

3 more bombs recovered in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Police Monday night recovered three bombs from Mashaura village in Daulatpur upazila.

A police team of Daulatpur police station raided the house of one Liyakat Ali at about 11.30 pm and recovered the bombs kept in a polythene bag at an abandoned house.

Police however, could not arrest anyone in this connection. Earlier on Sunday Bangladesh Rifles men recovered eight bombs from Jamalpur village in the same upazila.

Police suspect that criminals might have kept the bombs to use them at 'convenient' time.

Madrasa student murdered in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A madrasa student was chopped to death at Khoiran of Manikhat union in Shujanager upazila on Monday midnight.

Police recovered the body from a sugarcane field of the village yesterday morning. The dead was identified as Ilyas Khan, 15, son of Potu Khan of the village. He was a student of class six in Ulat Shiddikia Kamil Madrasa, police said.

Police and the locals said some unidentified persons called Ilyas out of his residence on Sunday. The gang later killed him by chopping and left the body in a sugarcane field adjacent to his residence.

Being informed Shujanager thana police rushed to the spot, recovered the body and sent it to Pabna General Hospital Morgue for autopsy.

Police look for clues to mass suicide in Mobi's claims

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

The mass suicide case here took a new turn after police launched a probe to verify the statement of Merajun Nahar Mobi, the lone living member of Anwar Fakir's family.

Mobi at a press conference in Brahmanbaria on Saturday said vested quarters might have 'compelled' her family members to commit suicide.

Eight of her family members and a maid servant committed suicide jumping under the wheels of a Mymensingh bound train at Kashor in the district town on Wednesday. An unnatural death (UD) case was filed with Jamalpur Railway Police in this connection.

Investigation Officer (IO) of the case Abdus Salam Bhuiyan, also Officer-in-Charge of the police station met Mobi in Brahmanbaria yesterday to record her statement. "The statement of Mobi might help us find out clues", said the IO.

The IO also told The Daily Star that he talked with Mobi on social life and religious belief in her family. After the death of Anwar, the family members became devoted to his eldest son Golam Mohiuddin Mahi. Mahi was a brilliant student and took higher education in Philosophy, he said.

"The family might have faced mental depression after the killing of Mahi in 2003 in Dhaka", the official added. "We must contact the relatives and locals for the sake of the investigation".

Additional Police Superintendent S M Akhtaruzzaman, quoting the diaries found at the house of late Anwar Hossain, said there is no sign of provocation or repression in the diaries supporting Mobi's claim.

One of the diaries said problems



PHOTO: STAR

The house of Anwar Hossain Fakir wears a deserted look after the mass suicide

arose with the locals in 1995 and in 2000 after the death of her father Anwar Hossain Fakir over his burial. But there is no writing on the enmity with local people, he added. The name of Mobi was not mentioned anywhere in the diaries, police sources informed.

Police observed, all the family members followed the ideology of Anwar as they believed that he was a man of 'super human quality'. They also said, Mobi could be a source of more information regard-

ing the suicide.

Mobi pointed her fingers at various quarters including those opposed in 2000 to bury Anwar Hossain Fakir as per his last wish. She also claimed that some 'greedy' relatives were out to grab their property after her father's death.

On contact, Tariqul Islam Tuhin, a nephew of Anwar Fakir's wife Hena said, "we had no greed or enmity for the wealth of Anwar's family. Anwar got the land from his father-in-law (Tariqul's grandfather), so Mobi's claim is totally baseless".

"If we had any such motive to grab the land or if we created any pressure on them, why they did not inform the police about the matter earlier", he posed.

Md Zakir Hossain, uncle of Mobi also denied her claim.

Asaduzzaman, Azharul Islam Rubel and Mizanur Rahman, all of them neighbours of Hena, said they never heard about any torture or repression on this family. But they acknowledged the problems created over the burial of Anwar Hossain and said most locals avoided them after the incident.

Nine people including eight members of Anwar's family apparently committed mass suicide Wednesday jumping under a running train at Kashor. The dead were identified as Hena Begum, 60, wife of late Anwar Hossain Fakir, their daughters Akhtari Begum, 35, Murshida, 30 and Shabnam, 10, sons Arif, 26 and Rahat, 18 and Mobi's son Mollah, 8 and her daughter Mariam, 10 and Lina, 32, the maid servant of the family.



PHOTO: STAR

Tidal water floods Post Office Road of Patuakhali town Sunday.

A plight of Patuakhali unheeded for years

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Patuakhali town dwellers suffer for years as no steps taken yet to stop inundation of town areas during flood or high tide. Most areas go under 2-5 feet water and life remains paralysed for several hours.

An embankment cum drainage project was proposed 10 years ago to mitigate the sufferings of people, but the project is yet to take off. Besides flooding, water logging is a constant problem in the low-lying areas of the coastal town. Erosion also devours huge areas of the district every year.

The embankment cum drainage project was proposed following visit of the then agriculture Minister Majid-Ul-Haque and then Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) secretary to Patuakhali in 1997.

The water resources ministry nodded to the project, but the Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) is still sitting on it, Abu Zafor Shamsuddin, acting chairman of Patuakhali Poursabha said.

A project was undertaken in the Sixties to protect Patuakhali town and coastal upazilas of Baufal, Dashmina, Galachipa, Kalapara and Mirzagonj from flood and saline water. Later the town was dropped from the project.

Afterwards, a new project titled 'Patuakhali town protection embankment cum drainage project' was planned at a cost of about Tk 17 crore.

The new project was designed to protect the town from flash flood, erosion and remove stagnant water.

The project includes construction of 4.20 km flood control embankment, eight water drains, eight sluice gates, 38 outlets, one km wall and installation of four power pumps.

At present the town goes under water even after normal rise of river

water. The most vulnerable areas in the town are Puran Bazar, Nababpara, Shimul Bagh, Katpatti, Collage Road, Adalat Para, Muslim Para, Sabuj Bagh, Aram Bagh, Char Para, Girls School Road, Chalkbazar, Munsef Para where water remains stagnant for days after high tide or rain.

About 50,000 people of these areas suffer a lot as water inundates most of their houses and business establishments.

Patuakhali town is surrounded by Lawkathi river in the north and Lohalia river in the east. Water from the rivers roll into the town whenever the mark rise. Two-thirds of the town go under 2 to 5 feet flood or rain water.

"I cook (food) during low tide and feed my children and husband during high tide," housewife Putul in Nabanpara cut a joke while talking to this correspondent.

"Because my kitchen inundates during high tide," she added with a faded smile.

There are many like Putul in the area.

Most of the businessmen incur loss as their shops and trading houses get flooded in the rainy season specially from month of June to October every year, Harun Munshi, a businessman of Puran Bazar said.

"We sent several letters including memorandum to higher authority concerned to take necessary step to protect the town but in a vain," lamented Md Awal, Vice-president of Patuakhali Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

A team from water ministry visited Patuakhali in January in 2006 to identify importance of the project. They also submitted their report in favour of the project recommending immediate steps for its implementation.

Zahir Ahmed, executive engineer of BWDB said, 'We have sent over 100 letters to the higher authority to implement the project but in a vain.'

EXTORTION CASE IN DINAJPUR Warrant for arrest of 7 BNP men

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A magistrate's court here issued a warrant of arrest against seven BNP leaders for their alleged involvement in extortion during BNP-Jamaat led 4-party alliance rule, court sources said.

The BNP leaders are former district BNP general secretary Md Ashrafal Alam, organising secretary and personal assistant to former Minister for Women and Children Affairs late Khurshid Zahan Haque, general secretary of district Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal Md Aminur Rashid, general secretary of Sadar upazila Jubo Dal Aminul Islam Munna, Mahfuzur Rahman,

Joyнал alias Kana Babu, Md Afzal Hossain, Lokman Sarker and Md Mofidul Islam, they said.

CSD Godown Labour Union general secretary Md Alauddin, son of Sarfaraz Uddin, of Shakin-Razarpur village in Sadar upazila filed the case with Dinajpur Police Station against 9 BNP leaders on May 11, police said.

While issuing the order, the magistrate asked them to appear before court on Monday. As they failed comply with the order, the court asked to forfeit their property.

All but two accused are on the run since promulgation of state of emergency in the country on January 11. The two, Md Afzal

Hossain and Md Mofidul Islam, were arrested two months ago.

In his complaint, Alauddin said a group of criminals led by BNP leader Md Ashrafal Alam attacked him on January 10, 2002. They abducted him from the CSD godown at gun point. They tortured him and demanded Tk.1lakh extortion. Accordingly, he paid the amount to them.

On receipt of the amount, the BNP men dropped Alauddin in front of his office and looted valuables worth Tk 3.38lakh from there. At that time, they stabbed him and his younger brother.

After investigation, police submitted the charge sheet against the 9 BNP men.

6X3

10X3

12X3