

Farhad murder Sramik Dal president, 5 others arrested in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Six persons, including Fakirhat upazila Sramik Dal president Alamgir Chowdhury, were arrested on Thursday night for their alleged involvement in the murder of industrialist Farid Hossain.

The arrested five others are Amjad Hossain, Taleb Goldar, Abu Hanif Goldar, Ohidul Islam and Jalil.

Detectives (DB) Inspector Shajahan Sharif has been made investigation officer (IO) of the case. Police produced the accused before the court yesterday seeking a seven-day remand. The court fixed October 21 for hearing on the remand prayer.

Rashida Begum, wife of slain industrialist, lodged a case with Fakirhat thana on Thursday naming some persons as accused. Arrested Amjad is one of the FIR-named accused.

When asked, IO Shajahan Sharif expressed his hope to unearth the motive behind the killing as early as possible.

"I am not ruling out the involvement of a UP chairman of Fakirhat behind the murder as he allegedly gave death threat to industrialist Farhad Hossain," IO Shajahan Sharif said.

Farhad's family members are feeling insecure as the elder brothers and complainant of the case have already received death threats.

Meanwhile, shrimp exporters of southwestern zone have strongly condemned the murder and demanded immediate arrest of the accused.

Police-dacoits gunfight in Ctg : 9 injured

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Nine people, including a police constable and five dacoits were injured in a gunfight between police and dacoits at Chandanaish in the district in the early hours of yesterday.

Police and witnesses said, a gang of 12 dacoits stormed into some houses at village Zia Fakirpara at South Joara under the thana and started looting valuables at around 1 am.

Being informed by the villagers, police rushed to the village encircled the gang with the help of villagers.

Sensing police presence, the gang opened fire in a bid to escape. Police returned fire.

Both sides traded fire for an hour, leaving the constable Abdur Rashid, three villagers and five dacoits injured.

Police arrested the injured dacoits while the rest fled away with looted goods worth about Tk 2 lakh.

The injured villagers, identified as Junab Bibi, Abu Taleb and Shishir, were admitted to local health complex.

Four killed in Cox's Bazar bus plunge

UNB, Cox's Bazar

Four people were killed and 30 injured, 12 of them seriously, when a passenger coach plunged into a roadside ditch at Jahallagarh on Chittagong-Cox's Bazar highway on Thursday night.

Passengers of the Cox's Bazar-bound night coach said the accident occurred as the driver lost his control over the steering, killing three people on the spot. Another succumbed to injuries at Chakoria health complex.

Two of the dead were identified as Lal Mia, 25, and Jasimuddin, 25.

The seriously injured passengers were admitted to Chakoria upazila health complex and Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

By-polls: Interview of BNP nomination seekers today

UNB, Dhaka

Interview of the nomination seekers of BNP for the November 12 by-elections in six constituencies will be held at party's Banani office at 8pm today.

The by-election will be held in Bogra-7, Khulna-2, Feni-1, Laxmipur-2, Moulvibazar-3 and Manikganj-2 constituencies, said a party press release.

Law & order deteriorating in Khulna

New breed of terrorists takes control of Skid Ghat points

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Law and order in the city and some areas of the district is deteriorating allegedly due to police inaction, particularly after the new government took over.

Apparently, a section of top police officials are reluctant to take effective steps for arrest of terrorists and other criminals and this has posed a serious threat to law and order.

Murders, illegal occupation of various business points, extortion and underground activities are again creating panic among people.

Four persons were killed since October 11-- one in the city and three others elsewhere in the district. On October 13, an activist of Awami League identified as Arshad, 34, was killed in Paikgachha upazila. The murder was a sequel to political rivalry that grew bitter during the recent election campaign, police sources said.

AL leaders of Paikgachha alleged that there has so far been no move by police to take action against those involved in the murder.

On the same day, Ibrahim, 28, a supporter of AL, was killed in Terokhada upazila allegedly by some BNP supporters. Police have virtually taken no action against those responsible.

Jubo Dal leader Didarul Alam (28) was gunned down at Haji Mohsin road in Sadar thana on October 14. It is alleged that police arrested none of the killers despite knowing who they are. Rather, an activist of Chhatra League, sagor, was shown arrested in the case. But the slain Jubo Dal leader's father has named none as accused in the case and made it clear to police that Sagor is not at all involved in the murder.

On October 16, industrialist Farhad Hossain was shot dead in broad daylight at Piliang under Fakirhat Upazila. Although the outlawed PBCP claimed responsibility for the murder, police arrested three employees of a roadside tea stall in this connection.

Some sources said armed cadres of PBCP from Rupsha upazila went to Fakirhat for killing the industrialist.

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Anti-war women workers took out a procession in the city yesterday, urging US to stop war in Afghanistan which is affecting Bangladesh's garment sector.

Shibir preventing BCL students from entering CU

CU CORRESPONDENT

Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) men are reportedly preventing students belonging to Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) from entering the Chittagong University (CU) campus.

Sources said about 500 such students, who are leaders, activists and supporters of the pro-Awami League student organisation, are facing an uncertain academic future as they cannot attend classes or sit for examinations for fear of attack by ICS activists.

ICS, the student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami, started persecuting BCL men soon after taking control of the dormitories on October 8. Classes of the university resumed on October 10 after a two-month stand-off and many departments announced fresh timetables for examinations postponed earlier.

BCL general secretary Nasir Haider Babul said, "Our leaders and activists could not attend classes or sit for examinations as they could not enter the campus due to resistance by Shibir armed cadres. We demand of the authority to take adequate security measures for our activists, especially those who are examinees."

Shibir cadres also reportedly manhandled 10 BCL activists last week and chased the president and general secretary of BCL out of the campus on Sunday. ICS also allegedly tortured general students residing at the dormitories, forcibly changing their hall seats and looting their valuables.

Several students have already been 'secretly' roughed up for their

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7 BNP activists held for looting bazar in Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Police yesterday arrested seven BNP activists from four villages in Kaliganj upazila for their alleged involvement in attacking and looting Shamsheernagar bazar on Tuesday night.

The arrested activists are: Shahidul Islam, Farook Hossain, Abdul Malek, Matir Rahman, Ajar Hossain, Moslem Uddin and Shahidul.

Sources said, police raided Satgadia, Sadekpur, Bashuria and Maladanga villages yesterday morning and arrested the seven.

Witnesses said, several hundred BNP activists attacked Shamsheernagar bazar known as a stronghold of Awami League, at about 10 pm on Tuesday.

They ransacked all the shops and looted goods.

A case was filed with Kaliganj thana on Wednesday accusing over four hundred people.

ASM NURUNNABI

The far-stretching beel of Ashulia is a fairly new recreation spot for the citizens of Dhaka. It is only during the monsoon that the Ashulia beel transforms into an extensive and charming water body that bewitches the city dwellers inured to the drab urban scenarios with cement, mortar and steel being its predominant features.

Situated about 25 km away from the Dhaka City, the attractive vistas of stretches of water and greenery offer a prized venue for rest and recreation. One gets enamoured of the place as a beautiful panorama comes to view with a 2 km-turn to the left from Abdullapur at Uttara. From that point, the sloth and monotony evaporate, making way for peace and tranquillity in the backdrop of lush natural beauty.

The Ashulia beel is an offshoot of the Turag river flowing near the city. And with the start of rainy season, the Ashulia scenario undergoes a magical change.

Many have begun to call Ashulia the Cox's Bazar of Dhaka. Many come to this spot with their children

DOWN TO EARTH

Attractions of Ashulia

Already there are apprehensions that this euphoric experience may be short-lived. Besides some recent isolated incidents of wayward activities of some anti-social elements, which go to reduce the charm of the place, there are other factors adversely affecting its image. In this context may be mentioned the environmental pollution being caused by the operating brickfields nearby from which the billowing black smoke vitiates the atmosphere.

On the other hand, there has been a spurt in the demand for acquisition of land in the area. A good number of private housing societies have come up doing brisk business in real estate. With the fast growing demand for land, there has been a sharp increase in its value. At the same time, brisk activities are going on to set up industries of various kinds, petrol

pumps and other business establishments connected with tourism. It is understood that a private construction firm has lately taken up a project, with the approval of the RAJUK, for setting up a modern tourism and recreation centre to be called fantasy kingdom, similar to the Disneyland. There are some other entrepreneurs taking up similar projects in this line.

Thus we find enormous prospects for expansion and development of the whole area as a tourist and holiday resort in the close proximity of the Dhaka City. Ashulia provides a pleasant breathing space for the city dwellers gasping for free air in the severe congestion of urban life.

7 killed in Sunamganj boat capsized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Seven people were killed when a boat capsized in a haor in Jamalpur upazila of Sunamganj district Thursday morning.

Bodies of three of the victim were recovered Thursday evening while those of others were found yesterday.

Police and local people said the boat was carrying about 10 people from village Medikpur to Bisna suddenly it overturned and sank in the haor.

The victims were identified as Subur Jan, 30, Rahima, 55, Aina Bibi, 60, Jahangir Alam, 45, Abdur Rab, 24 and Fakir Miah, 35.

Border talks begin in Rajshahi today

BSS, Kurigram

A four-day high level meeting between Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Border Security Force (BSF) of India will begin in Rajshahi today.

BDR sources said the meeting will discuss different issues to ensure peace and security in the border areas of the two neighbouring countries.

Brigadier General Abdus Salam Chowdhury, Deputy Director General of BDR, will lead the Bangladesh delegation to the meeting while Inspector General of BSF (South Bengal) SB Kakati lead the Indian side.

Emergency meet of BNP executive body today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An emergency meeting of the national executive committee of ruling BNP will be held at party's city unit office at Naya Paltan at 11am today.

BNP secretary general and LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan has asked the city unit president and general secretary, eight MPs of Dhaka city, members of the national executive committee and central presidents and general secretaries of different front organisations to attend the meeting.



A procession under the banner of 'Touhidi Janata' was brought out after Juma prayers yesterday, disrupting traffic at Matuail point on Dhaka-Chittagong Highway for an hour.

7 separatists among 9 killed in Assam

AFP, Guwahati

At least nine people, including seven separatists, were killed in two clashes early yesterday in India's northeastern state of Assam, officials said.

A police spokesman said heavily armed militants of the outlawed National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) attacked the Labdanguri police station in western Assam's Barpeta district, 175 kilometres from the state capital Guwahati.

"A group of about 150 NDFB militants surrounded the police station around 5:00 am Friday and started indiscriminate firing, prompting the security forces to retaliate," a top police official told AFP by telephone from Barpeta.

"In the ensuing gunbattle that lasted for more than an hour, two policemen and five NDFB rebels were killed, while many were seriously injured," the official said.

About 20 policemen were present when the rebels attacked the police station, located closed to the Bhutan border.

"The militants later carried away the dead comrades and fled the scene," the official said.

The NDFB, fighting for an independent tribal homeland, operates out of well-entrenched bases inside Bhutan to stage hit-and-run guerrilla strikes on security forces in Assam.

In another incident, villagers of Nagarbari in Kamrup district, 30 kilometres from Guwahati, killed two militants of the banned United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) late Thursday.

"The two ULFA militants came to the village for extortion and as they approached local villagers caught them and later lynched them with crude weapons and machines," a police official said.

The ULFA, also fighting for a separate state, has stepped up its

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No intention to attack militant camps in Pakistan: Delhi

AP, New Delhi

India has no intention of attacking militant camps in Pakistan, Home Minister Lal Krishna Advani said yesterday.

"Under international law, it is legitimate if anyone attacks you, you have the right to pursue. But at the present point of time, we have no plans to do that," Advani told the Foreign Correspondents' Club in New Delhi.

Although India says Pakistan is a main sponsor of terrorist groups in South Asia, Advani said India has no problem with the United States working with Pakistan at this time to combat terrorist groups in Afghanistan.

"In this fight, Pakistan being on our side in the battle against terrorism is an advantage in the international effort. We don't find fault with

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Anthrax scare hits British parliament

REUTERS, London

The British parliament delayed its opening by an hour yesterday after a package containing white powder was found in the House of Commons.

Parts of the nearby ministry of health were also evacuated soon afterwards after another suspect package was found.

The discoveries, amid a worldwide scare over anthrax attacks, meant that the parliamentary session opened one hour late at 10.30 am local time.

Veteran journalists and officials could not immediately recall the last time that the work of the "Mother of Parliaments" had been disrupted by a security alert.

"The sitting of the house was delayed for an hour this morning on security advice while a suspect package received in the members'

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Anthrax: Indian postal workers on alert

AFP, New Delhi

India yesterday alerted postal workers to beware of suspicious international mail amid the global anthrax scare, as authorities in the eastern city of Kolkata reported a suspect package.

"The department of posts has issued instructions to all its officers, especially those handling international mails, on how to handle suspicious international mails," Communications and IT Minister Pramod Mahajan told a meeting in New Delhi.

Postal department officials said mail sorters have been asked to use gloves and masks when handling suspicious mail, in accordance with international guidelines.

In Kolkata, an investigation has been launched after a registered parcel from New Delhi was found to contain white powder when it was opened by a high school librarian.

Librarian Bishnuprasad Dasgupta at Mint High School in West Bengal's Midnapore district, 250 kilometers south of Kolkata, complained of eye irritation after the powder fell from books he had ordered, said PK Sakar, director of Kolkata's School of Tropical Medicine.

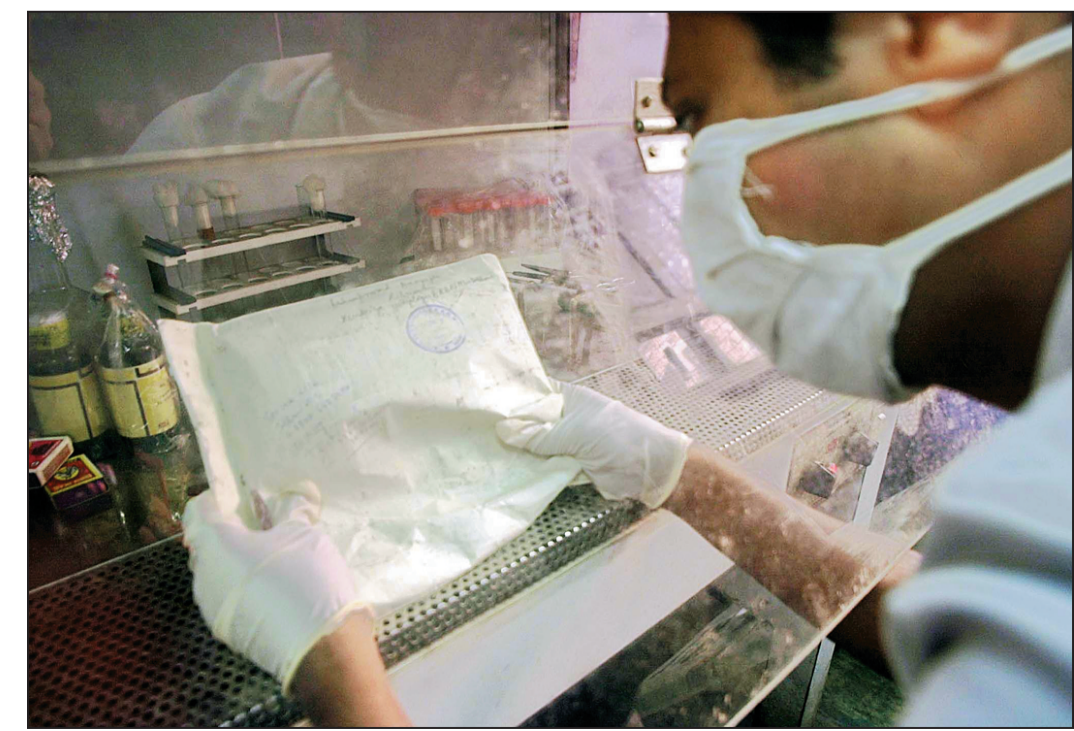
Sakar said powder was being examined and the results would be released on Monday.

Indian Home Minister LK Advani said yesterday the government was constantly assessing chemical and biological threats against the country.

"All kinds of precautions are being taken and we are taking no chances," he said.

Meanwhile, in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, mysterious parcels received by mail at an Indian Airforce Station at suburban

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A laboratory assistant inspects an envelope which contains a book found with white powder inside at the School of Tropical Medicines in Kolkata yesterday. The laboratory received a sample of white powder, suspected to be anthrax, for "routine test" after the suspicious substance was found at a school library in Midnapore district.

Kolkata court jails 3 for spying for Pakistan

AFP, Kolkata

A court here on Thursday sentenced a Pakistani, an Afghan and an Indian to life imprisonment after they were convicted of spying for Pakistan.

The three had been convicted the day before of espionage for Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency on the Chandpur missile launching centre on the Bay of Bengal in Orissa state.

The alleged leader of the spy ring, Pakistani national Ahmed Ali, was arrested in September 1999 in Dum Dum on Calcutta's northern outskirts.

Police said they seized incriminating documents from Ali's rented flat, including a diary that included the telephone number and address of a senior Indian intelligence officer.

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