

'Robber' killed in Rab 'crossfire'

UNB, Ctg

A robber was killed in a 'shootout' between Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and his cohorts at Uttar Samura village in Boalkhali upazila of the district early yesterday.

He was identified as Jafar Ahmed, 31, son of late Abdus Sobhan of Karandanga village under Boalkhali upazila.

Rab sources said they arrested notorious robber Jafar in Bayezid Bostami area of the port city Wednesday evening.

According to his statement, the members of the elite force took him to Samura village at about 4:00am yesterday to recover firearms.

When the Rab team along with Jafar reached the village, his accomplices opened fire, forcing the Rab men to retaliate.

During the shootout, Jafar was shot as he tried to escape. He was taken to the local health complex where the doctors declared him dead.

Boalkhali police said Jafar was wanted in about 12 robbery and other criminal cases.

Fires gut 36 houses, shops in Chittagong

CU CORRESPONDENT

At least 36 houses and shops were gutted, damaging properties worth over Tk 10 lakh in three separate incidents of fire here in the port city yesterday.

According to fire service sources, 17 thatched houses were gutted leaving some 55 families homeless at a slum adjacent to Ispahani Gate No. 1 under Pahartali thana in the early hours yesterday.

The fire, reportedly originating from mosquito coil at around 1:30am, also gutted nine shops and a rickshaw garage, causing damage of property worth around Tk 4 lakh.

Five units of fire fighting vehicles extinguished the fire at around 3:30am. No casualty was reported in the incident.

Another fire at the Royal Food Factory reduced the noodle factory to ashes at Patharghata Brickfield Road under Kotwali thana in the afternoon.

The fire broke out at around 1:00pm and damaged property worth around Tk 3 lakh before the fire fighters brought the situation under control at around 2:00pm, sources said. The origin of the fire could not be known.

The third incident of fire took place at Rizwan Complex, one of the busiest markets for readymade garments, on Tamakumandi Lane at Reazuddin Bazar at around 1:15pm.

The fire originated from electric short-circuit and gutted some eight shops, damaging properties worth over Tk 3 lakh before five units of fire fighting vehicles extinguished the fire, sources said.

More areas go under water in Gaibandha

Major rivers mark rise in north

STAR REPORT

Fresh areas in five upazilas of Gaibandha have been inundated with the water level in the Karotoa, Teesta, Ghagot and Brahmaputra rivers continuing to rise yesterday while flood waters in Nilphamari have begun to recede, compounding the problems of the affected people.

Our correspondent from Gaibandha reports: Four wards of Gobindagnaj pourashava have been submerged after surging rainwater had breached Karotoa Flood Control Embankment at Taraf Manu.

Gobindaganj Upazila Health Complex and Upazila Parishad premises have gone under knee-deep water, prompting the authorities to shift the patients to other places.

Besides, flood waters have submerged 17 villages under Gumaniganj, Sapmara, Fulbari, and Rakhal Buruj unions of the same upazila, leaving over 7,000 people marooned.

As of yesterday, the road link between Gobindaganj and Dinajpur was on the brink of collapse as the Gobindaganj-Dinajpur Highway remained under water due to breaches in the Karotoa flood control embank-

ment, said an official of upazila administration.

Flood affected people of Gobindaganj have taken shelter at different educational institutions.

Water level in the Karotoa kept rising, posing a threat of erosion to Rangpur-Bogra Highway.

Over 20,000 people in 34 chars on the Brahmaputra have been marooned by flood waters as the overflowing river continued to damage standing crops on vast tracts of land on its banks.

Gaibandha Town Protection
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Barapukuria coal mine fails to go on line again

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinajpur

Barapukuria Coal Mining Company Limited (BCMCL) has once again failed to start commercial extraction of coal as Chinese company CMC could not complete mining work within the scheduled time, BCMCL sources said.

This is for the seventh time the BCMCL failed to start operation of the mine that was scheduled to go into commercial production in July.

A 20-day test extraction drama at Barapukuria that started on September 18 has now ended, delaying

the country's first coal-based power project by at least another two to four months, sources said.

The Chinese company is engaged in mine development work at Barapukuria in Dinajpur since 1992 under a suppliers' credit arrangement. China Bank invested Tk 1,600 crore in this project.

Sources said the temperature, moisture and methane intensity in the mining area went up too high, disrupting coal extraction from the

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Govt starts selling rice at Tk 4 a kg

UNB, Dhaka

Sale of rice at a subsidised price of Tk 4 per kg began yesterday to help feed the poor.

Food and Disaster Management Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf inaugurated the countrywide drive on Jagir Union Parishad premises in Sadar upazila of Manikganj.

Deputy Minister for Food and Disaster Management Asadul Habib Dulu, Harunur Rashid Khan Munnu MP, Food and Disaster Management Secretary Mohammad Fazlur Rahman, Director General of the Food Department Zahid Hossain and deputy commissioner of Manikganj were, among others, present.

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PHOTO: STAR

Breach in Korotoa flood protection embankment has led to the submersion of many such houses in Gaibandha pourasava and adjoining areas. The photo was taken yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR

On the eve of Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the Hindus, sculptor Shankar Dhar gives a finishing touch to an image of goddess Durga at Tanti bazar in the city yesterday.

8 die in attack on Pak Ahmadiyya mosque

AP, Multan

Assailants with assault rifles attacked a mosque belonging to a small Muslim sect in eastern Pakistan early yesterday, killing at least eight people and wounding 19, police and a doctor said.

The attack on the mosque belonging to Ahmadiyya sect happened in the village of Mong, about 380km northeast of Multan, a main city in the eastern Punjab province, said Mohammed Arif, an area police officer.

"So far we only know that three men riding on a motorcycle suddenly

came in the village Friday morning. Two of them went inside the mosque and started firing," he said.

Arshad Nawaz, a doctor at a hospital in the area, confirmed that the death toll had risen to eight and said 19 people were still being treated, some of whom were in critical condition.

Masood Ahmed Raja, a cardiologist who belongs to the Ahmadiyya sect, told The Associated Press in a telephone interview that he was going to the Baitul Hamad mosque when he saw three masked men fleeing on a motorcycle.

"I had no idea who these men were, but when I reached the mosque, I heard cries and saw blood everywhere," he said. "I don't know who attacked our mosque, but it seems to be an act of religious terrorism."

Waqar Haider, the district police chief, said police were searching areas near the Mong village in an effort to catch the assailants. He refused to speculate who might have been behind the attack.

An estimated 150 of the 18,000 people in Mong belong to the Ahmadiyya sect.

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Idols vandalized in 3 areas

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Unidentified miscreants vandalised idols at three puja mandaps in Khulna, Faridpur and Jessore on Thursday night.

In Faridpur, the miscreants damaged the puja mandap at Chandpur village under Gopalpur Union.

Deputy Commissioner Md Nasiruddin and Police Superintendent Abdul Jalil visited the spot yesterday.

Meanwhile, departmental actions have been taken against two policemen--Sub-Inspector (SI) Golam Nabi and ASI

6 US marines killed in Iraq

29 insurgents killed in fighting, 20 bodies found

AFP, REUTERS, Baghdad

Six US marines and 29 insurgents were killed Thursday in fighting in western Iraq in a drive to root out militants while Iraqi police have recovered 22 bodies near the Iran border, the US military said in a statement yesterday.

Four died when killed by a bomb explosion near Al Karmah, near Fallujah, and two by a roadside bomb in the vicinity of Al Qaim, near the Syrian border.

The latest deaths bring to at least

1,946 the number of US military personnel killed in Iraq since the US-led invasion of March 2003, according to an AFP tally based on Pentagon figures.

Earlier US troops have killed at least 29 insurgents in western Iraq in their drive to root out militants waging a bloody struggle to topple the US-backed Baghdad government, the military said yesterday.

About 1,000 US Marines and

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LOAD-SHEDDING

Locals attack Tongi power office

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Locals ransacked Tongi power supply office yesterday evening in protest against frequent load-shedding.

Police clubbed the agitating people to bring the situation under control, leaving five injured.

Witnesses said local people attacked the power supply office at Cherag Ali Market under Tongi municipality soon after Iftar and damaged its doors, windows and furniture.

On information, police rushed to the spot and resorted to baton-charge to disperse the angry mob.

When contacted, duty officer at the Tongi control office told the news agency that load-shedding takes place due to the shortage of power supply from the sub-centre.

Taiwan president sees no rush for China talks

REUTERS, Taipei

Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian declared on Friday he would not be rushed into talks with China, saying it was vital to preserve the island's sovereign status.

Whereas China's leaders have said they were striving for talks to start even if they had delays during the negotiations, "I want to revise that statement," Chen said in an interview. "I want to strive for delays while not fearing talks."

He said his go-slow policy would benefit the 23 million people on the island more than accepting as a precondition for talks China's vision of one country that includes both Taiwan and the mainland.

"This is not reconciliation, this is
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Sehri-Iftar				
Ramadan	Oct	Sehri	Iftar	
3	8		5-42	
4	9	4-34	5-41	

Prayer Timing		
October 8		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-34	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-41	5-54
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation