

# 13 firearms seized in Sundarbans, 3 held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,

Khulna

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and coastguards in a joint drive arrested three illegal arms traders in Khulna city and Batiaghata upazila of the district early Friday.

Following their confessional statements, the law enforcers recovered 13 firearms and 26 bullets from Sundarbans the same day.

The arrestees are Milon Mondol, 34, son of Ombarish Mondol of Amtala village in Dakope upazila, Rafiqul Sheikh, 50, son of Jamiruddin Sheikh of Gaoghara village, and Saidul Howlader, 35, son of Shafiuddin Howlader of Katianagla village in Batiaghata upazila of Khulna district.

Being tipped off, a team of Rab-6 and coastguards headed by Lt Commander Noor-e-Alam and coastguards Mongla West Zone Staff Officer Lt Commander M Hasanuzzaman arrested Saidul and Milon Mondol in Zero Point area of Khulna city at around 4:00am.

A case was filed with Dakope Police Station at 10:03pm on Friday under Section 19-A and 19-F of the Arms Act. Sub-Inspector (SI) Parimol Das has been made investigation officer



PHOTO: STAR

Three arrested illegal arms traders with the firearms and ammunition seized from Sundarbans at coastguard Mongla west zone office in Mongla on Friday.

recovered a US made revolver, five one-shooter guns, seven light guns and 26 bullets from Jongra area of the mangrove forest under Dakope upazila.

The arms and ammunition meant for sale to the pirates of Sundarbans were found hidden under ground on the bank of Jongra Canal, said Lt Commander Hasanuzzaman.

Hasanuzzaman quoted the statements of the arrestees as saying that sale and purchase of illegal arms between pirates and extremists are being done with the connivance of a section of forest officials and guards.

When asked, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) east

(IO) of the case

According to police, the three arrestees are active operatives of outlawed New Biplobi Communist Party (NBCP) now linked with some notorious gangs of pirates and an organised gang of inter-district illegal arms traders.

Lt Commander Hasanuzzaman quoted the statements of the arrestees as saying that sale and purchase of illegal arms between pirates and extremists are being done with the connivance of a section of forest officials and guards.

They are Shamim of outlawed New Biplobi Communist Party (NBCP) and Shukur of notorious Gama Bahini of Sundarbans. Coastguards also recovered one SBL gun and 25 bullets from their possession.

Mihir Kumar flatly denied the allegation of involvement of any forest official or guard in illegal arms trade.

On November 24 this year, coastguards arrested two pirates on the Passur River adjacent to Nandabala forest camp under east wing of Sundarbans Forest Division.

They are Shamim of outlawed New Biplobi Communist Party (NBCP) and Shukur of notorious Gama Bahini of Sundarbans. Coastguards also recovered one SBL gun and 25 bullets from their possession.

## JCD leader injured in bomb attack

UNB, Khulna

A Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader was critically injured in a bomb attack at Gollamari zero point in the city on Friday morning.

The injured was identified as Aslam Sikdar, 35, president of Jalsa union Chhatra Dal unit in Batiaghata upazila.

Nur Islam Sikdar, elder brother of Aslam, said two unidentified men coming in a motorbike hurled a bomb at Aslam at 9:30am while he was entering his Gollamari housing office, leaving him critically injured.

Later, the attackers fled the scene exploding another bomb.

## Youth jailed for stalking

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

Dinajpur

A mobile court here on Friday sentenced a youth to one year imprisonment for sexually harassing a schoolgirl.

The convict was identified as Raju, 24, son of Azizur Rahman alias Laltu of Barakul village in Sadar upazila.

Police said Raju used to tease a class IV girl student on her way to school.

Following a complaint by the victim's father, police raided the house of Raju early Friday and arrested him.

Later, he was produced before the mobile court led by executive magistrate Abdur Rahman who after examining the witnesses handed down the punishment.



PHOTO: STAR

Fourteen people, allegedly engaged in forced labour at Sohag Brick Field at Itbaria village in Kolapara upazila of Patuakhali district, were rescued by Rab personnel yesterday.

# Modern day slavery

## 14 rescued from Patuakhali brick field

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A Rab-8 team yesterday rescued 14 people allegedly engaged in forced labour at a brick field under Kalapara upazila in the district.

The labourers were confined to Sohag Brick Field, owned by Nurul Haque Munshi of Itbaria village under Kalapara upazila. All the rescued people hailed from different villages under Paikgachha and Dakope upazilas in Khulna district.

Major Nuruzzaman, company commander for Rab-8 Patuakhali camp said, following a tip-off, they raided the brick field and rescued the labourers including women and children. The owner brought them from Khulna and his men forced them to work for over 10 to 12 hours a day.

"We came to work here a month ago. Since

then, the owner did not pay us regularly for which we could not send money to our families," Abul Kalam, a labourer told this correspondent.

"A few musclemen of the owner always kept watch on us so that we can not flee from the field," he added.

Sensing presence of law enforcers, the manager and other employees of the brick field fled the scene, Rab sources said.

A case was under process with Kalapara police station at the time of filing this report yesterday afternoon.

Rab sources added they earlier rescued 19 other labourers from the same place and fined the owner Tk 10,000 on charge of illegally burning firewood, on February 22 this year.

Manager and a caretaker were also jailed for 15 days and fined Tk 2,000 each, they said.

# College girl dies as train hits her while talking over mobile

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A college student met a tragic death as an intercity train hit her while walking on the rail track at Joypurhat station yesterday.

She was talking over her cell phone at the time of the incident.

Victim Amena Begum, 24, was daughter of Ahmedul Haque of Gobarchapa village under Badalgachhi upazila of Naogaon district.

Amena was a honours first year student of political science at Joypurhat Government College residing at Masterpara village.

Witnesses said the Joypurhat railway station authorities around 11:00 am cleared the signal for Titumir Express, a Chilahati-bound intercity train from Rajshahi.

When the train was entering the platform, the girl was still talking over her cell phone and walking on the rail line without noticing the train.

She received severe head injuries and lost one of her legs. People of the area rushed her to Joypurhat Modern Hospital where she succumbed to her injuries after 10 minutes of admission.

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This ferry with buses, trucks and private cars on board remained stranded on Mawa-Kawrakandi route in the Padma for 10 hours from 11:45pm on Friday due to poor visibility caused by dense fog, right, Suspension of ferry service on the river route during the period led to a tailback on the road leading to Mawa terminal in Munshiganj. Similar situation was reported from Daulatdia-Patuaaria terminals.

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