Counsellor office there. The largest number of Bangladeshi immigrants to Britain are from Sylhet.

His visit is a follow-up of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's trip to UK last year during the Bangladesh Festival.

Indian State Minister Ajit Panja will be coming to Dhaka on January 20 on a three-day official visit. It will be the first visit by an Indian leader since the BJP-led coalition government bounced to power.

The Saudi daily also published photographs of Bangla-

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Suffering of Bangladeshis in KSA mounts No action yet against devious recruiters

By Reaz Ahmad

Street protests by Bangladeshi workers in Saudi Arabia are forcing Dhaka to deal with devious recruiters who trick people out of their money with promises of lucrative jobs abroad.

In late December, Bangladeshi workers marched through the streets of the Al-Sharfiyah district to protest employers who withheld salaries.

According to reports published in the Saudi Gazette, the labour office in Jeddah summoned the owner of a trading establishment who didn't pay 170 Bangladeshi workers for four months.

The Saudi daily also published photographs of Bangla-

deshi living in unhygienic conditions, and 20 workers sharing a small plate of dates - the only food they could afford.

The country's mission in Saudi Arabia has asked officials in Dhaka to investigate the practices of recruitment agencies to prevent more people from being duped.

Sources in the Ministry of Labour and Employment said they expect a full report on the incident from the country's mission in Saudi Arabia by January 13.

However, nobody from the ministry would discuss why the government didn't crack down on deceptive recruiting agencies before the protests.

"We haven't received a full report from our mission in Saudi Arabia," said M A Mannan, the labour and employment minister. "Once we get that report, actions will follow."

Sources said officials have failed for years to stop the dubious dealings of brokers, agents and labour contractors who paint 'rosy pictures' of life abroad but fail to live up to their promises.

The ministry planned to raise agency licensing fees from Tk 6 lakh to Tk 10 lakh, but backed down under pressure, said sources.

The minister and his office

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JS session resumes today

The Jatiya Sangsad will take up a motion for vote of thanks to President Shahabuddin Ahmed for his address to the House, when it resumes today at 9.30 am after a recess of 11 days, reports ESS.

President Shahabuddin in his address to the 16th session of the 7th parliament on opening day of the new millennium, urged the political leaders to sink their individual and party interest for national interest.

Chief Whip Abul Hasanat Abdullah is likely to propose the vote of thanks to the President for his millennium speech.

The House will transact some legislative businesses and two bills - Local and International Trade Arbitration Bill and Drugs Control (Amendment) Bill are expected to be introduced today.

Student shot dead in city: 4 arrested

By Staff Correspondent

A student who returned to Dhaka from the United States a week ago was shot dead after a dispute in front of an Eskaton restaurant early Monday morning.

Shafayet Hossain Swapon, 28, was the son of Mir Hossain. He hailed from Dumaroma, Senbagh in Noakhali.

Police said the attackers and Swapon were drunk when they started to argue over a trifle matter, which led to the killing.

Family sources said Swapon went to a relatives residence at 408 Gulbagh with friends Sunday night.

They arrived at the Golden Dragon Restaurant in Eskaton where they ate and drank. Sources said some of Swapon's

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Frantic efforts by firefighters and local people to extinguish the fire at Judge Patti in Mirpur in the city Monday night. —Star photo

Fire at Mirpur: One killed, 200 shops gutted

By Staff Correspondent

One person was killed and 40 were injured in a devastating fire that gutted more than 200 shops at Judge Patti in Mirpur in the city Monday evening.

The dead was identified as Akhtar, an electrician. He came in contact with a live electric wire during the fire incident and died at a hospital yesterday. The injured include two others who came in contact with live line. They are under treatment.

Fire Brigade and police said the fire originated from a cowshed at about 5:30 pm when one person was trying to make smoke to drive away mosquitoes. The fire engulfed surrounding shops where cut-piece cloths were stored.

Fire Brigade units brought the fire under control after more than four hours.

In another incident at Kona-

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Fresh programmes soon Differences on action council are over

By Rezaul Karim

The liaison committee of the BNP-led opposition alliance will chart fresh action programmes in a couple of days to step up the one-point movement to topple the Awami League government.

BNP vice-chairman M Shamsul Islam MP, who is representing the main opposition party in the liaison committee, said the committee will definitely sit within a day or two, hopefully today, to put things into place for formation of the Action Council.

He said one or two meetings will be necessary to complete the process of formation of the council.

Besides, the committee will discuss the next course of action and strategies for future movement. He hinted a series of hartal and non-stop action programmes in the days to come.

Replying to a question, he said the differences on formation of the Action Council are over and that a circular on guidelines regarding formation of the council will be sent to all city, district, thana, ward and union committees very soon.

Secretaries-general of the four parties will sign the circular.

The alliance, which had earlier vowed to launch a militant anti-government movement after the Eid, is determined to create a "mass upsurge" by announcing programmes like hartal, siege and road and rail blockade.

Sources at the opposition camps said that the policymakers of the alliance partners

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Time Warner, AOL tie up The first global media and communication company of the Internet century in the offing

WASHINGTON, Jan 11: The biggest corporate merger ever between America Online and Time Warner took the corporate world by storm and sent stock prices soaring to new records, reports AFP.

The two firms valued the combined entity - the first mega-merger of the new century - at 350 billion dollars, but at yesterday's closing stock prices the transaction could be worth close to 200 billion dollars.

The new group, to be called AOL Time Warner, aims to revolutionise the way people obtain information and communicate.

the companies said yesterday.

The merger will create 'the first global media and communications company of the Internet century,' said AOL chairman Steve Case, who will become chairman of the new entity.

This is the first time a major Internet company has combined with a major media company.

The new entity, with annual revenues of more than 30 billion dollars, will control brands such as AOL, Time, CNN, CompuServe, Warner Bros and Netscape.

It combines AOL, the biggest Internet company, with media-entertainment leader Time Warner, with holdings in television, film and publishing.

Case said the merger would capitalise on the explosion of the Internet and lead to further innovation and 'launch the next Internet revolution.'

America Online shareholders will end up owning 55 per cent of the new empire, with 45 per cent for Time Warner.

"By joining forces with Time Warner, we will fundamentally change the way people get in-

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Holiday hangover prevails

By Staff Correspondent

The capital seemed to be in a holiday hangover although government and private offices reopened yesterday after a four-day holiday that included a three-day Eid vacation.

The holiday officially began on January 8 (Saturday), but most of the city dwellers left the city on January 6 (Thursday) to celebrate the Eid-ul-Fitr, (the greatest religious festival of the Muslim) with their near and dear ones in outlying villages and towns.

The capital still looked deserted as most shops and business centres kept their shutters

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WE MOURN



We announce with the deepest regret that **A.F.M Aminul Huq, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of our Bank and Managing Director of Smart Group of Industry** breathed his last in Washington Adventist Hospital, Maryland, USA on 6th January, 2000, Thursday (Inna Lillahe Razeun). He was 63.

We pray to Almighty Allah for the salvation of his departed soul and express our deepest sympathy to the bereaved family members of the deceased.

His Namaz-e-Janaza will be held on Thursday, 13th January, 2000 at Banani Jam-e-Mosque after Johor Prayer and he will be buried at the Banani graveyard.

His Qulhwani will be held on Friday, 14th January, after Asr prayer (At 4.00 P.M) at his residence at House No. 55, Block No. E, Road No. 13, Banani, Dhaka.

Relatives, Friends, Colleagues, Admirers are requested to attend the Namaz-e-Janaza and Qulhwani.

Board of Directors, Executives & Officers of

Prime Bank Limited

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Prayer Timings

January 12		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-18	5-25
Zohr	12-45	1-20
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-33	5-38
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation