

# 70 BNP men dropped from 23 murder cases in Naogaon

## Trial of AL leaders Raza, Arun murder cases stalled as 23 accused including a deputy minister and his brother dropped from charge

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Names of 70 ruling party men including Deputy Minister Alamgir Kabir and his brother Anwar Hossain Bulu have been dropped from lists of accused in 23 sensational murder cases in Naogaon.

Names of 21 more accused in the cases are in the process of being dropped.

The cases include one for the double murder of Awami League leader advocate Siddikur Rahman Raza and Sramik League

leader Arun on March 30, 1999 in Atrai in Naogaon.

Twenty-seven people were killed in the 23 murders. All the victims were leaders and activists of Awami League and its front organisations, sources claimed.

The names have been withdrawn after separate prayers to the District Judge's court by the Naogaon district administration following orders from the Home Ministry, Public Prosecutor (PP) Mohammad Joyal Abedin told this correspondent on Sunday.

All the accused are local lead-

ers and activists of ruling BNP or its front organisations, other sources claimed.

Of the 70, 27 were among 41 accused in the Raza-Arun double murder case. Their names were dropped as per a Home Ministry order (Memo No. mls-21/2001(Law-1)(S.M.-1) / 1183, dated 05.04.2003).

The PP said trial of the Raza-Arun case has been stopped following withdrawal of names of the 27 accused because witnesses are not appearing before court now.

All the murders were committed during 1998-2003. The victims include Jubo League leader Lal Mohammad Lalu, Golam Nabi, Abdul Latif Khan, Belal Hossain, Mozibur Rahman, advocate Abdus Sattar, Nazrul Islam Nazu, Munsur Rahman, Mozibur Rahman, Shakawat Hossain, Mozaffar Hossain, Munsur, Mozibur Rahman, Bhutto, advocate Sobhan Chowdhury, Bisha Union Parishad chairman Hazi Muzammel Haque, Sohagi Begum, brothers Gias Uddin and Abdul Jobber, Salamot Hossain Chowdhury and Abul Hossain.

## ATTACK ON WRITER HUMAYUN AZAD

# Protests continue in dists

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Protests by socio-political and cultural organisations continued in districts against the heinous attack on writer Humayun Azad and demanding resignation of the home minister for the government's failure to nab the culprits.

Our CU Correspondent reports: Muktizudher Shaheed Smriti Pathagar and Ekattar Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee at a joint rally at the Shaheed Minar in Chittagong city on Thursday demanded judicial probe into the attack on Humayun Azad.

Speakers at the rally alleged that anti-liberation forces sheltered by the government made the attack and demanded resignation of the home minister for his failure to ensure security to citizens.

Among others, former pro-VC of Chittagong University (CU) Prof. Dr. Abu Yousuf, Prof. Dr. Gazi Saleh Uddin, Shawkat Bangalee and Nur Jahan Khan addressed the rally presided over by Nirmul Committee's Chittagong unit president advocate Shaiful Alam.

It was addressed by, among others, Begum Mushtari Shafi, advocate Kamrunnabar and Ward Commissioner Rehana Kabir Ranu. They called upon pro-liberation forces to unite to resist such attacks.

CU Abritti Manch (recitation forum) also expressed their condemnation over the attack.

Our Patuakhali Correspondent reports: Leaders of Oikkya Prochesta and Udichi Shilp Gosti at separate rallies in the town said the attack on Humayun Azad is not an isolated incident. It is part of a plan by the



A procession by Sangskritik Oikya Jote in Manikganj town on Wednesday protesting the attack on writer and Dhaka University teacher Humayun Azad.

anti-liberation forces to eliminate pro-liberation and progressive intellectuals.

They said the government has no right to stay in power as it has failed to ensure security to people's life and property. They also called upon the people, particularly writers and journalists, to unite and protest such attacks.

Oikkya Prochesta leader advocate Abdul Aziz, Subhas Chanda, Motalab Molla and Udichi member Bipul Das addressed the rallies.

A correspondent reports from Bhola:

Bhola Sammolito Nagorik Samaj (Bhola citizens' committee) at a rally on Obaidul Hoque College premise in the town condemned the attack on Humayun Azad and deplored that the government could not nab the culprits in seven days after the

incident.

They also demanded the home minister's resignation.

Presided over by Mobassar Ullah Chowdhury, the rally was addressed by, among others, Nirob Mollah, S. Alam, Mohiuddin Masud, Abu Taher, Fazlul Kader Monju and Mofazzal Hossain Shahin.

After the rally, a protest procession was passing by Bhola Bar Association building, some miscreants riding on about 20 motorcycles attacked and dispersed it. Some people were injured.

Witnesses said the attackers chanted slogans like 'Khaleda Tumi Agra Cholo Amara Achi Tumar Shathe' (Khaleda you march forward we are with you).

Our B'baria Correspondent reports: Brahmanbaria Nagorik

Samaj (citizens' committee) organised a human chain, held a rally and brought out a procession in the town on Thursday protesting the attack.

They blamed anti-liberation forces for the attack and demanded the home minister's resignation.

Presided over by Prof. Muklesur Rahman Khan, the rally preceded by the procession was addressed by, among others Muktizudha Sheed Smriti Pathagar President Ali Akbar Mazumder, local Nirmul Committee Chairman Joydul Hossain, Sahipakala Academy director Majbul Bari, Insar Ali Pasa, Nagorik Samaj Secretary AKM Shibly, MK Kaitum Khan, Azizul Haque and Sarafal Hussain.

Our Manikganj Correspondent reports: The district unit of Sammolito Sangskritik Jote brought out procession in the town and held a rally in front of Manikganj Press Club Wednesday afternoon demanding arrest and punishment to the attackers of writer Humayun Azad.

With Jote district convenor and Awami League General Secretary Gazi Kamrul Huda Selim in the chair, the rally was addressed by, among others, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD-Inu) central joint secretary Iqbal Hossain Khan, CPB (Communist Party of Bangladesh) leader Mizanur Rahman Hazrat, Manikganj Bar Association President Md Meher Uddin, Gono Forum leader Iqbal Hossain Kochi and AL leader advocate Dipak Ghosh.

They said this government must be ousted to stop such attacks because the ruling party is sheltering criminals, who are anti-liberation forces. They are fomenting communalism and fundamentalism.

They urged the people to unite to dislodge the government.

## A family of drug peddlers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Police arrested Rezaul Moral, 35, his wife Delwara, 26, and their son Hassan, 5, from Nathullabad bus stand in the city at about 3 am Wednesday and recovered 30 bottles of Phensidyl, four kgs of other drugs and chemicals used for making Phensidyl mixture.

They confessed to police that they came to Barisal from Sharsha in Jessore by bus on their way to Patuakhali to deliver the items to one Kalu at Patuakhali bus stand.

Rezaul said he was given Tk 500 for this. They were sent to jail.

## Outlaws kill AL leader in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Outlawed party cadres shot dead an Awami League (AL) leader at Dahakula village in Sadar upazila on Tuesday.

The victim is Abdul Khaleq, 40, son of late Habib Uddin Mondol of the village.

Police said cadres of the outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) stormed into the house of Khaleq and took him to a nearby field where they shot him dead.

Police recovered the body and sent to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy.

The victim's family disclosed that an outlawed party demanded Tk one lakh as illegal toll from the victim a few days back. Khaleq declined to pay the toll.

A case was filed with Sadar Police Station, but police could not arrest anyone.

## BNP cadres capture shrimp enclosure: 3 hurt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Three persons including a woman were injured severely in a clash over capture of a shrimp enclosure by BNP cadres at Banishanta in Dekop upazila on Thursday.

The injured are Shefali Begum, 35, Alamgir Hossain, 34, and Kayum Bhuiyan, 25. They were admitted to Dekop Upazila Health Complex.

The shrimp enclosure is owned by an Awami League (AL) activist named Kamrul Islam.

Police said a ruling BNP MP's nephew sent the armed cadres led by Boing Molla, younger brother of Khulna City Corporation (KCC) ward commissioner Amanullah.

He complained that he had received death threats by the occupants. Police did not visit the spot, he alleged.

## Family feud: Old man chopped, burnt to death at Sylhet village

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A 65-year-old man was chopped and burnt to death at a remote village in Jakiganj upazila on Wednesday night. The tragic incident occurred as a sequel to a family feud, locals and police informed.

The victim, Jamal Ahmed went to see his younger brother's wife Dilara Begum at her brother's house at Kazirapon village on Tuesday evening. Jamal exchanged hot words with Dilara over family feud. At one stage Dilara and her family chopped him. They took him inside a locked room, gouged out his right eye and poured kerosene on his person before setting it on fire. Later, neighbours informed the matter to police.

On information, Jakiganj thana police recovered the body on Thursday and arrested Dilara along with four others. They are: Dilara's brother Abdul Karim, 26, wife Hosna Begum, 18, mother Kamala Begum, 60, and niece Syeda Jasmine Nahar, 15.



Blind Babul (wearing dark glasses) appearing at SSC examination at Brahmanbaria Annada Government High School centre on Thursday.

## Blind Babul appearing at SSC exam

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Blindness is no bar to Babul in acquiring knowledge. He is appearing at the SSC examination this year.

Babul Chandra Das dictates and another student of class nine of his school - Md Shahadat Hussain -- writes for him at the examination hall at Annada Government High School centre.

A student of Brahmanbaria High School, Babul did well although his school examinations. He got 4.67 (four point six seven) GPA (Grade Point Average) in test examination at school.

Babul is different from others since his childhood, when the cause of blindness befell him due to wrong treatment, his father Rakhal Chandra Das told this correspondent.

When he was a student of two, his father took him to a doctor for treatment offer.

The doctor wrongly diagnosed the fever as malaria and treated him for quite a long time, said Rakhal, an employee of Rural Electrification Board.

He was cured but side effect of the medicine started blurring his eyesight.

He was sent to Dhaka and then abroad, but to no effect. Child Babul gradually lost his eyesight.

At his son's insistence, the father admitted him to Brahmanbaria High School. He was lodged at the hostel run by the Assistance for Blind Children, an NGO.

Babul hopes to do well in the SSC examination and wants to study further.

## People will resist hartal, home minister says

### AL leader Patuakhali Poura Chairman joins BNP at public meeting

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Home Minister Air Vice Marshal (Rtd) Altaf Hossain Chowdhury yesterday said Awami League activist will not be allowed to come on streets to enforce their hartal (today) and destroy public property.

People do not want anarchy and they will resist hartal, he said.

He was addressed a public meeting at Shaheed Alauddin Children Park, where Patuakhali Pourashbha Chairmen Mostaq Ahmed along with some others from Awami League joined ruling BNP.

BNP lawmaker Shahidul Alam Talukder, former lawmaker Shajahan Khan and district BNP secretary Suhansu Sarkar Kuti addressed the meeting with Abdur Rashid Channu Mia, Senior Vice-

president of the party's district unit in the chair.

Home minister said, AL leaders are "lairs". While in power, they had declared that they would not call any hartal.

But they are calling frequent hartals now only to go to power at the cost of people's misery.

AL is calling hartal without any issue. He said fuel prices have increased slightly in the country because of price hike in the international market.

Law and order is improving following drastic actions by the government against criminals, he claimed. The situation will improve further, he said. He also claimed that there was no political murder in Patuakhali town during BNP's two and a half years' rule.

## Syedpur Uttara Housing Project Planned self-immolation by Bangalees' leader foiled

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

The planned self-immolation by Abul Hasan Bulu, leader of Banglaeas agitating for houses in government's Uttara Housing Project in Syedpur, on Wednesday was foiled by his supporters.

Abul Hasan Bulu on Sunday had declared the self-immolation protesting the local authorities' decision to allot houses only to Beharis.

On Wednesday, the Bangalees held a big rally near the project. It was addressed by Bulu and others.

At the fag end of the rally, Bulu brought out a bottle of petrol and a match box from his pocket. As he was about to pour the petrol on his body there were shouts from the audience urging him not to do so and some youths jumped on the dais and snatched the bottle and the match box.

Earlier on Tuesday, Nilphamari Police Superintendent told this correspondent that attempt to commit suicide is also a punishable offense.

On Wednesday, contingents of police were deployed in the project area as tension mounted centring the self-immolation programme.

Army men who were supervising the project construction work were also seen standing near the venue of the rally.

The Prime Minister is likely to inaugurate the project on March 14, official sources said.

Bangalees are agitating as the local authorities declared that the 1000 houses in the project will be allotted only to Beharis in violation of the government's earlier announcement through a gazette notification.

## SHATKHIRA SUNDARBANS DEFORESTATION FOR SHRIMP CULTURE

# Forest official suspended, 11 others transferred

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

The Sandarbans Station Officer in Kaikhali, Golam Rabbani, has been suspended for negligence in duty following felling of trees on about five acres of forest area by some local influentials allegedly for building a shrimp enclosure.

Eleven other forest officials and staff have been transferred from the station in Satkhira district.

Divisional Forest Officer (DPO) Badrul Alam Bhuiyan took the action on February 29 after a probe, official sources said.

The transferred people are assistant station officers Khalilur Rahman and Khondakar Wahiduzzaman; forest guards Rashedul Islam, Kobayed Ali, Hafizur Rahman, Champak Das,

Maniruzzaman, Abdul Quddus, Ruhul Quddus; and boat drivers Subash Chandra Majumdar and Mujibar Rahman.

The forest department has filed a case against three persons -- Rashedul Gazi, Ebadul Gazi and Moktar Gazi of Bhetkhali in Shyamnagar upazila -- for felling the trees for shrimp cultivation.

They took away several hundred Geo, Kewra and Hetal trees from Compartment No 47 in Kaikhali near Gokhali village in Shyamnagar upazila in January, forest official Kazi Karim said quoting from the probe report.

The probe was done by forest officials Nurul Amin and Kazi Nurul Karim, Karimsaid.

During a recent visit to the area some local people told this correspondent that some influential groups had

been eyeing the Sundarbans for long to grab land for shrimp cultivation.

The Kaikhali Forest Station covers 1,51,351 acres of land. Human habitation has been separated from the Sundarbans by building an embankment.

The trees from the five-acre area were felled within two weeks from the last week of January in connivance with a section of corrupt forest officials, they alleged.

When contacted, Rashidul Gazi and Moktar Guzi said they cut the trees as tigers from bushes there often come to nearby shrimp farms, threatening life of security guards. They said their intention was not to grab the Sundarbans land.

## Salima to urge PM not to lay off Rangpur Sugar Mills

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Salima Rahman would urge the Prime Minister not to lay off Rangpur Sugar Mills.

She told this while addressing a meeting of the district development and co-ordination meeting at the Deputy Commissioner's (DC) conference room here on Thursday.

Gaibandha DC Tapon Chandra Majumder presided over the meeting while it was addressed, among others, by Additional Police Super Musfiqur Rahman, ADC (Gen) Abedur Rahman, Civil Surgeon Abdul Quddus, BNP central committee member Saiful Alam Suja, Zila Parishad Chief Executive Officer Sudev Chandra Sarker and Deputy Director of Agriculture Department Abdur Rouf.

Earlier, the state minister opened the newly-constructed office building of Boali Union Parishad and the DC Gold Cup Football tournament at Gaibandha stadium.

## Tk 50,000 given to Rangamati fire victims

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

The district administration in a letter to the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Affairs Ministry has sought Tk two lakh and 20 tonnes of foodgrains as relief for 115 victims of the recent fire incident at a village in Rajsholi upazila.

The families are now homeless as the devastating fire gutted their houses and over one hundred shops, Deputy Commissioner Dr Jafar Ahmed Khan told this correspondent.

The Rangamati Hill District Council (RHDC) has distributed Tk 50,000 among the victims, the DC said. members.

## Regional ijtema ends today at Mymensingh

### Vehicles out of purview of today's hartal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A three-day regional ijtema organised by Tablig Jamaat of Mymensingh region began near the BTV Sub-station at Akua in the district town on Thursday.

A large number of devotees from Mymensingh, Sherpur, Netrakona, Jamalpur, Kishoreganj and other parts of the country is attending the ijtema.

The local administration has taken all measures to hold it successfully.

Meanwhile, the district Awami League (AL) has decided to keep all vehicles out of the purview of today's hartal so that devotees can take part in the Akheri Munajat.

## Ctg Divisional Commissioner meets journalists

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Chittagong Divisional Commissioner Md Ashraful Makbul met local journalists at the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) here on Wednesday.

The journalists discussed various problems faced by them while performing professional duties with the divisional commissioner.

Brahmanbaria Press Club president Manjur Kamal (Observer), vice president Sayed Md Shahjahan (Independent), former vice-president Sheikh Md Shahidul Islam (The Daily Star), secretary Muhammad Anif Mia, (Ittefaq), Pijus Kanti Acharya (Bhorcr Kago), Abdus Noor (Jugantor), Monjori Alam (Editor, Samat Barta), Mohibur Rahman (Editor, Projabandhu), Javed Rahim, Bijon (Manabjainin) Md Jiban (Bangla Bazar), Md Sadekul Rahman (Sangbad) and Md Delwar Hussain (The New Age) addressed the meeting.

## UP chairman held by joint forces in Assassuni

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Anulia Union Parishad (UP) chairman and former Assassuni thana Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) president Ruhul Quddus was arrested by joint forces from his house at Assassuni upazila on Monday.

Police told this correspondent a group of miscreants led by Quddus armed with deadly weapons attacked and damaged a hatchery at Hijilion in Assassuni upazila for refusal of its owner to pay toll amounting to Tk 50,000 on February 20. They also beat up its staff.

Quddus was placed on five-day remand by the magistrate on Wednesday.

Earlier, hatchery owner Nurul Amin filed a case with Assassuni thana.

## SNAPS

### JU admission test now from March 13 to 23

JU CORRESPONDENT

The date of admission test into first year honours classes for 2003-04 session in Jahangirnagar University (JU) has been rescheduled.

Now it will be held from March 17 to 25 instead of March 13 to 23.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the examination committee held at the council room of the university with vice chancellor (VC) Prof Jasim Uddin Ahmad in the chair.

However, teachers of the university may boycott admission test due to authorities' delay in appointment of a new VC from the elected three-member panel after several days of election.

### Two hacked by extortionists

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

Two persons were hacked by extortionists at Puratan Chawdhurypara in the town on Wednesday for failure to pay them Tk 20,000 as illegal toll.

The victims are Sharif Uddin Ahmed (Babul), 28, and Mohabub Alam (Tohin), 25.

Police and local people told this correspondent eight extortionists led by Kamal, 28, son of Abdul Wohab, of Bismillah House, Chandpur, Golam Sharif, 25, son of late Mohon Miah of Mogoltoli and Nasir, son of Mazid Miah of Faruki House in Comilla town hacked them on Tuesday. Comilla Kotwali police arrested Kamal while hitting Tohin. The injured were admitted to Comilla Sadar Hospital in a critical condition.

Other culprits managed to flee.

## IU students block road for resumption of classes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Students kept the main road in front of Islamic University blocked for an hour on Thursday demanding immediate resumption of classes and examinations.

They will continue the programme till classes resume.

At a rally on the day, the agitated students declared that they will stop operation of Janata Bank on the campus to press their demand.

Alongside, the Islamic University Teachers Association (IUTA), ruling BNP-backed Zia Parishad and Awami League supported Bangabandhu Parishad continued their agitation under the banner of Bibhi Bidhan Sangrakhan Committee (BBSC- committee to protect rules)

demanding resignation of Vice-chancellor Prof Mustafizur Rahman for allegedly using Jamaat-e-Islami line in running the administration.

They also brought against him allegations of financial irregularity, nepotism in promotion of teachers and officials and ignoring national days like Victory Day and February 21.

But the VC did not pay any heed to the allegations as he is backed by the pro-Jamaat teachers group Green Forum and pro-BNP Peshajibi Parishad (professionals group), sources on the campus said.

Most of the classes are not held since January 1 as the teachers and officials demanding VC's resignation are staying away. The first year admission test scheduled for January 19 was also postponed.

Teachers belonging to the Green Forum tried to take classes in the Theology Faculty but could not take examinations due to non-cooperation by other teachers, the sources said.

Talking to this correspondent, Prof Ashraf Ali, convenor of BBSC, said, "The VC has lost all moral rights to stay in office as he betrayed with teachers, officials and staff. Majority of the teachers do not want the VC as he is unable to run the university."

When contacted, the VC dismissed all allegations as 'baseless'.

"They have made students hostages. They so-called movement is illegal. They are drawing their salary but not taking classes. It is unethical", he said.



Hundreds of landless people at a meeting on Sunday at Mahindrappur High School ground in Kumarkhali upazila, Kushtia demanding allotment of khas lands for them. Local NGOs Sheldid Rabintra Sangsad and Palli Seba in collaboration with Dhaka-based Association for Land Reforms and Development (ALRD) jointly organised the meeting.