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58 DAYS INTO SPECIAL DRIVE IN SOUTHWEST Shootouts kill 63, criminals 29

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

The joint special drive of police and Rapid Action Battalion in the outlaw infested south-western region has seen 63 deaths in "crossfire" and "shootouts" in 58 days as of yesterday.

Out of 63 criminals that died in such incidents in 10 districts of Khulna division, 25 died in Kushtia alone as of October 18, the highest number of deaths in a district, says Rab statistics.

Interestingly, only 11 deaths in shootouts occurred in the region during January 1-August 21 before the drive began on August 22.

Since the drive began, police and Rab have

claimed that these incidents of shootouts took place between them and accomplices of alleged criminals, most of whom are members of different banned outfits.

Meanwhile, criminals have killed at least 29 persons in these 10 districts since the drive was launched two days after the inspector general of police and the Rab director general's visit to Kushtia.

Police and Rab officials in the district, however, said the number of killings in the last 56 days is "significantly lower" compared to the total 285 murders since January 1.

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Outlaw killed in 'shootout'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

An outlaw was killed in a 'shootout' between his cohorts and police in Chatmohor upazila in Pabna yesterday.

The dead was identified as Jamal Uddin, 38, a regional leader of Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-Janajuddha).

Acting on a tip-off, Chatmohor police raided Kutibari Battala where the outlaws were holding a meeting around 3:00am.

Sensing their presence, the Janajuddha cadres opened fire forcing the law enforcers to retaliate.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

President calls for consensus

Stresses mutual cooperation among parties

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday called for mutual cooperation and understanding of the political parties to reach consensus on issues of national interest.

"I hope the country's political parties will extend their hands of mutual cooperation and understanding in the national interest and for development of fair democracy," he said addressing the inaugural function of 'Jagannath University Day' at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium.

The president said it is a normal phenomenon that there would be different opinions among various parties in the democratic system of a society and these are the beauty of democracy.

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Pac should sit regularly

Members observe; chief criticised for not convening meeting in 5 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of the Public Accounts Committee (Pac) of parliament yesterday criticised committee chief KH Rashiduzzaman for not convening its meeting in the last five months.

They urged him to ensure regular holding of the House body's meeting to make it functional, committee sources said. Formed on February 18, the Pac held its third meeting yesterday with the second one held on May 25. The committee has made little progress in performing its task of ensuring transparency in government expenditure.

At yesterday's meeting, committee member Ali Ashraf raised the issue of non-holding of its meeting, and said it should sit regularly, even everyday, since it has huge tasks, meeting sources said.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Warehouse fire yet to be doused

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The fire at the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) warehouse is still simmering 60 hours after it broke out, destroying paper and books worth crores of taka.

However, fire department sources said the blaze is under control.

Despite committed efforts, the process of removing stacks of paper and ash is going on

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PHOTO: STAR

Firefighters use a forklift to remove damaged papers from NCTB warehouse at Tejgaon in the capital, 60 hours after the fire broke out there.

PROF AZAD MURDER ATTEMPT Court asks CID to probe afresh

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court ordered a re-investigation yesterday into a case filed on charges of attempt to murder on Prof Humayun Azad in February 2004.

First Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Ehsanul Haque passed the order following a petition submitted by Monjur Kabir, complainant of the case.

The court directed additional inspector general of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to carry out the investigation in efforts to find out real culprits and submit a report to the court by December 30.

On February 27, 2004, assailants stabbed prominent writer Humayun Azad brutally with machetes in front of Bangla Academy when he was on his way back to his residence.

In the petition filed on October 6, Monjur Kabir, brother of the victim, mentioned previous investigation officers could not find out the masterminds behind the attack though they had indicted several persons in connection with the assaults.

Being under treatment in March 2004 at Combined Military Hospital (CMH), Azad himself said that Jamaat leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee deprecated his book titled 'Pak Saar Jamin Saad Baad', said Kabir.

Prof Azad also asked the investigators to have a probe into the activities of those who criticised him for writing the book, he added.

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OnlinePoll

Do you think administration will be able to take legal actions against the land grabbers, river encroachers, no matter how influential they are following the PM's directive?

- Yes (13.3%)
- No (84.2%)
- No Comments (2.5%)

Total votes: 1091

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think it is necessary to form a new high-powered body to implement the recommendations of the Regulatory Reform Commission?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

Prayer Timing

October 21

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-50	6-25
Zohr	1-45	2-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-36	6-39
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

DRIVE TO FREE SHITALAKHYA

Traders given 2 days to remove sand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Authorities have removed around thirty makeshift structures from the west foreshore of the river Shitalakhya and ordered unauthorised sand traders to remove earth filling within two days during an eviction drive yesterday.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) and Narayanganj district

administration conducted the drive that started around 11:00am to free the riverbank from sand filling near Kanchpur Bridge in Shimrail mouza.

"The sand traders were given a two-day notification to remove the earth filling or else the authorities will arrange an auction," said BIWTA Deputy Director Alamgir Kabir.

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AUGUST 17 BLASTS Boma Mizan, 4 others get 8 yrs' jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A court here yesterday sentenced five Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) members to eight years' rigorous imprisonment each in August 17 serial bomb blast case filed in Cox's Bazar after

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Twin bombs kill 7 at Islamabad university

20 militants killed in offensive, over 1 lakh displaced

AFP, AP, Dera Ismail Khan/ Islamabad

A double suicide bombing at a university campus in Pakistan's capital yesterday killed up to seven people, including the two bombers, an administration official said.

"Seven people, including two suicide bombers are dead, and 29 injured in the two attacks. Among the dead is one female," a senior

administration official, Rana Akbar Hayat told AFP at the scene of the attack.

Police investigators confirmed that both were suicide attacks.

Meanwhile, Pakistani troops and Taliban fighters were locked in fierce clashes in a major offensive that officials said had killed more than 100 people and uprooted 110,000.

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Marhum Rezaur Rahman (Mamun Mia) Siddique Manjil, Comilla

This day you left us for eternal peace in Jannath. You are out of sight for years but never out of mind. We feel you in our every moment of life. May "Allah" bless you eternal peace in Jannath. Ameen.

Justice Mamnoon Rahman
Kohinoor Rahman
Maisha
Maha

Dr. Masroor Rahman
Dr. Farhana Rahman
Muntaha
Minnah