

95 jailed for mutiny, two acquitted in Rangamati

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

A special court sentenced 95 jawans of 9 and 18 Rifles Battalions of BDR to prison yesterday for their involvement in the mutiny on February last year.

The Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), later renamed Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), convicts are to serve prison terms ranging from a minimum of four months to a maximum of seven years. In addition to jail terms, the court also fined each convict Tk 100.

Out of 95 convicts, 74 are from 9 Rifles Battalion while 21 are from 18 Rifles Battalion.

The court acquitted two accused Subedar Md Shah Alam and Havilder Selim Reza of 18 Rifles Battalion as the

allegations brought against them could not be proved.

The court led by Col Zahedur Rahman, started delivering the verdicts at 9:00am and continued for half an hour, later resumed at 2:00pm. The trial proceedings were set up at Mechanical Transport Shed in the town's BGB sector headquarters.

During the first half of delivering verdicts, seven out of 21 convicts of 18 Rifles Battalion were jailed for a highest of seven years while the remaining were sentenced to shorter terms of imprisonment.

In the second half, six of the convicts out of 74 from 9 Rifles Battalion were sentenced for highest seven years rigorous imprisonment while the oth-

ers were sentenced to different terms of imprisonment.

Nayek Subedar Shahadat Lohani of 18 Rifles Battalion and Junior Commissioned Officer Md Rezaur Rahman of 9 Rifles Battalion filed two separate cases against the jawans for rebelling against their officers on February 26, 2009.

Earlier, all the jawans had claimed their innocence and appealed to the court to acquit them from the 'false case'.

Lt Col Sayedus Saqlain and Maj Golam Mostafa Al-Mamun were present as members of the court while deputy attorney general Kazi Izzatul Haque Akand was the representative of attorney general.



PHOTO: STAR

SAVED FROM DARK LIFE: Fifteen Bangladeshi young girls, trafficked to India and sold to a gang in Bombay two years ago, return through Benapole land port after the Indian Border Security Force handed them over to Bangladesh authorities yesterday, following initiatives of two rights organisations of the neighbouring countries.

15 victims of trafficking return home from India

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole (Jessore)

Fifteen woman victims of trafficking returned home on Saturday from India through the Benapole check post.

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) Benapole check post commander Liakat Hossain said the human traffickers

took the hapless women to India alluring them of giving good job two years ago through various border points. Later, they were sold to a gang in Mumbai.

Acting on a tip-off, Mumbai police rescued the girls and they were sent to jail.

Oasis, a voluntary organisation of Mumbai recently

released them on bail and kept them at a shelter home. They informed the matter to Rights Jessore, a human rights body in Jessore.

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) handed over the 15 women to the BGB members yesterday afternoon.

All the women hail from Satkhira and Jessore districts of the country.

Robbers loot night coach, nine houses

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Robbers looted a night coach on Thursday and at least nine houses on Friday and Saturday.

Armed robbers looted cash and gold ornaments worth about Tk 10 lakh from the passengers of a bus on Dhaka-Chittagong highway in Sonargaon upazila of Narayanganj district on Thursday night, reports UNB.

Sources said when the Comilla-bound Asia Line bus from Sayedabad in Dhaka reached Madanpur area of Sonargaon at about 9:45pm a gang of six robbers, who were travelling in the guise of passengers, took the driver and supervisor hostage at gunpoint.

Later, they took the bus to nearby Pakuakanda area and looted valuables including gold ornaments, cash and mobile phone sets worth about Tk 10 lakh from the passengers.

When the bus stopped due to a traffic jam in the area, the passengers raised a hue and cry. Sensing danger,

the robbers fled away with the booty. However, locals after a hot chase, caught one of the unidentified robbers and beat him mercilessly. Later, police rescued him in a critical condition.

When the bus reached Comilla at midnight the angry passengers beat up driver Selim suspecting his involvement in the robbery.

But hearing the news of beating the driver, local transport workers attacked and beat up the passengers indiscriminately creating panic in the area.

In Magura, robbers looted valuables from seven houses at Belnagar and Laxmikandor villages in Sadar upazila early Friday.

Local people said, a gang of robbers numbering 10/15 swooped on the house of Ishrat Hossain at Laxmikandor village late at night and looted valuables after taking the house members hostage at gunpoint.

Ishrat Hossain was stabbed by the robbers as he tried to resist them. He was admitted to a local hospital.

Later, the gang stormed into the houses of Mantosh Kumar, Sagor and Ayenuddin of Laxmikandor village and Mohon Mollah, Taleb Mollah and Tilam Ali of Belnagar village one after another and looted valuables including gold ornaments, mobile phone sets, cash and other valuables worth about Tk 10 lakh.

In Faridpur, a gang of robbers committed robbery in two houses at Char Sultanpur village of Gazirtek union under Charvadrason upazila early Saturday, reports our correspondent.

Police said, a gang of 10/12 masked robbers entered the house of local physician Dr. Himangshu Shekhar of Char Sultanpur village and looted 10 tolas of gold, Tk one lakh in cash and valuables. Dr Shekhar was stabbed by the robbers and admitted to Charvadrason upazila health complex.

Later, the robbers entered the neighbouring house of Dr Gopal Chandra and looted 15 tolas of gold, Tk 80 thousand in cash and 30/35 sharis from the house.

B'baria mourns BCL' men's death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Brahmanbaria district Awami League (AL) has announced a three-day mourning in the district from today following deaths of 11 BCL leaders and workers and a microbus driver in a fatal road accident at Tarail in Bhanga upazila of Faridpur district on Friday.

The dead are Md Mahadi Hasan 31, of Kautoli village, Md Ariful Islam Babu, 30, Md. Ziaul Islam Riyadh, 27, and Md Shahjahan Rahmatullah Rumel, 28, of Kazipara village, Liyon Sarker, 28, of Medda village, Md Murshed, 29, of Kautoli village, Sheikh Raihan, 28, of Shimraikandi village, Md Pavel, 28, and Md Tanvir, 25, of Maddyapara village under Brahmanbaria municipality; and Md Asif, 28, of Dewra village under Sarail upazila, Md Emran, 28, of Shuhilpur villager under Brahmanbaria Sadar upazila, and microbus driver Md Mizanur Rahman, 35, of Brahmanbaria municipality.

The bodies were brought to Brahmanbaria from Faridpur at around 7:00am and kept on the premises of the Zila Parishad office until 11:00. Namaj-e-Janaza for the deceased was held at Brahmanbaria Zila Eidgah Maidan at 11:00am.

After janaza, Deputy Commissioner Md Abdul Manna placed wreaths on the coffins on behalf of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Leaders of district AL and its associate bodies also placed wreaths on the coffins. In the afternoon, the BCL men were buried at their family graveyards.

Eleven BCL men and the driver died as their microbus collided with a tank-lorry on the Dhaka-Khulna Highway Friday afternoon.

The BCL leaders and workers were the returning from to Tungipara with RAM Obaidul Mukta Dir Chowdhury after paying homage to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.



PHOTO: STAR

Teachers, students, representatives from non-governmental organisations and local traders join a human chain at Naria upazila headquarters under Shariatpur district yesterday demanding exemplary punishment to the killers of Hena who died on Tuesday last due to whipping following a fatwa (edict).

Unplanned construction at Kuakata stopped

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The district administration has ordered the Kalapara upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) and the assistant commissioner of land to stop all unplanned construction work at Kuakata as Urban Development Department is working to bring the area under a master plan.

Mohammad Yusuf, deputy commissioner of Patuakhali, gave the direc-

tive through a letter issued on January 26 as some realtors have started unplanned construction in the area.

Earlier on January 18, the district administration issued notice to 13 real estate companies in Kuakata asking them not to conduct work in the area without taking 'no objection' certificate.

Land section of deputy commissioner's (DC) office sent the notice (memo No S.A/Patua/22-miscellaneous/222007-130) to the 13 com-

panies through registered mail.

The recipient companies are Basudha Island, Green Delta Housing and Development, Cassandra Properties, Nasy Housing Development Ltd, Oriental Real State, Quality Real State Private Ltd, Century Reality Ltd, Nabodoy Housing, Ocean City Ltd, Bandhu Mohol '81 Bahumukhi Samabay Samity Ltd, Kuakata Estate Ltd and Ifle Haque Foundation -- all working in Kuakata as devel-

opers.

According to the notice, the real estate companies are to take 'no objection' certificate within seven days from the district administration by submitting necessary papers including deed of lands, master plan of the companies, certified copies of ownership of plots and others related papers, sources in the DC's office said.

In case of failure, lawful action will be taken against the companies, they added.



PHOTO: STAR

Locals under the banner of Faridpur Unnayan Parishad form a human chain in front of Faridpur Press Club yesterday demanding establishment of 'Bangabandhu international airport' in the district.

Villagers say 'no' to RCC housing on farmlands

RU CORRESPONDENT

Farmers of three villages--Chotobangram, Meherchundy and Mushroil-- under Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) yesterday staged a demonstration protesting an alleged move to acquire farmlands of the villages for a housing project.

They alleged RCC is going to acquire 136 acres of land where they cultivate potato, wheat, onion and others agro-products.

They said Rajshahi Development Authority (RDA) had earlier acquired lands in the area and completed housing projects named Padma, Chandrima, Parijat and Mohananda. But some acquired areas have remained abandoned for long, they added.

They farmers urged the RCC authorities

not to go for acquisition of land at the villages as farming is the main source of their livelihood.

The agitating farmers also held a press conference on a potato field at Mushroil village and urged the RCC authorities to withdraw the decision to acquire land at the villages as early as possible.

They said they will submit a memorandum to the prime minister, form a human chain at Shaheb Bazar in the city and lay a siege to the deputy commissioner's office if their demand is not met soon.

Aslam Uddin, convener of land protection committee, SM Omar Faruk, Abdul Malek, Awal Hossain and Moslem Ali addressed the press conference.



PHOTO: STAR

Padokkhep, a drama circle, and The Daily Star jointly arrange a street drama in Gaibandha town on Friday marking the 40th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence as well as the 20th anniversary of the newspaper.

15 get life for murder

UNB, Bagerhat

A court here on Wednesday sentenced 15 people to life term imprisonment for killing a man nine years ago.

The convicts are Hanif Mollik, Nazrul Mollik, Wahab Mollik, Kamrul Mollik, Alamgir Mollik, Ikhlal Mollik, Sagar Mallik, Hanif Mollik-2, Md Samir Sheikh, Md Kamrul Hossain, Kamal Mollik, Jamal Mollik, Md Arman, Md Shamsur Rahman and Md Liakat Khan. All hail from Makordan village in Mongla upazila.

The court also fined the convicts Tk 5,000 each, in default, they are to suffer another year in jail.

According to the prosecution, the convicts tried to capture one Saidur Rahman's fish enclosure at the village on January 17, 2002.

Being resisted by Saidur's younger brother Sirajul Islam, they attacked him with sharp weapon, leaving him critically injured. Sirajul succumbed to his injuries at the hospital on January 20.

Saidur filed a case accusing 19 people the same day. After examining the records and witnesses, Additional District and Sessions Judge Md Razaul Karim handed down the verdict. He acquitted four others of the murder charge.

Limestone factory gutted

UNB, Sunamganj

A limestone factory at Bajnamahal village in Chhatak upazila was gutted in a devastating fire on Friday.

Fire service sources said the fire took place following an explosion at a gas line at the factory of Azizur Rahman and soon engulfed the entire factory at about 2:30pm.

Four people sustained burn injuries while trying to extinguish the blaze.

The affected factory owner claimed that the extent of loss from the fire could go up to Tk 5 lakh.