

Arms smuggled in from clandestine factories

Arrested Indian discloses 4 such factories near border

AMANUR AMAN, back from border areas

Kushtia: Firearms produced at clandestine factories operated by criminals across Kushtia border are being smuggled into Bangladesh.

There are at least four such factories in Nasirpara and Kacharipara villages in Zalanagi thana in Murshidabad district. The two villages are within three kilometres of the border in India, sources said.

Some well organised gangs who operate in border areas in the two countries are engaged in the arms smuggling.

On Monday, BDR caught an Indian national - Asmot Ali at Fulbari border point in Damurhuda upazila in Chuadanga and recovered a pistol from him.

He identified himself as son of one Khoda Box of Malya village in Chapra thana in Nadia district. He told BDR that such pistols and

other common and cheaper firearms are produced in those clandestine factories and smuggle those into Bangladesh, BDR officials told this correspondent.

Such arms carriers were nabbed earlier also while trying to enter Bangladesh through different border points in Kushtia, Meherpur and Chuadanga districts, BDR sources said.

BSF officials at the meeting said they know presence of such clandestine factories close to the border in India and had raised the issue at BDR-BSF flag meetings. The last such meeting was held in Chuadanga on April 13.

Murshidabad district in India and Kushtia in Bangladesh are divided by Mathabhanga river.

It was gathered from different sources that several gangs are active

at several points in the border. Prominent among them are Faisal-Fahmid Bahini of Jamalpur in Bangladesh and Lalchad Bahini of Philipnagar in India. In Bangladesh, these are sheltered by some local Union Parishad leaders and ruling party men, sources said.

The arms smugglers mostly use Jamalpur, Chilmari, Ramkrishnapur, Bigathua and Bhagjote points. Of these, the smugglers prefer Jamalpur point the most, the sources said.

BDR personnel recently arrested two smugglers at this point and seized several firearms, they said.

The arms which are being smuggled into Bangladesh include pistol, pipe gun, shutter gun, revolver, eight-shooter gun and swan-off rifle. Of these, pipe gun, shutter gun, some types of pistols like Moyuree and some other light firearms are produced in these factories.

These firearms are popular

among criminals because of cheap rate. Foreign made firearms are also smuggled through these points.

A shutter gun and a pipe gun is sold at between Tk 1000 and Tk 5000 in Bangladesh. Outlaws in the south-western region of the country are the main buyers. The smugglers supply arms according to demand of the buyers.

There are about 275 kilometers border in greater Kushtia including Chuadanga and Meherpur districts.

The gangs usually use consignments of fruits, eggs, rice, vegetables and other items to smuggle firearms.

An official source said that most of the 1,939 illegal firearms surrendered by criminals in Khulna division in 1999 in response to the then Awami League government's general amnesty were made in India.

Kidnappers kill trader for ransom

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Abductors have killed cattle trader Amirul Islam as his family failed to pay them additional ransom money.

Police recovered the dead body from Porardia Char near the Padma river yesterday.

Police said criminals kidnapped Amirul on Saturday when he was on way to Allahdarga Bazar to buy cattle. The gang snatched Tk 20,000 from Amirul and latter demanded more Tk 80,000 from his family for his release.

Family sources said a local gang named Lalchad Bahini lead by Lalchad demanded the money over cell phone on Saturday night and asked them no to go to police. But the victim's family could not arrange the money.

Local people yesterday saw the Amirul's body at Porardia Char and informed police.

Police sent the body to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy and filed a case Daulatpur police station.

Nor'wester lashes Gaibandha: One killed, 45 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

One person was killed and 45 others sustained injuries when a nor'wester lashed five unions of two upazilas here on Sunday.

Monower Hossain, 55, of Munshipara was electrocuted when he came in contact with a snapped live power line. His son Rana, 23, received severe injuries while he tried to rescue his father.

Over 500 dwelling houses ragged to the ground and many fruit bearing trees and electric poles were uprooted resulting in suspension of power supply for 12 hours.

The affected areas are Falia, Pulbandi, Radha Krishnapur, Laxmipur, Sardertari, Lenga bazaar, Malibari, Kuptala and Madanepara.

The nor'wester damaged boro crops on a vast tract of land, according to Gaibandha Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO).

Tiger kills honey collector

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkira

A honey collector was killed by a tiger in Dingimari area in the Sundarbans on Monday.

The victim is Monzel Gazi, 40, son of Adam Gazi of village Chakbari in Shyamnagar upazila.

Quoting local people police said, Monzel Gazi and six other honey collectors went there to collect honey taking official passes from Burigoaini Forest Office on April 15. Suddenly a tiger swooped on Monzel and dragged him into deep forest. Later, the victim's associates recovered the body.

In an earlier incident on Friday, Mokbul Hossain, 48, son of Belayet Hossain Sheikh of village Sora in Shyamnagar upazila was also killed by tiger. At that time he was cutting 'goal pata' in Athorobeki area in the Sundarbans.

Local people recovered the body.



STAR FILE PHOTO

A tribal girl accompanied by her father pay respect to Birsrestha Munshi Abdur Rouf at the monument on March 26.

Erosion threatens Birsrestha's monument in Rangamati

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

People of Rangamati celebrated the Independence Day this year paying tributes to Birsrestha Munsir Abdur Rouf.

Numerous people placed wreaths on the grave on a hilltop at Burighat in Kaptai in Naniarchar upazila.

Programmes will also be held at the monument today, the day Munsir Abdur Rouf made the supreme sacrifice for the country's independence.

But the monument erected in 1996 is threatened with erosion. Immediate steps are needed to protect it.

Rangamati district administration

submitted a proposal to the Freedom Fighters Affairs Ministry months ago, but there has been no progress in allocation of funds, BDR Rangamati Sector Commander Col. Hamidul Islam PSC told this correspondent.

The monument was built after the spot where the hero made the supreme sacrifice was located by one of his co-fighters - Doyal Krishna Chakma - during a visit to the area by the then BDR Director General Maj. Gen. Azizur Rahman in 1996.

On December 10 in the same year, the BDR built a monument to the great hero.

Since then, BDR has been organising programmes at the monument on the Victory Day (December 16) and the Independence Day (March 26) in memory of the

hero. On April 20 in 1971, the then EPR (East Pakistan Regiment) Lans Naek Munsir Abdur Rouf fought alone to let others escape when Pakistani troops attacked the area from three sides, said Robert Ronald, another co-fighter, now a politician in Kaptai.

Co-fighters fled the scene and request Rouf also to join them but he declined. Munsir's team was guarding the Mohalchhari-Rangamati belt, taking position at Burighat.

A mortar shell hit him, killing him on the spot. Doyal Chakma later buried the body on the hilltop.

Munshi was born in May 1943 Salamotpur village in Boalmari thana in Faridpur district.

Fire damages Diamond Partex Factory

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Six people were injured in a stampede when a fire damaged the Diamond Partex Factory at Uttom in the town yesterday.

The fire burnt all raw materials and products, fire fighters and factory owners said.

Rangpur Kotwali police said the fire originated from an electric short circuit at about 2 pm and soon engulfed the whole factory.

Fire fighters from Rangpur town, Sayedpur, Nilphamari, Kounia, Haragachh and Kurigram extinguished the fire in about three hours, police said.

Kamal, Managing Director of the company, said they are yet to calculate the loss.

Diarrhoea kills 10 in Netrakona Over 100 hospitalised in Madaripur

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Diarrhoea has broken out in Netrakona and Madaripur districts, killing at least 10 people in Netrakona. No death has been reported from Madaripur though several hundred have been attacked.

Our Netrakona Correspondent reports: Diarrhoea and other intestinal diseases killed 10 people and attacked over 250 in Durgapur, Purbadhala, Khalajuri and Mohongonj upazilas in Netrakona district in last one week.

The worst affected area is Durgapur where four persons were killed and about 800 were attacked by the disease.

The dead are Khatun, 5, Rahima, 2, Nurunnahar, 8 and Salim Mia, 70

of Durgapur; Sarjina, 7, and Mahara Khatun, 50 of Khalajuri; Sahara Khatun, 40, and Moyna, 2, of Mohongonj and Khokon, 6 and Kuhnir, 9, of Purbadhala upazila.

Sources at Netrakona Civil Surgeon's office said the diseases have broken out in large scale due to the sweltering heat. But the situation is under control now as 40 medical teams are in the affected areas.

They said about 2000 people have so far been treated in health complexes in Durgapur, Purbadhala, Mohongonj and Khalajuri. At least 150 patients are coming to different hospitals in a day, they said.

Local people alleged that the medical teams do not have adequate medicines and saline packets with them to supply to the areas.

To this, the sources said the

medical teams were given oral saline only so that they could treat patients at primary stage.

A Correspondent reports from Madaripur: Diarrhoea has broken out in different areas in the four upazilas of Madaripur district.

Fifteen diarrhoea patients were admitted to four upazila health complexes in the district in last 24 hours, health officials said here. Over 100 were treated at the hospitals in last seven days.

Another 10 patients were admitted to the Sadar Hospital yesterday.

When contacted, Civil Surgeon Dr Sojjad Hossain however said the situation is under control as there are huge stocks of saline in all the hospitals.

An effort to revive jute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A day-long training for jute-growers ended in Mirpur upazila headquarters in Kushtia district on Monday. The workshop was organised by the ministry of jute.

Komal Krishna Kundu, Assistant Director, Department of Jute, addressed the training session as chief guest.

The training was conducted by Joint Director Abdus Samad Mondol, Mirpur Upazila Agricultural Officer Abu Bakkar Siddique and Inspector Saha Alam. About 100 jute farmers from different areas of the upazila took part in the programme.



PHOTO: STAR

Farmers at the day-long training on jute cultivation, held at Mirpur on Monday.

DEATH OF EXPAT IN SYLHET HOSPITAL

Probe blames doctors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A three-member probe committee held the on-duty physicians responsible for death of an expatriate at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital following a road accident on April 4.

The victim is Abul Khayer Noman, 28, hailing from village Dharon in Chhatak.

Prof Mir Mahbul Alam, Head of the Department of Surgery who led the probe committee had submitted the report to the hospital director on Monday.

After the death of the victim, his relatives held the interneer doctors

responsible for death of their near one. At this stage, interneer doctors and other staff of the hospital confined them along with the victim's body in a ward. They were freed after about six hours at the intervention of high officials and senior doctors of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA).

The same day, interneer doctors began an indefinite strike alleging outsiders' attack on them. They withdrew the strike three days later.

However, after submission of the investigation report, the hospital authorities met the political leaders and elite of the city to discuss the prevailing situation.

ROUMARI CLASH

Condition of 3 critical, police deployed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Condition of three of the people bullet-hit at Roumari in Kurigram yesterday is critical at Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

Among the three, Helal was undergoing when the report was being filed at noon.

Condition of Akber Ali and Dulu is also critical, doctors said. Excessive bleeding made their condition critical, they said.

Condition of another 11 people, injured during a clash between people and police, is stable at Kurigram Hospital, according to doctors there reached over telephone.

Meanwhile, police have arrested 16 people from villages in Roumari upazila on charge of damaging two

jeeps, attacking Thana Nirbahi Officer Delwar Hossen, his office and residence on Monday.

They were sent up to Kurigram jail yesterday. Police have been deployed at Roumari and Kurigram. Eyewitnesses said, the TNO and some upzila officials came under attack on Monday when they fined two businessmen Tk 1000 each for ignoring metric system of weight measurement.

DC of Kurigram Azizur Rahman Mollah along with acting police superintendent Nurul Islam went to Roumari Monday night. They asked the upazila administration to the face situation with patience.

OMS of rice stopped in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Open market sale (OMS) of rice has been stopped in the district though full scale IRRI-Boro harvest is still about two weeks away.

This has created a problem for the poor people who used to buy rice from OMS dealers at subsidized rates.

The OMS programme was scheduled to continue till harvest of IRRI-Boro but stopped on Sunday.

Hundreds of poor people are crowding the 303 OMS dealer shops in eight upzilas in the district. But they are returning home empty handed as the programme was stopped without any prior notice.

When contacted, the District Food Controller told The Daily Star that the OMS has been stopped following a directive from higher authorities.

