

BSF kills 26 in 6 months on southwestern border

Sector commanders of two sides hold meet today

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Indian Security Forces (BSF) will hold a sector commander level meeting in Kushtia today.

BDR sources said the meeting will discuss different issues including killing of Bangladeshis by BSF, cross-border movement of criminals, drug smuggling, reinstallation of demolished or stolen border pillars, survey of disputed lands and raising barbed wires fence by BSF.

The meeting will be held at the office of Sector Commander of 9 Rifles Battalion in Kushtia.

Sources said at least 26 Bangladeshis were killed and over 150 injured by BSF on the south-western border in six months from January 1 to June 30. The Indian border guards also allegedly abduc-

ted at least 60 Bangladeshis during the period, the sources said.

Of the abducted Bangladeshis, about 35 are still in different jails in India and the rest were released after flag meetings between BDR and BSF.

At least 40 incidents of exchange of fire between the two border guards took place on the south-western border during the period.

According to information available from BDR and police and newspaper reports, seven Bangladeshis were killed in January, one in February, five in March, three in April, four in May and six in June on the southwestern border. Nine of the victims were cattle traders.

Satkhira border was the most troubled spot where at least 10 Bangladeshis were killed by BSF. Six of them were cattle traders.

In April, BSF troops entered Bangladesh territory and abducted a woman. Her body was later found on the no man's land.

The sources said BSF killed 62 Bangladeshis during January-December last year on the border.

A two-day Indo-Bangladesh border conference was held in Kushtia on June 4-5 last year.

"We always lodge strong protest at flag meetings and our counterparts also agreed not to open fire, but they often violate," Maj. Ashraf Hossain of 32 Rifles Battalion told this correspondent yesterday.

Another high official of BDR seeking anonymity said killing by BSF on border increased after the August 17 countrywide serial bomb blasts in 2005.

BSF was put on 'high alert' and ordered to take 'any measure to

stop sneaking of Islamist militants into India'. Smuggling is another cause for killings, he said.

At least 104 Bangladeshis were killed on southwestern border since August 17, 2005. Of them, 16 were killed from August 17 to December 2005, 62 in 2006 and 26 in last six months.

On the contrary, 8 were killed between January 1 to August 17, 2005.

"They (BSF) do not allow any adult Bangladeshi to come near the border even during day time," a BDR personnel told this correspondent during a visit to border areas in Kushtia.

BSF erected barbed wire fence along about 40 kilometers of the border in the region amid BDR protest, BDR sources said. BSF also use searchlight at night to check cross-border movement.

Two jailed for extortion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A court in Barisal yesterday sentenced two persons to 44 years rigorous imprisonment each for armed extortion.

The court also fined Junayed Alam Shuva and Riaz Parvez alias Tutul Biswas Tk 20,000 each, in default to serve prison term for one year more.

According to the prosecution story, Junayed Alam Shuva and Riaz Parvez of Gorachand Das road of the city wielded firearms and demanded toll from Patarhut Hotel at Port Road on July 11, 2001.

Hotel owners with the help of people nearby caught them and informed police, who arrested the two along with a 9mm pistol with 4 bullets.

Hotel manager Md. Hanif lodged two cases with Kotwali police station under the Arms Act and the Public Safety Act.

After examining 14 witnesses and evidences, Judge Abdus Salek sentenced the accused to 30 years RI with a fine of Tk 10,000 each under the Arms Act and 14 years RI with a fine of Tk 10,000 under the Public Safety Act.

Both of the accused were granted bail earlier by another judge of the court.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Phatikhchhari police in a raid in Bali rubber garden area in Chittagong Monday night recovered a G-3 rifle, a 303 rifle, a triple bore revolver, 3 magazines and 350 bullets.

Extortion case against ex- JP MP in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Former Jatiya Party lawmaker Mohammad Ali was sued for extortion yesterday.

Former Union Parishad member Azizul Hoque of Badarganj filed the case with a magistrate court in Rangpur.

Mohammad Ali's two younger brothers Moksed Ali and Mosharraf Hossein were also accused in the case.

Azizul alleged that the then lawmaker Mohammad Ali took Tk 50,000 from his daughter Aduri Begum, a Union Parishad member, in 2004 in the name of issuing a DO (demand order) letter for release of 10 tonnes of rice under food for work programme.

Aduri gave the money to Mohammad Ali in presence of his two brothers but he did not issue any DO letter, he alleged in the case.

Azizul mentioned in the complaint that neither he nor his daughter could file case earlier fearing reprisal.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Children presenting a cultural show as part of programmes in Laxmipur, organised by the district administration yesterday marking observance of Birth Registration Day 2007

Call to ensure birth registration in CHT

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Speakers at a discussion here yesterday urged the people in CHT to ensure their birth registration for 'a safer future'.

Khagrachhari district administration organised the discussion at the Officers' Club here.

Speakers stressed the need for birth registration here for identification as permanent citizens in CHT. It is also required for land registration, they said.

Speakers said that birth registration should be completed within 2008 without any fee for getting passport, driving license, trade license, national ID, marriage registration, voter ID, for opening bank account, for admission in educational institutions, health facilities and recruitment in government or non-government jobs.

They urged all to ensure birth registration of all people within 2008.

EXTORTION CASE

Ex-Kushtia BNP lawmaker among 14 chargesheeted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Police yesterday framed charges against former BNP lawmaker Reza Ahmed Bachhu Mollah and 14 other BNP leaders and activists in an extortion case.

The accused also include the former lawmaker's brother Shamim Reza alias Shamim Mollah and Lal Chad, alleged leader of a gang of musclemen locally known as Lalchand Bahini.

The case was filed with a magistrate court by Matiur Rahman Bappi, a contractor, on May 6.

According to the charge sheet submitted before a First Class Magistrate's court here, contractor Bappi dropped tender for some construction works under

Daulatpur upazila engineering department on May 9 last year.

Bachhu Mollah asked Bappi to withdraw from the contest, saying his men would bid for the work.

Bappi declined to withdraw the bid and subsequently got the work.

After some days, a gang of musclemen allegedly backed by Bachhu Mollah threatened Bappi of 'dire consequences.'

Bappi went to Bachhu Mollah on June 6 last year to resolve the matter. Bachhu Mollah demanded Tk10 lakh and also asked Bappi to leave the area.

Bappi paid the money and left the area on June 20.

Others accused in the case are Daulatpur upazila BNP vice-president Jamal Uddin Dulal, publicity secretary Golam Mustafa, finance secretary

Nazrul Islam, party activists Ramzan Ali, Zohurul Islam, Saidul Islam, Nurul Islam, FAZU, upazila Jubo Dal president, Mahbub Lasker and secretary Abul Kalam Azad.

Sub-Inspector (SI) Anisuzzaman of Daulatpur police station investigated the case.

In his complaint, Bappi also stated that he narrated the whole story at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) office and the news was published in different national dailies on May 27 last year.

Officer-in-charge (OC) of Daulatpur police station Abdus Samad said the charge sheet was submitted as the allegation was proved during investigation.

All the accused are on the run now, the OC said.



PHOTO: STAR

Rapid Action Battalion arrested former Chhatra League leader Bidhan Kumar Shaha from Bagbari in Sylhet city Monday night and recovered firearms from his possession.

PROF TAHER MURDER

Trial of RU teacher, Salehi begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The trial of Rajshahi University (RU) professor Dr Mia Mohammad Mohiuddin, Islami Chhatra Shibir RU unit president Mahbubul Alam Salehi, and four others for murdering RU professor Dr S Taher Ahmed began in Rajshahi yesterday.

The court of public safety tribunal and special sessions judge Jahangir Alam Mollah recorded depositions from four witnesses -- plaintiff Sanjid Alvi Ahmed (the victim's son), victim's neighbour and RU teacher Prof Kamal Mostafa, RU assistant proctor Rabiul Islam and

victim's nephew Ziauddin.

Charges against six accused were framed on July 18 after police pressed charges on March 18.

Prof Mohiuddin, currently on bail granted by the High Court, Salehi and the other four accused -- Jahangir, Salam, Nazmul and Azimuddin Munshi -- were produced before the court.

According to the charges, RU professor Mohiuddin and student leader Salehi masterminded Dr Taher's murder and employed hired guns to kill him.

Top Khulna outlaw says a BNP leader sheltered him

Confesses to murdering two cops, Jubo Dal leader Masum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Arrested outlaw Abdur Rahman has disclosed that he was protected and harboured by a 'top' leader of BNP in Khulna.

He also confessed to his involvement in the murders of police sub-inspector Shamsul Huq, Havilder Abu Bakar Siddique and Jubo Dal leader Masum.

Abdur Rahman, a 'regional leader' of Janajuddho faction of outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP), was placed on two days' remand yesterday for interrogation.

He was arrested from Daspara in Bianibazar upazila in Sylhet district on July 1 and brought to Khulna on Monday.

Sources said he told interrogators Monday night that he had fled to Sylhet two months ago along with PBCP armed cadres Yusuf and Liton in the face of operation by joint forces and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab).

Abdur Rahman is wanted in connection with nine murder cases and 12 other criminal cases filed with different police stations in Khulna and Bagerhat.

He also disclosed that he had developed good relations with two JMB (Jamaatul Mujahideen, Bangladesh) leaders in Bianibazar. Abdur Rahman stayed with his elder brother Abdul Halim who is Imam of

Daspara Jame mosque there.

The two JMB leaders are physicians by profession, an interrogator quoted him as saying.

Abdur Rahman told police that his arms were kept in custody of a Union Parishad chairman in Rupsha upazila when he went into hiding to evade arrest.

Sub Inspector AZmol Huda of Rupsha police station who arrested the outlaw from Bianibazar said that custodians of Abdur Rahman's arms went into hiding soon after his arrest.

RU body to probe admission forgery

RU CORRESPONDENT

The Social Work department of Rajshahi University yesterday formed a three-member committee to investigate alleged admission forgery in first year honours course in 2006-07 academic session.

Headed by department's teacher Sayeda Afrina Mamun, the body includes Rabiul Islam and Saidur Rahman Chowdhury.

Earlier, on June 29, RU Syndicate expelled eight students of the department for allegedly being admitted through forgery. It also took action against an employee of the department.

The committee has been formed to probe whether more students were admitted through forgery, sources said.

Obituary

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Language movement veteran, freedom fighter and journalist Kamal Uddin Ahmed died at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Monday night. He was 75.



He was suffering from heart disease and diabetes. A pall of gloom descended in Noakhali, particularly in the journalist community, at his death.

The body was buried yesterday with state honour at the family graveyard in Laxmipur district.

A former president of Noakhali Press Club, Kamal Uddin had a long career as a journalist. Starting with the then Dainik Pakistan, he worked for Dainik Azadi, Dainik Bangla and Janakantha as Staff Reporter based in Noakhali.



PHOTO: STAR

The rugged Port Road in in Barisal city is virtually unusable due to water-logging and lack of attention by the authorities.

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