

No sign of let-up in killings, extortion by Janajuddha

Outlaws in Jhenidah end lull as Kuddus takes leadership

HOSSAIN SERAJ AND AZIBOR RAHMAN, from Jhenidah

There is no sign of let-up in killings and toll collection by Janajuddha faction of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) in Jhenidah despite launching of several anti-crime drives and death of at least 26 cadres including its chief Abdur Rashid Malitha alias Dada Tapon in 'crossfire' incidents.

After choosing their new leader Janajuddha cadres have returned to their violent activities including killing of their rivals and toll collection from innocent people.

Sources in intelligence agencies and locals said, Janajuddha men had to stop their 'misdeeds' after their leader Dada Tapon was killed on June 18, 2008.

The cadres, however, within a short time chose Kuddus Ali, 38, of Aswasthali village under Jhenidah Sadar upazila as their new leader and started afresh their so-called 'organisational activities' including murder and toll collection in the area.

Police records and sources in intelligence agencies said, before becoming Janajuddha chief, Kuddus was linked with several underground outfits. He is also accused in several murder cases lodged with different police stations in Jhenidah. In their latest attack in the early hours of Thursday Janajuddha cadres hurled two bombs on the house of Tofazzal Miah of Mirzapur village killing Abdul Gani, a Biplobi Communist Party (BCP) cadre on the spot while he was sleeping on the veranda, police said.

On April 13, miscreants threw three bombs on the 'Barosha filling station in Jhenidah town at around 8-30 pm injuring a Class-Nine girl student identified as Shirin.

In a revenge attack last month, a former cadre of BCP (Biplobi Communist Party), identified as Enamul Huq, 32, was slaughtered on March 9 at village Kuti-Durgapur in Koachandpur upazila of the district.

Earlier, on March 6, one Golam Kibria was bombed to death at around 7-00 pm at a tea stall at Aswasthali village in Jhenidah Sadar upazila.

Apart from killing their rivals, the Janajuddha outlaws under their new leadership have also started toll collection from locals of Kaluhati, Kuti-Durgapur, Chandipur Bazar and Sholmar Bazar areas under Jhenidah Sadar, sources in police and locals alleged.

Younus Ali, a clerk at Batai Secondary School in Sadar upazila, talking to this correspondent said a few weeks ago a man introducing himself over cell phone as follower of Kuddus Ali, demanded illegal toll.

When I contacted Kuddus over phone, he (Kuddus) also told me to meet the demand, Yunus said.

The same day Kuddus and his accomplices went to Anwar Hossain, a contractor constructing Kuti-Durgapur Government Primary School and demanded Tk 50,000 from him.

As both of them refused to pay toll, the Janajuddha cadres hurled bombs on the house of Younus and the under-

construction building of the school.

During the attack, they took away four cell phone sets from the people of the contractor and threatened Anwar of dire consequences.

Another contractor, Runu Mian, talking to The Daily Star also alleged that the accomplices of Kuddus stopped his construction work at the same village as he refused to pay Tk 50 thousand toll.

Contacted, Superintendent of Police (SP) in Jhenidah Jahangir Hossain Matabbar said, he heard about the misdeeds of Janajuddha cadres led by Kuddus but nobody lodged any specific allegation yet with police in this regard.

The SP, however, said all-out measures have already been taken to curb the criminal activities by outlaws in the district.

Abdus Sobhan, a senior teacher at Kuti-Durgapur Siddiqia Madrasa said, "After the death of Dada Tapon, peace-loving locals heaved a sigh of relief but now again they are under serious threat as Janajuddha cadres have returned with fresh vigour with the new leadership of Kuddus."

Dada Tapon died in 'crossfire' between members of Rab and his accomplices on June 18 last year.

Several special drives including 'Operation Clean Heart' and 'Operation Spider Web' were launched in the south-western districts including Jhenidah. But most of the drives turned futile due to leakage of information ahead of the drives, some law enforcers on condition of anonymity said.



As weather becomes favourable again with cyclone Bijli crossing the coasts early yesterday, foreign and local tourists start thronging Patenga Sea beach in Chittagong.

Jobless youths fall prey to swindle in Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

A cheat defrauded scores of unemployed youths of crores of taka by supplying fake visa in Jhenidah. He decamped with the money and is now residing in Dhaka. If anyone asks for return of money, the cheat harasses him by filing false case.

A number of hapless youths alleged this at Jhenidah, saying that the swindler, a young man, hails from Bazrapur village under Moheshpur upazila in the district.

Falling prey to the situation many families have become destitute and lost their dwelling houses. Many parents lost their cattle and valuables including ornaments as they sold them for sending their sons abroad, they added.

They said several victims were harassed in false cases filed by the swindler when they went to his so-called travel office at Naya Paltan in the capital to realise money.

On April 5, some youths went to the office and demanded the money deposited for going abroad. At this, the alleged swindler vandalised his office himself and filed cases against them. The victims also filed cases with Shahbagh Police Station on April 11. The SI, supposed to carry out investigation, is now threatening the victims over mobile phone who went to the police station to seek justice.

Victims Shaheb Ali, Kartik Chandra and Ashraf Ali recently told a press conference in Jhenidah that the cheat grabbed Tk 17 lakh from Bablu of Kanejpur village under Sadar upazila. Bablu is a resident of the swindler's father-in-law's village.

The victims claimed at the press conference that Tk 4 crore were gobbled up from hundreds of youths of Madhupur, Nagarbatan, Defolbari, Allardarga Kushta, Kotchandpur, Moheshpur, Kaliganj, Comilla, Nauga, Mymensingh, Barisal, Meherpur,

Chuadanga and Alamdanga.

Besides, the cheat took Tk 65 lakh from Osman and Khokon of Alamdanga, Sufal, Anotosh and Atul of Sonadanga Magura, Shonit of Defolbari, Saidur of Allardarga Kushta, Aulad of Bhatol Bazar, Saidur of Kotchandpur and Alim of Bidhyadharpur. The youths were not sent abroad and now they are not getting back their money.

Sources said, the person also deceived 30 people of Moheshpur, 25 of Kotchandpur and 20 of Chowgachha, Jessore.

Contacted, the said SI of Shahbagh police station denied the allegations brought against him. He said he rather tried to solve the problem.

The alleged swindler, when contacted, refuted the allegations and said he owes Tk 4-lakh 20 thousand to one Kartik. He said that one Ashraf of Dhupabila village under Sadar upazila is solely responsible for the alleged fraud.



During a four-hour 'water therapy session' by a quack, a man pours water on a person affected with 'unknown disease' at a Shaikupa village, left, and a female patient being taken home after such treatment.

Quacks cash in on villagers' woes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Quacks are doing brisk business in the name of treatment after three people died of 'unknown disease' in two villages of Shaikupa upazila under the district.

Shihab Sikdar, 32, of Dhaura village, Nazma Khatun and Bhanu Moti of of Dhalla village, who died suddenly on April 7, said before death that they felt pain in the vein of their shoulders, locals said.

Soon the story of the 'disease' spread in the surrounding areas including Audha, Kamal Nagar, Boro Dhaura, Paikpara, Mohishadanga, Char, Shitali and Dalipur villages.

Several people of the villages fell sick in similar ways during the last ten days, Barik Molla, chairman of Dhalahar

Chandra Union Parishad, said.

Local quacks started to cash in on the situation. They are now treating patients by pouring water for a long time and giving them oral or intravenous saline.

They are charging 'good amounts' as fee, villagers said.

On Thursday morning, teacher Hasanuzzaman got unwell when he was teaching the students. A quack rushed to the spot and poured water on his head and injected saline. As Hasan's condition deteriorated, he was rushed to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital and later sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where check-up showed that he has gastric problem.

Mofizur Rahman and Hafizur

Rahman of Dhaura village said, as no medical official has visited the village quacks Dianot, Biren and Shahabuddin, who are charging Tk 700/800 from each patient.

Shahabuddin admitted that they are making handsome bucks as the disease can be treated only with water and saline.

Abdul Khalek, health and family planning officer of Shaikupa upazila, said, "It is not an unknown disease. From the description of the symptoms, it seems that the three patients died due to heart attack. I have visited the affected areas and advised patients to come to hospital."

Residents of the area, on the other hand, said they have not seen any medical official to visit the villages.

Nasim applies for review of 'false murder case'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Former home minister Awami League leader Mohammad Nasim has submitted an application to Pabna district magistrate's court for withdrawal of a 'false' case against him.

In the application recently submitted to the court, Nasim said his name was falsely implicated in a murder case to harass him politically, said an official source seeking anonymity.

"Former minister Nasim and several other political leaders submitted application to the district magistrate for review of their cases. The time for submitting application has been extended till May 17 and we are receiving a large number of applications for 'withdrawing false political cases'. The applications will be reviewed as per rule," Additional Deputy Magistrate Md Imam Uddin Kabir told this correspondent.

Dalits demand welfare steps

Speakers at a discussion on the occasion of 118th birth anniversary of Dr B R Ambedkar, the great leader of the scheduled caste people (Dalits), have demanded government steps for development of the community, says a press release.

Bangladesh Guru Rabidas (Dham) Mission arranged the discussion at Sadar Alam Nagar in Joypurhat on Wednesday.

Demands placed at the meeting include quota for 'dalit' students at all levels of educational institutions in the country, rehabilitation of landless 'dalits' in government khas lands, quota for 'dalits' in government service and projection of their culture in the electronic media.

Master Kanai Lal Rabidas, director general of Bangladesh Guru Rabidas (Dham) Mission, attended as chief guest while local municipality Commissioner Lili Begum and advocate Babul Rabidas as special guests at the meeting presided over by Jagadish Rabidas, a local leader of the community.



Children taking part in a painting competition at Ambika Maidan in Faridpur town yesterday. The programme was arranged marking reception for the lawmakers from greater Faridpur.

RU Shibir stages showdown, blocks highway

RU CORRESPONDENT

Activists of Islami Chhatra Shibir and their parent organisation Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday staged demonstration on Rajshahi University (RU) campus and blocked Dhaka-Rajshahi highway near Binodpur Bazar, creating panic among local people and traders.

A large number of outsiders including students of schools, colleges and madrasas also joined the Jamaat-Shibir procession in the evening and chanted slogans against Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Awami League, witnesses said.

As the Shibir men blocked Dhaka-Rajshahi highway and held their programme in presence of police, movement of vehicles suspended there.

At a rally, Shibir leaders demanded arrest of the killers

of RU Shibir Secretary Sharifuzzaman Nomani before reopening the Rajshahi University.

They alleged that Rajshahi City Corporation mayor led the killing and he did not want reopening of the university.

They threatened to 'make grave' for those who would try to oust Shibir from the campus.

Jamaat leader Siddik Hossain, Shibir RU unit President Delwar Hossain Saigy, Secretary Shamsul Alam Golap, city unit President Nur Mohammed Mondol addressed the meeting, among others.

Earlier on March 13, the RU authorities closed the university indefinitely following a clash between BCL and Shibir that left Shibir leader Nomani killed and 100 others from the two groups injured.

ADMISSION TRADE BCL factions clash at BM College: 4 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Two factions of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) Barisal Government Brojo Mohon (BM) College unit clashed over 'admission business' on the campus yesterday, leaving four injured.

One faction is led by Moin Tusher while the another by Rafiq Serinabat. Both are the joint conveners of the BCL college unit.

The clashing groups chased each other and ransacked classrooms of the physics department. Being informed, police went to the campus and brought the situation under control.

Moin Tusher claimed that Rafiq was involved in 'admission business' at the college and creating pressure on the authorities to allow some students recommended by him for admission to honours classes.

Refuting the allegation, Rafiq said Moin Tusher and his supporters swooped on them when they were protesting Tusher's 'admission business' at the college.



Wholesalers stand beside a huge pile of hilsa at Fishery Ghat in Chittagong yesterday as fishermen have netted large catches in the sea during the last few days.