

Pirate gangs in Sundarbans unite against BDR drive

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Fishermen feel insecure to go for fishing in the Sundarbans fearing reprisal by pirates who are reportedly regrouping after the January 1 killing of five gang members in a gunfight with BDR at Kalir Char on Kalindi river.

The four gangs of pirates who virtually rule the vast mangrove forest are closing ranks to retaliate the killing, sources claimed.

Four temporary BDR camps were set up in the Sundarbans eight months ago but strength of the security force and logistics are too inadequate to ensure security in the forest, which provides livelihood to thousands of fishermen, honey collectors and locals.

Maj Alamgir, Commanding Officer of 7 Rifles Battalion at Nildumur, said BDR personnel are patrolling the forest to nab pirates and smugglers. The camps are at Kachhikata and Daiti on Roymongal river, Angtuhara in Kholpetua river and Choddorashi

in Kabodak river in the Sundarbans.

He said a letter has been written to higher authorities to set two more camps and provide them with modern logistics to intensify the drive against pirates and smugglers.

Sources claimed that pirates belonging to Masum Bahini, Raju Bahini, Motaleb Bahini and Baki Billah Bahini are regrouping again to increase their strength in the Sundarbans to counter law enforcers' drive.

This was disclosed by arrested pirate Bablu Mollah who was injured in the January 1 gunfight with BDR.

The gangs move on mechanised boats and possess sophisticated arms.

The pirates attack fishermen and honey collectors, realise toll from them. Incidents of abduction for toll and looting money and equipment from fishermen take place often in east and western zones of the Sundarbans.

The five pirates killed in the a gunfight were Md Zulu, 32, and Md Baki, 38, of Rampal in Bagerhat; Md Nasir, 34, of Rupsa and Samrat Zahir, 40, of Daulatpur in Khulna and Khokon of Morelganj in Bagerhat.

During interrogation, Bablu Mollah told BDR that the five foreign guns recovered by BDR after the gunfight were earlier looted by members of Baki Billah Bahini from gangs belonging to Motaleb Bahini on December 6 last year.

After the killing of five pirates, the gangs are now closing ranks and regrouping, Bablu told BDR.

The four pirate groups control Dublar Char, Mandarbaria, Balir Gao, Shirsha, Kalir Char, Panir Khal and Goral area at Roy Mongal estuary and other areas in the Sundarbans.

This correspondent talked to fishermen Jasim uddin, Zakir Hossain, Rajib Hossain and Shajahan Hawladar, rescued by BDR on Tuesday from abductors.

The four were among 11 fisher-

men abducted by pirates from Mandarbaria on December 28. The 11 were among 55 fishermen from Patharghata in Barguna district. The pirates also looted all the boats and demanded Tk 15,000 each for their release.

They said the pirates went into hiding after the January 1 gunfight and will reappear soon. They are regrouping and preparing to launch attacks and abduct fishermen again, the fishermen claimed.

They urged BDR, Coast Guard and forest guards to intensify patrol in the Sundarbans to ensure safety of fishermen, honey collectors and others.

Rakesh Chakma, assistant conservator of forest in Satkhira Range of the Sundarbans, said pirate gangs have modern weapons. Five BDR men in a camp in deep forest are too inadequate to face the pirates, he said.

Forest guards also feel insecure to resist the well equipped pirates, he said.

UGC to probe 'corruption' by KU VC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has formed a three-member committee to investigate into the allegations of corruption against Khulna University (KU) vice chancellor (VC) Prof Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman.

Headed by UGC member Prof Md Abdul Halim, two other members of the probe committee are UGC assistant secretary Ferdous Zaman and UGC member Prof Dr Md Tajul Islam.

KU Registrar Prof Dr Nazrul Islam received a copy of the official order signed by UGC joint secretary Mohammad Shamsul Alam on Thursday.

The committee was authorised to check and re-check any document, either confidential or open, required to conduct the probe. It was also authorised to peruse documents relating to resolutions and decisions of the Syndicate meetings. The probe committee has been asked to submit its report by January 31.

KU vice chancellor is facing allegations of corruption in recruitment of officials and employees and misappropriation of fund by forged means. He is now staying in Canada and is supposed to join his duty on February 14, said assistant director of the Public Relations Department, Atiar Rahman.

Trial of Satkhira editor murder stayed again

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Appellate Division of the Supreme Court has stayed for two months the trial of daily Patradut Editor SM Alauddin murder.

The SC order followed filing of a leave to appeal petition by two charge-sheeted accused against an earlier order of the High Court (HC).

Accused Abdus Sabur and Khalilullah Jhharu submitted the leave to appeal petition with the Appellate Division of Supreme Court against the HC order as the HC rejected a prayer submitted by them to shift the trial court from here to another place.

After the petition, the Division Bench of HC stayed the trial till August 8 last year. But after hearing, the court rejected the prayer on November 5 last year.

Afterwards, trial of the murder case began again with the court here. Judge Ashish Ranjan Das of the District and Sessions Judge Court fixed January 24 to resume trial of the case asking the accused to appear before court, court sources said. As soon as the court resumed proceeding of the case, the counsel for the accused produced before court the Supreme



S M Alauddin

Court's order staying trial for two months.

After hearing, judge of the District and Sessions Judge Court suspended the trial for two months, court sources said.

The Daily Patradut Editor SM Ala Uddin was shot dead by assailants while discharging his professional duties at his office here on June 19, 1996.

Police arrested a Jubo League activist and a member of the killing squad Saiful Islam after five days of the incident. He disclosed names of other accused.

The investigation officer (IO) submitted charge sheet with a magistrate court here pressing charges against 10 accused after

over 11 months of investigation on May 5, 1997.

The accused are Abdus Sabur, Khalilullah Jhharu, Saiful Islam, Momin Ullah Mohon, Abdur Rouf, Abul Kalam, Eskandar Mirza, Atiar Rahman, Saiful Islam and Saifur Rahman. Saiful Islam died on January 15. Saiful Islam and Abdur Rouf are now in jail as they were convicted in two separate cases earlier.

Accused Abdus Sabur, Khalilullah Jhharu, Abul Kalam, Momin Ullah Mohon and Saiful Islam were released on bail granted by the High Court while Matiar Rahman and Eskandar absconded soon after the murder.

The trial delayed because of submission of a petition by five accused to HC seeking quashment. HC accepted the prayer and quashed the case in 1998. On appeal from the government, the Supreme Court rejected the quashment order of the HC which withered away the hindrances to resume the trial even after 11 years in 2007.

SM Ala Uddin was elected a member of the Provincial Assembly as an Awami League (AL) candidate from Tala-Kalaroa constituency in the 1970 elections.



Culling of bird flu suspect chickens at a farm at Dinajpur, left, destroyed fowls and eggs being dumped outside Patuakhali town yesterday (story on back page).



PHOTO STAR

'Announce revised wage board award soon'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Barisal Reporters Unity at its general meeting here yesterday demanded immediate announcement of revised Sixth Wage Board award and ensuring job security of media men.

The meeting held on board MV Baro Awlia at Barisal river port also called upon media men to pursue objective journalism to help establish democracy through a free and fair election and rule of law.

BRU president Nasimul Alam presided over the meeting.

AUG 22 POLICE FIRING AT RU Killed rickshawpuller's mother demand compensation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Elderly mother of a rickshaw-puller who was killed in police firing during campus violence in Rajshahi last year demanded compensation from the government and a fair trial.

Rickshaw-puller Afzal Hossain, 30, hailing from Golmunda village in Jaldhaka upazila was killed in police firing near the Rajshahi University (RU) Medical Centre on August 22.

Afzal's ill-fated mother Sarotonnesa Bewa, 60, demanded

this while addressing a press conference in Jaldhaka Press Club yesterday.

She said, 'I want justice, I want trial of killers of my son.'

She said Afzal looked after her along with his family after death of her husband.

Afzal's widow Asma Begum, 25, and his youngest daughter were also present at the press conference. Asma said she had three orphan daughters, Afroza, 8, Champa, 5, and Parul, 3. They were now passing days unfed or half-fed. 'I want compensation for my husband's brutal killing,' Asma said.

2 killed in Netrakona clashes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Two persons were killed and 35 others injured in separate villagers' clashes over land in Durgapur and Purbadhala upazila yesterday, police sources said.

In the first incident, Abdul Malak, 45, of Anantapur villager was killed and 25 others were injured at Naogon in the morning. In the afternoon, the villagers clashed again leaving Nur Mahmud dead.

Of the injured, Abdur Rashid, 35, and Wares Ali, 60, were sent to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital in a critical condition. Other injured were admitted to Durgapur Upazila Health Complex and Purbadhala Upazila Health Complex.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Police Headquarters Dhaka Re-Local Tender Notice. Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the manufacturers/suppliers/local agents in their official pad for the purchase of the following items for Bangladesh Police, Rapid Action Battalion, Formed Police Unit (FPU) and other projects.

Satkhira landless people face another case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Another case has been filed accusing 82 'landless' people including Debhata Upazila Landless People's Association President Abdul Gaffar and over 2,000 unidentified people for allegedly demanding toll to the lessee and stealing fishes after illegally occupying 1500 bighas of khas land at Norarhakin Debhata upazila.

Satata Matsyajibi Samabaya Samitee leader MA Shahid Dulu of Katia in Satkhira town filed the case with Debhata Police Station on Wednesday night.

Earlier on Tuesday night, Parulia union assistant land officer Golam Farooque in Debhata upazila filed a case with Debhata Police Station accusing nine leaders of the association including its President Abdul Gaffar and over 700 to 800 unnamed landless people for illegally occupying 1500 bighas of government khas land.

Complainant MA Shahid Dulu said he on behalf of Satata Matsyajibi Samabaya Samitee took lease of 1500 bighas of the special water body (khas land) at Norarhakin from the local administration for Tk 28 lakh yearly revenue following government rules last year and started cultivating shrimps there.

Abdul Gaffar, identifying himself as Debhata Upazila Landless People's Association President, along with others came to him on January 17 and demanded Tk 5 lakh as toll and threatened to occupy the land in case of non-compliance, Shahid alleged.

Abdul Gaffar said the local administration did not lease the khas land for the landless people although a High Court order 26 years ago asked the authorities to allocate the land for the landless people through maintaining proper procedure.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার বাংলাদেশ ফিল্ম আর্কাইভ তথ্য মন্ত্রণালয় ১২ গজনবী রোড, কলেজগেট মোহাম্মদপুর, ঢাকা-১২০৭ ফিল্ম এ্যাপ্রিসিয়েশন কোর্সে ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Police Headquarters Dhaka International Tender Notice. Sealed tender are hereby invited from the manufacturers/suppliers/local agents in their official pad for the purchase of the following items for Bangladesh Police, Rapid Action Battalion, Formed Police Unit (FPU) and other projects.