

'Military chief' of Gono Mukti Fouz arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Police arrested the 'military commander' of outlawed Gono Mukti Fouz (GMF), Jahangir Alam alias Arfen alias Doyal, on Friday night.

Police said they raided his house at Alampur in Sadar upazila at about 7:30 pm and arrested him. Arfen was later taken to the police station for all night for extracting information regarding his long involvement with underground parties.

At a briefing at the office of Kushtia superintendent of police (SP) yesterday, police said Arfen hailed from Alampur village in Sadar upazila in the district.

Son of late Ansar Ali, he knows several languages including English and Chinese. Arfen became a worker of United Communist League in 1979 when he was student of class X, police said.



Arrested 'military commander' of GMF Jahangir Alam alias Arfen talks to media yesterday.

In course of time, he turned towards 'armed struggle' and joined the outlawed Biplobi Communist Party (BCP) in 1988. He left BCP in 1999 and

joined Shromojibi Mukti Andolon as a close aide to its founder Mir Ilias Hossain Dilip. Arfen was later made

district convener of Shromojibi. He became general secretary of Shromojibi in 2001. Arfen used to train cadres and organise Gono Mukti Fouz (GMF), the armed wing of Shromojibi Mukti Andolon.

Arfen concurrently held the posts of military chief and secretary of GMF, he (Arfen) told newspress during Saturday's press briefing.

Arfen said he gave statements on TVs and his interviews with two private channels were telecast in August last year.

Police said Arfen was not directly involved with any killings but a large number of murders took place in his instruction.

So far three murder cases were lodged against him and investigation is going on to find his link with other crimes including of murder, police said.

Truckers stop work at Teknaf land port

A CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Loading and unloading of goods at Teknaf land port in Cox's Bazar have remained suspended for the last two days due to a strike by truck workers.

Teknaf Truck Workers Union enforced the strike following seizure of two dried fish-laden trucks of the younger brother of local Awami League lawmaker Abdur Rahman Bodi by the port authorities on Thursday night.

Port sources said the government is incurring a loss of about Tk 28 lakh in revenue everyday due to the strike.

Businessmen and workers of the land port said more than 50 workers of Teknaf Truck Workers Union entered the port at around 10:00am yesterday and staged a demonstration there.

They later held a rally on the main road near the port which was addressed, among others, by Cox's Bazar district Truck Workers Union Convener and Teknaf municipality's acting mayor Hasan Ahmed, Councillor Mohammad Yusuf, workers union leaders Mohammad Ilias, Nabi Hossain and Badiul Alam.

The speakers alleged that port manager (accounts) Jasim Uddin seized the trucks with dried fish imported from Myanmar on the pretext of dodging duty. The manager's hired goons also beat up trucker Sona Mia and helper Rumel and took away the keys of the trucks, they alleged.

The speakers threatened to paralyse the land port if the dried fish-laden trucks were not released and manager Jasim was not withdrawn in the next 24 hours.

Denying the allegation of assaulting trucker Sona Mia,

administrative officer of United Land Port Ltd, a private organisation that runs the land port, Md Salahuddin said port authorities refused to issue out pass for additional 1644 kg dried fish in two trucks on the night of December 31 to local lawmaker's brother Abdul Amin.

Failing to get the out pass, Abdul Amin along with 15 to 20 criminals attacked the port manager Jasim Uddin, the administrative officer said.

A case was filed with Teknaf Police Station against 15 people including Abdul Amin.



Truck Workers Union brings out a procession on Teknaf-Cox Bazar Highway near Teknaf land port yesterday morning.

Migratory birds still unsafe in remote areas

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Water bodies in Tangail are buzzing with chirping and fluttering of thousands of migratory birds that have flown in from extremely cold northern lands.

Like every winter, several species of ducks including *bali hansh*, *sarali hansh*, *raj hansh* have arrived in the

natural water bodies in different upazilas of the district.

Local birds including heron, kingfisher, snipe, domestic ducks, *kalim*, *shamuk kecha*, *hottitrik*, *pankouri* and *dahuk* have also joined them in the water bodies.

From the very beginning of this winter, Burai River, now a nearly dead flow near

Tangail town, has become a temporary abode of migratory birds, especially *bali hansh* and *sarali hansh*.

Despite arrival of a good number of visitors everyday, the migratory birds are relatively safe as local people, now more conscious about the necessity of preserving the essential part of our biodiversity, remain watchful about their safety as well

as privacy.

A section of callous people, however, are still engaged in hunting the beautiful creatures in water bodies of remote rural areas, especially by setting traps.

This correspondent recently visited several large water bodies in Sadar, Kalihati, Ghatail and Bhupur upazilas to see the migratory birds.

"Like every year, we the local people are enjoying the beauty and chirp of migratory birds. We are always careful to protect these birds from any harm as the number of winter migratory birds in the local water bodies has reduced to about two-thirds during the last few years," said businessman Shahidul Islam, a resident of Tangail.

He, however, expressed fear about the spread of bird flu as domestic ducks have joined the migratory birds in the same water bodies.

It is hard to open fire to hunt birds in urban and thickly populated areas but poachers and a section of villagers are engaged in hunting these birds in the lonely water bodies in remote rural areas by setting traps, said locals.

The hunted birds are used to prepare savoury dishes or sold to others, they added.

The authorities concerned have set signboards beside all large natural water bodies in the district with notices to preserve the water bodies and as well as migratory birds but such initiative seems futile due to lack of proper monitoring.



Defying ban from the authorities, poachers set a trap in Burai River near Tangail town to catch migratory birds that have appeared in large numbers in the area.



Natore townspeople stage sit-in on a road yesterday demanding gas supply to the district town. They also formed human chain during the agitation programme.

Townfolk paralyse Natore for 15 minutes for gas link

A CORRESPONDENT, Natore

All activities in Natore town came to a halt for 15 minutes yesterday as townfolk participated in road blockade and human chain programmes demanding supply of gas to the district town through pipeline.

People from all walks of life stopped their work and movement of vehicular traffic remained halted during the programme.

Townpeople under the banner of 'Gas Supply Movement Committee' blocked all roads and formed human chains at 15 points, including Kanaikhali bus stand, for 15 minutes from 11:00am.

They demanded that the government install pipeline to supply gas to Natore and make an announcement in this regard.

Sources said installation of pipeline from Sirajganj via Bonpara in Natore for supplying gas to Rajshahi has started, keeping Natore town out of the gas supply project.

Addressing the rallies at the venues, Gas Supply Movement Committee President Kazi Abul Hashem, former municipal chairman Khandker Zubair Hossain, Amel Chowdhury and advocate Sirajul Islam urged the government to include Natore town in the gas supply project.

The speakers also gave a seven-day ultimatum to the government to make an announcement in this regard. Otherwise, they threatened to launch a tougher action programme to realise their demand.

Narayanganj, gas starved people yesterday laid a siege to the regional office of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company demanding uninterrupted gas supply in the district.

According to UNB, the agitated people, under the banner of Narayanganj Zila Unnayan Parishad, also staged demonstration and formed a human chain in Chashara Balur math area in the morning.

Where has Shibu gone with the money?



Shibu Pal

A CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Shibu Pal, 60, a businessman at Uparer Bazar under Teknaf municipality, allegedly fled to India with about Tk 1 crore he borrowed from local people and businessmen of Khatunganj in Chittagong city.

Police and witnesses said Shibu Pal, owner of a grocery shop at the bazar, had been doing his business for the last 40 years.

Local people found his shop under lock and key on

December 20 and later came to know that Shibu Pal along with his family had fled to Kolkata.

Investigation revealed that Shibu Pal borrowed Tk 23 lakh from businessman Zafar Alam of Jaliapara in Teknaf municipality, Tk 10 lakh from Jahangir Alam, Tk six lakh from Probud Pal, a shrimp trader of Uttar Jaliapara, and Tk 12 lakh from Rafiqul Islam of Aliabad village.

He owes over Tk 50 lakh to 15 Khatunganj businessmen who supplied goods to him at different times.

Businessman Zafar Alam filed a general diary (GD) with Teknaf Police Station on Wednesday.

Jahangir Alam, who lent him Tk 10 lakh, said Shibu's wife Shinu Pal and son Imon Pal have been living at Shiktola in Kolkata for 15 years. Shibu along with his sons Sabuj Pal, 35, and Sumon Pal, 32, was engaged in business at Teknaf.

Officer-in-Charge Md Khaled Hossain of Teknaf Police Station said they sealed Shibu's shop at Uparer Bazar and are looking for him.

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