

BDR, BSF exchange lists of criminals

Accord on several other issues

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Indian Border Security Force (BSF) exchanged the lists of criminals of the bordering areas of the two countries at a sector commander level border coordination meeting in Panchagarh yesterday.

Rangpur Sector Commander Col Mohammad Khairuzzaman led the eight member BDR delegation while an eight member BSF team was led by Shiliguri Sector DIG Reaz Ahmed Khan at the meeting at Banglabandha border outpost (BOP) under Tentulia upazila of the district. The meeting began at 11:30am and continued till 5:00pm.

BDR team leader Col Khairuzzaman received the BSF officials when they entered Bangladesh through

Banglabandha zero point at 10:30am.

After the meeting, Col Khairuzzaman told a press briefing that the lists of criminals of the bordering areas of both countries were exchanged at the meeting. Both sides agreed on joint patrol to check border terrorism, smuggling, drug trade,

intrusion and trafficking of women and children, he said.

Both sides also signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to maintain peace on the border, show highest restraint at special circumstances and solve border related problems through discussion.

Our Staff Correspondent from Sylhet reported that a



Col Mohammad Khairuzzaman, Rangpur Sector commander of BDR, receives Shiliguri Sector DIG of BSF Reaz Ahmed Khan at Banglabandha Zero Point, below, sector commander-level coordination meeting at Banglabandha border outpost in Tentulia upazila of Panchagarh district yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR

Col Mohammad Khairuzzaman, Rangpur Sector commander of BDR, receives Shiliguri Sector DIG of BSF Reaz Ahmed Khan at Banglabandha Zero Point, below, sector commander-level coordination meeting at Banglabandha border outpost in Tentulia upazila of Panchagarh district yesterday.

deputy director-general level meeting between BDR and BSF will be held at Tamabil check post tomorrow.

BDR Deputy Director General Brigadier General Obaidul Haque will lead the BDR team while BSF Inspector General of Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram and Cachhar frontiers SK Mishra lead the Indian side.

The recent unrest along the border in Sylhet region and other trans-border problems will come up for discussion at the meeting, said the commanding officer of 21 Rifles Battalion.

At a battalion commander level flag at Tamabil yesterday, the border guards of India and Bangladesh agreed to maintain peace on the border in Sylhet region.

They also agreed to maintain status quo on the disputed farmland along the border until a joint survey is done.

Commanding officer of 21 Rifles Battalion Lt Colonel Khondaker Zahirul Alam led the BDR team while BSF Battalion Commander-1, Meghalaya, SK Tirki headed the BSF delegation.

The flag meeting was held following the exchange of fire between BDR and BSF on Jaintapur and Sripur borders over fishing in a water body. Both sides traded over 300 gunshots, leaving three people injured.

BDR sources said around 50 Indian Khasia tribesmen accompanied by BSF men entered Bangladesh territory around 11:00am and attempted to catch fish in a water body, some 300 metres inside the borderline in Jaintapur.

The BSF troops of Muktarpur camp started firing after BDR men asked the Indian force to leave the area and proposed a flag meeting. The BSF also opened fire on Sripur border, about three kilometres off Jaintapur border.



Tank lorries wait in a queue in front of the gate of Baghabari Oil Depot that sees shortage of fuel oil, especially diesel, as supply has decreased due to problem in plying of oil carrying vessels following drastic fall in the water level of the Jamuna.

DRASTIC FALL IN JAMUNA WATER LEVEL

Farmers in north worried as fuel supply hampered

GOLAM MOSTAFA JIBON, from Baghabari

Supply of fuel specially diesel is being hampered, as fuel carrying barges cannot reach Baghabari depots in time due to drastic fall in water level of Jamuna River.

With serious diesel crisis looming large, the farmers of northern region are now worried about irrigating their fields with diesel-run pumps in the peak boro season.

Some unscrupulous traders have increased diesel price by Tk 1 to Tk 2 per litre in rural areas of the region on the plea of its short supply while several dealers and fuel pumps owners have said they are failing to get fuel from depots as per demand.

Depots sources said fuel supply is being hampered as large fuel carrying barges cannot reach Baghabari due to navigability problem in the dry season. Many shoals have already emerged at different points including Nakalia, Berakhola, Latifpur, Pechakhola, Char Saifullah and Mohonganj in the channel. Nine to 13 feet deep water is needed for

smooth movement of large barges but there is only six feet depth at different points of Jamuna channel. As a result, barges often get stuck.

If a fertiliser loaded cargo or vessel is stuck in the river, goods can be unloaded from there by using small boats but it is not possible to unload fuel from a stranded barge, said officials of the depots.

So, they have to bring lighter barges through the river channel. The process takes longer time as the barges have to move slowly to avoid underwater shoals.

At least 12 vessels and barges loaded with fertiliser and fuel have remained stuck at different points in the river for the last three days, said sources at Baghabari port and depots.

During visits to different points of Jamuna River on Sunday, this correspondent found that fertiliser sacks are being unloaded from stranded vessels with the help of some engine boats.

Many farmers said fuel station owners and dealers are realising additional money for diesel at different

places while the latter denied the allegation of price rise. However, dealers alleged that they are facing harassment to get diesel from depots due to short supply.

"I returned from the depot empty-handed after waiting there for two days as the depot authorities said that there was fuel shortage due to navigability problem," said Abul Kashem, a tank-lorry driver of Dinajpur.

When contacted, ABM Siddique, manager of Padma depot, Tipu Sultan, manager of Meghna depot, and Sayeed Hassan Khan, manager of Jamuna depot, said there is demand of around 18-lakh litres of diesel from the three depots that have a stock of about three crore litres in total.

If the navigability problem is not solved within two or three days, they will face serious crisis in two weeks, they said, adding that as they have started supplying diesel through rationing system as a precaution, some dealers are not getting diesel as per their demand.

ROBBERIES IN SEVERAL DISTRICTS

House owner strangled in Noakhali

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Robbers strangled a house owner and injured his wife seriously in Noakhali town early yesterday.

The robbery took place at Sabuj Building adjacent to new bus stand at around 2:00 am, reports a correspondent from Noakhali.

The robbers strangled Delwar Hossain Bhutto, 35, with a scarf as he tried to resist the robbers. They also beat Bhutto's wife Rabeya Akhter, 30, unconscious.

The gang then looted goods worth Tk 10 lakh including 10 tolas of gold ornaments and cash Tk 4 lakh.

Sudharam police and locals said, a gang of about 15 to 16 robbers broke open the door of Bhutto's rented house where he lived for last several years. He hailed from Amir Bazaar Miapur village under Begumganj upazila. Bhutto ran a rent-a-car business. He owned three microbuses.

Seriously injured Rabeya was admitted to Noakhali General Hospital.

In Rajshahi town, robbers killed a man during a robbery in Khisintinkor area on Sunday night, reports a RU correspondent.

Sources said, a gang of robbers entered the house of Abu Bakkar Siddique, a teacher of Rajshahi City College.

Hearing the hue and cry, Motin, a neighbour rushed to the spot.

At this, the robbers stabbed Motin and fled the scene exploding three bombs. Motin was rushed to Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries early yesterday.

The robbers looted gold ornaments and two mobile sets from the house.

Our staff correspondent in Bogra reports: An alleged robber was injured and another arrested when a gang was preparing to commit robbery by putting up barricade at Porapara point of Bogra-Naogaon Road in Bogra early yesterday.

Officer-in-charge (OC) of Kahlalu police station Md Zahurul Haque said, a patrol police team chased the gang of six to seven armed robbers.

Ful Miah, 35, was injured as police opened fire while Abdul Majid was arrested after a brief chase.

In Manikganj, robbers looted three houses and injured six people in Sadar upazila early Sunday.

UNB quoting police said, a masked gang numbering 10-12 swooped on the house of Haji Hakim Uddin breaking open the door at Hatirpara village in the upazila at about 1:30 am.

The robbers looted Tk 1 lakh in cash, 18 tolas of gold ornaments and several

mobile phone sets from the house taking the house members hostage at gunpoint.

They also stabbed Hakim, 60, and his wife Rizia Begum, 50, as they tried to resist them leaving the two seriously injured.

The gang later raided the house of Anis Mridha at nearby Bonkhuri village breaking open the collapsible gate and took away valuables including Tk 28,000 in cash, two tolas of gold ornaments and other valuables leaving three members of the house injured.

In yet another incident, a gang of robbers, numbering 8-10, stormed into the house of businessman Abdur Rouf at Girls' School Road in Sadar poura area at about 2:30 am.

They stabbed Sabbir Ahmed Dollar, 21, son of Rouf, as he caught one of the robbers. Dollar was admitted to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) in critical condition.

Our correspondent in Kushtia reports: Robbers looted a house in Chuadanga Sunday night.

A gang stormed into the house of Awlad Hossain at Purondopur village in Alamdanga upazila at about 10:30 pm. Confining the members of the house to a room at gun point, the gang looted Tk 8,000, gold ornaments worth about Tk 40,000 and other valuables.

Language veterans of Magura

HOSSAIN SERAJ, Magura

Language movement veterans in Magura have remained unsung and little known, although they played commendable role in the struggle for upholding the dignity of mother language during the turbulent days in early 50s.

"No political or socio-cultural organisations held any programme here to pay tribute to the language movement veterans. Most of them have already passed away," said educationist Khan Ziaul Huq, also a leading language movement veteran in Magura.

Inspired by the language movement that had started in capital Dhaka, local student leaders along with general students of the then Islamia College (now Government Hossain Shaheed Suhrawardy College) in Magura town started campaign in the area and soon initiative was taken to spread the movement to remote areas of the then subdivision.

Student leaders Nasirul Islam Abu Mian, Khan Ziaul Huq, Abdul Jalil Khan, Aminul Islam Chandu Mian and Azim Dewan mainly led the movement at Magura.



Ziaul Huq and Aminul Islam are still alive while two others have passed away.

On February 21 in 1952, police picked up Khan Ziaul Huq, Chandu Mian and a few other leaders when they brought out a procession from Nomanai Maidan area and moved towards the Chourongi Square in Magura town.

Meanwhile, a student leader from the then Iqbal Hall of Dhaka University Mirza Shawkat Hossain came to Magura and held meetings at different educational institutions to motivate general students to join the language movement.

AK Hamiduzzaman Ehia, a student of Raicharan High School, with the cooperation of the then headmaster of Sreepur High School Abdur Rahim Joarder began to organise students of different institutions in Sreepur thana. Abdus Salam, Abdur Rashed, Ali Ahmed and Jitendranath Ghosh were among the associates of Ehia.

To observe February 21 in 1952, various programmes including rally was held at Magura under the leadership of Nasirul Islam Abu Mian.

After the news of killing of a few language movement activists in Dhaka reached Magura, students of Raicharan High School in Sreepur placed floral wreath at the Shaheed Minar that they made with bamboo, said language movement veterans.

The government should take initiative to give state honour to language movement heroes, even if it is posthumous, said Aminul Islam.



Police fire teargas shells to disperse the unruly students of Kushtia Government College during a clash between two rival groups of Bangladesh Chhatra League yesterday.

44 shops gutted in 4 districts

STAR NATIONAL DESK

At least 44 shops have been gutted in fire incidents in four districts.

In Jamalpur, at least 23 shops were gutted in a devastating fire at Mahmudpur Bazaar in Melandaha upazila early yesterday.

UNB quoting locals said the blaze originated from an electric short circuit at a shop and soon engulfed the other adjoining establishments at about 2:30 am.

Fire service men extinguished the blaze after three hours of frantic efforts with the help of local people.

The affected shop owners claimed that goods worth about Tk 50 lakh were gutted in the blaze.

In Gopalganj, nine shops were gutted

in a devastating fire at a market near Sheikh Kamal Stadium in the district town early yesterday.

Locals said, the fire originated from the oven at a hotel of the market of Muslim Orphanage at about 3:00 am.

On information, two units of local fire service rushed in and put out the blaze after an hour long efforts.

Eight shops were gutted completely while another partially in the incident.

The affected businessmen estimated the extent of loss from the fire at Tk 20 lakh.

In another fire incident in Laxmipur early Sunday, five shops were gutted at local Dighir Paral Bazaar in Ramganj upazila.

Locals suspected that rivals might have set fire to the shops late at night due

to enmity.

On information, a firefighting unit from Sadar upazila headquarters rushed in and doused the fire after two hours of hectic efforts with the help of local people.

The victim shop owners claimed that the extent of loss from the fire could go upto Tk 15 lakh.

In Bogra, a fire at Koritola Bazaar in Sariakandi upazila gutted seven shops on Friday night.

Witnesses said the fire broke out from a grocery shop in the market at midnight and soon engulfed six other adjoining shops.

Locals doused the fire after one hour of frantic efforts.

The victims claimed that the extent of loss from the fire could go upto Tk 8 lakh.