

5 'robbers' held after gunfight

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested five suspected robbers, four of them with bullet wounds, after a gunfight at Mohakhali in the capital Sunday night.

Rab-2 officials said they also recovered three foreign-made firearms, two pistols and a revolver, 16 bullets and four cocktails from their possession.

Bullet injured Montu Mian, 22, and Mohammad Farid, 23, of Sherpur district, Chandan Burman, 25, of Netrokona, and Mohammad Rajib, 21, of Shariatpur district were admitted to

Rab did not allow journalists to talk to the alleged robbers

Major Ershadul Haque of Rab-2 said they, acting on a tip-off, raided a tin-roofed house at Arjatpara where the robbers were making preparation for committing a robbery at around 8:15pm.

Sensing their presence, the robbers opened fire on the Rab men, prompting them to retaliate with bullets.

Rab officials said all the detainees were garment workers and lived in Tongi and Savar areas.

Meanwhile, the Rab did not allow journalists to talk to the alleged robbers.

Chidananda Dasgupta passes away

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Noted film critic Chidananda Dasgupta, father of renowned actor and director Aparna Sen, died in Kolkata on Sunday night following brief illness.

He was 89 and predeceased by his wife two years ago.

He was suffering from acute broncho pneumonia and Parkinson's disease, doctors attending on him said. Aparna, who was away in the United States, would come here tomorrow to do the final rites.

Born in 1922, Chidananda, along with Satyajit Ray and Hari Sadhan Dasgupta, founded the Calcutta Film Society.

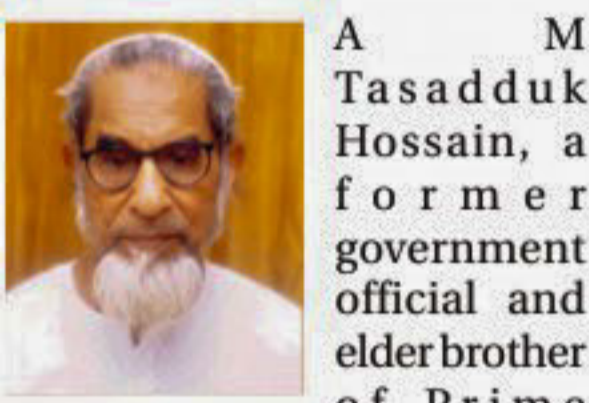
Dasgupta started off as a college lecturer, switched to advertising but made his name as a film critic and historian.

Alongside doyens like Satyajit Ray and Bansi Chandragupta, he founded India's first film society dedicated to feature films -- Calcutta Film Society -- in 1947.

Dasgupta directed seven films "The Stuff Of Steel" (1969), "The Dance of Shiva" (1968), "Portrait of a City" (1961), "Amodini" (1994), "Zaroorat Ki Puri" (1979), "Rakhto" (1973) and "Bilet Pherat" (1972).

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



A. M. Tasadduk Hossain, a former government official and elder brother of Prime Minister's adviser HT Imam, died of old age complications yesterday at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University at the age of 91, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, four sons, three daughters and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

He will be buried at his Khan Sonatola village at Ullapara in Sirajganj today.

SUBSIDENCE IN NAKHALPARA

Buet experts find faulty piling work

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Low-quality soil, faulty design and inadequate protection measures in piling works led to the subsidence at a construction site in the city's Nakhla para on Saturday, assessed an expert team from Buet.

Visiting the site yesterday, the team comprised of civil engineering experts Prof AMM Shafiullah and Prof Syed Fakhrul Ameen tried to ascertain the causes behind the incident.

Islamic Trading Consortium Ltd was doing the piling to build a basement car park for a proposed 14-storey Impulse Medical College and Hospital.

But the retaining wall of the pit dug for the foundations crumbled resulting in the cave-in and collapse of three corrugated iron sheet houses in the early hours of Saturday.

Part of a road subsided and cracks appeared on the adjoining structures including two five-storey residential buildings.

Both of them pointed at the lack of adequate protection measures in shore piling (ground

digging for the foundations) of the site.

Prof Ameen said apparently the design was flawed and pilings were weak. The basement is larger than the surface coverage of the building, he said, and it is risky.

Prof Shafiullah said the disaster wouldn't have happened if the design had been drawn up properly.

However, collapse risk for the five-storey building to the north of the site has reduced after the pit filling started. But another to the west is still in danger with vacuum underneath, he said.

According to Shafiullah, almost all the good-quality soil of the capital has been used up and only low-quality soil is left for construction.

Proper soil investigation, which is often ignored, is crucial for any construction, he said.

He suggested continuing filling up of the pit. Meanwhile, army engineers have so far dumped 20 percent of estimated ten lakh cubic feet of earth till yesterday, Brigadier General Md Siddique Rahman Sarkar told The Daily Star.

Residents of at least 20 adjoining houses have to suffer miserably, as the utility connections got snapped with the collapse.

'Raise budgetary allocation in edn'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Increase of budgetary allocation in education sector should get top priority in the Sixth Five-Year Plan (SFYP), speakers at a discussion said yesterday.

Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP) in cooperation with Oxfam organised the discussion titled at Cirdap in the city.

Lawmaker Rashed Khan Menon said,

"Finance in the education sector should be the first priority in this regard."

It would take at least Tk 68,000 crore to implement the education policy, he said.

Prof Nazrul Islam, former chairman of University Grants Commission among others spoke while Principal Quazi Faruque Ahmed presented the keynote paper.

MA Jalil, BUP chairman, presided over the discussion.

Dipu Moni for trade with Kazakhstan

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday stressed the importance of exploring potentials in enhancing bilateral relations with Kazakhstan in various fields, particularly in trade and culture.

She also laid emphasis on concluding some legal instruments between the two countries and forming a joint commission for facilitating trade, investment, and cultural cooperation.

Dipu Moni said this when Kazakhstan Ambassador to Bangladesh Bakhitbek Shabarbayev, resident in Islamabad, called on her at the foreign office in the city yesterday, says a press release.

The ambassador handed over an invitation from the foreign minister of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kazykhanov requesting Dipu Moni to participate in the 38th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) to be held in Kazakhstan capital, Astana, from June 28-30.

She thankfully accepted the invitation and asked the ambassador to convey her congratulations to her Kazakh counterpart on his recent appointment as the foreign minister of his country.

HC asks for law on migrants' rights

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

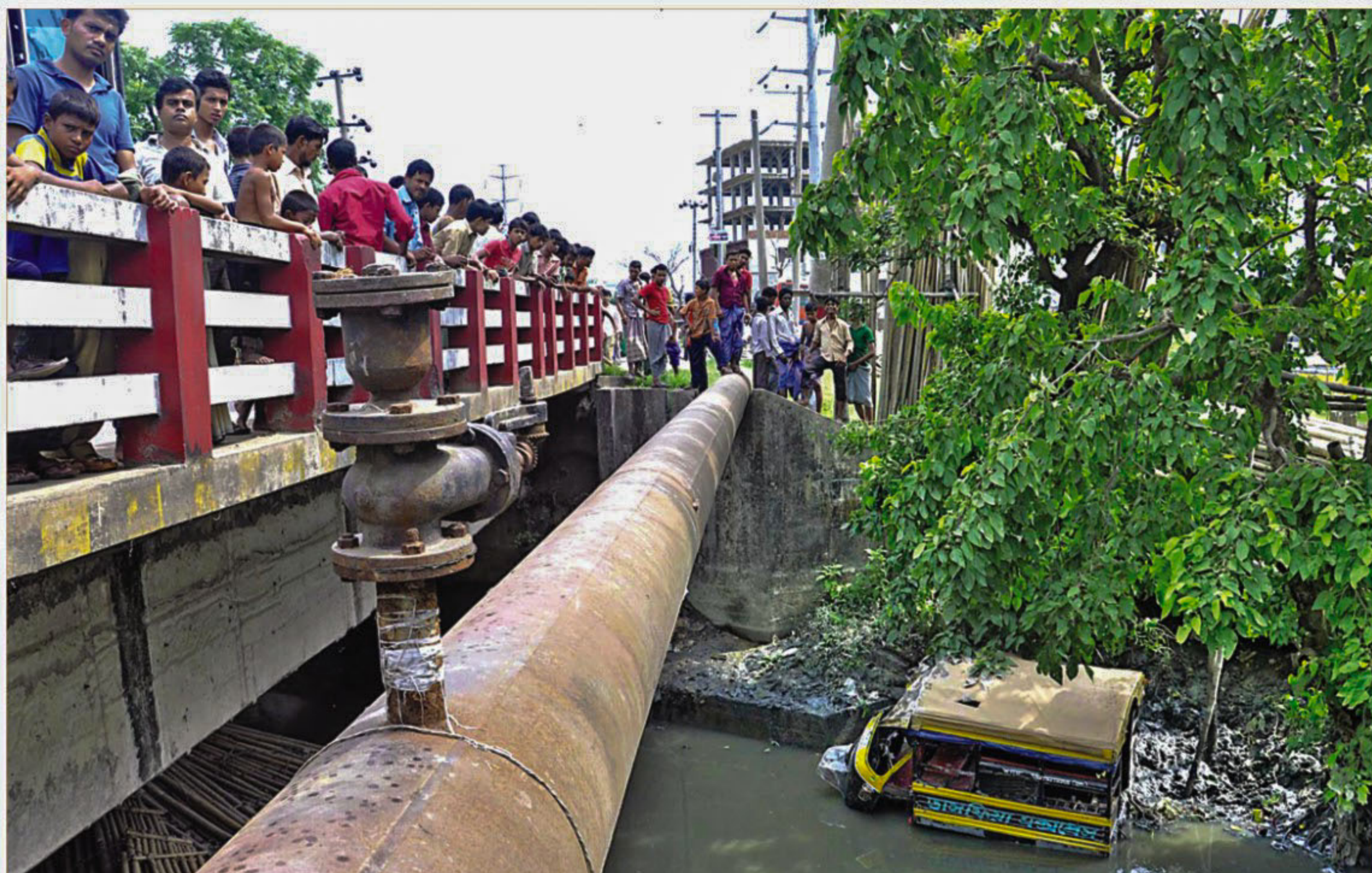
The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the government to explain within 15 days why it should not be directed to enact a comprehensive law and formulate a guideline to ensure rights of Bangladeshi migrants and workers abroad and to prevent human trafficking.

An HC bench of Justice Farid Ahmed and Justice M Shaukat Hossain issued the rule after holding a hearing on a writ petition filed by Bangladesh Woman Lawyers Association (BNWLA).



Meghna Group Chairman and Managing Director Mostafa Kamal, second right, hands over a cheque for Tk 15 lakh as donation, on behalf of the group, for the victims of the recent earthquake and tsunami in Japan to Tamotsu Shinotsuka, ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh, right, on Sunday. Md Jasim Uddin, deputy managing director, and Md Afzal Hossain, senior general manager, of Meghna Group of Industries are also seen.

PHOTO: COURTESY



The improvised three-wheeler, locally called tempo, skidded into the canal with passengers after being hit by a local bus in Fultali area of Chittagong city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

BNP protests arrest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday strongly protested and condemned the arrest of the party chairperson's advisory council member Dr AZM Zahid Hossain, saying that the government detained him, as he was working to reorganise professionals against the government misdeeds.

"Zahid's arrest is nothing but a conspiracy, as he is popular among professionals and working to organise them against government's wrongdoings," said BNP's acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir at a briefing at the party's central office in Naya Paltan of the city.

The party leaders MK Anwar, Abdulla Al Noman, Fazlur Rahman Patal, Ruhul Kabir Rizvi were also present at the briefing.

Meanwhile, Jatiyatabadi Chitra Dal staged a demonstration in front of the Naya Paltan office protesting the arrest of Zahid, also a leader of Doctors Association of Bangladesh (Dab), a pro-BNP physicians' body.

Dr Zahid was arrested on Sunday night in a number of cases filed regarding the incident of construction disaster at Tejgaon in the city.

Dr Zahid freed on bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Dr AZM Zahid Hossain, secretary general of Doctors' Association of Bangladesh (DAB), got bail yesterday in all eight cases filed against him in connection with Saturday's Nakhla para land subsidence.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Ismail Hossain granted him bail turning down police petitions for remanding him for interrogation.

Zahid was released from the custody of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court at 5:30pm.

He was welcome at the gate by his colleagues.

Earlier in the day, Tejgaon Industrial police produced Zahid before the court and prayed for a 56-day remand in eight cases.

Police arrested Zahid, who is also an adviser of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, on Sunday.

Meantime, businessman Mohammad Ramizuddin yesterday

at a press conference at the Court Reporters' Association of Dhaka said Zahid and his accomplices grabbed his land forcefully and started piling it for building Impulse Medical College.



PHOTO: STAR

The Faculty of Fine Arts of Dhaka University forms a human chain in front of the faculty yesterday protesting vandalism on the statue of Bangabandhu in Narayanganj.

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