

Villagers panicked by frequent bomb blasts at night

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Residents of two villages in Alamdanga upazila of Chuadanga district are in a state of panic as unidentified gangs exploded several bombs at the villages on two consecutive nights.

Police quoted the villagers as saying that three bombs went off at Nischindpur village at around 11.00pm on Saturday while five bombs at Shishirdari village at the same time on Sunday.

They said the bombs exploded at different locations of the two adjacent villages within a span of merely 15-30 minutes and the gangs left the scenes soon after the explosions.

Police led by Sub-Inspector (SI) Keramat Ali of Khaskarra police camp went to the villages after bomb blasts. None was arrested in connection with the inci-

dents as of yesterday.

Local people said outlawed party cadres and different criminal gangs have been roaming freely in the areas for the last few days. They are demanding money from some villagers and local shop owners, said a villager seeking anonymity.

Contacted, Officer-In-Charge (OC) Syed Abdullah of Alamdanga Police Station, said police patrolling and surveillance have been intensified at the villages.

Meanwhile, law enforcers seized five bombs from outlaw Nayan Ali's house at Madhugari village in Daulatpur upazila of Kushtia early yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, a team from Daulatpur Police Station raided the house of Nayan, a cadre of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-ML), at the village at around 12:30pm and found the bombs.



PHOTO: STAR
This recently built memorial at Anantapur Bazar in Hatia union of Ulipur upazila under Kurigram district is a reminder of the tragedy on November 12 in 1971 when the Pakistan occupation army aided by their local collaborators massacred at least 697 freedom-loving people in the area.

SEVEN VILLAGES OF KURIGRAM Pak army massacred 700 on this day in '71

ABDUL WAHED, Kurigram

Today is 'Hatia massacre day'.

People of Hatia union in Ulipur upazila observe the day with a heavy heart and due respect every year.

On this day in 1971, Pakistani army with the help of local collaborators killed at least 697 people, including women and children, of seven villages.

When the country was still fighting for freedom, one of the biggest mass killings took place at Dagar Kuthi village in the union.

The invaders also burned houses to ashes and tortured women.

Hatia union, under Sector 11 during the Liberation War of 1971, was a safe place for the freedom fighters who had set up camps. Local families assisted the freedom fighters with food and shelter.

On information from the

local agents (Rajakar, Al-Badar and Al-Shams), the Pakistani occupation forces on this day launched a massive gun attack on the people of the villages just after Shehri, as it was the 23rd day of Ramadan.

The villages are Anantapur, Rumkhana, Naya Doba, Bagua, Nilkhata, Dagar Kuthi and Hatia.

Of the victims, a few were brought to a killing ground at Dagar Kuthi and shot dead while the rest burnt alive near the Brahmaputra River.

A few eye-witnesses of the killings like Zorina Bewa, 71, Bayjon, 60, Babar Ali, 76, and Mijanur Rahman, 55, said that a large number of bodies were dumped in unmarked graves beside the river while many others washed away by current.

They demanded punishment to war criminals and proper documentation of the liberation war of 1971 for

the sake of true history of the nation.

A memorial was constructed at Dagar Kuthi village and later devoured by the river.

People of Hatia built a new memorial at the Hatia union parishad ground. The union parishad and the memorial are now again under the threat of erosion.

Recently another memorial has been built near Natun Anantapur Bazar in the union where the people of Hatia will gather with heavy hearts to mark the day.

According to the local freedom fighters, the names of 412 martyrs have so far been collected and they have taken steps to collect the rest of the victims.

Meanwhile, the upazila Muktijoddha Sangshad and the union parishad will jointly hold various programmes including flag hosting, rally and discussion today.

Outlaw murdered in Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

An outlaw belonging to Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) Janajuddha faction was killed allegedly by his party rivals on Sunday night.

His body was recovered from a field at Garulia village in Harinakundu upazila yesterday morning.

The dead was identified as Bellal Hossain, 40, son of Nazimuddin of Harishpur village under the upazila.

Officer in-charge of Harinakundu police station Abul Khayer said, Bellal had been residing at his maternal uncle's house at village Harishpur for the last 15 years. He was accused in a number of cases including in a murder case with Harinakundu and Sailkupa police stations in Jhenidah,

Islamic University and Kushtia police stations in Kushtia and Alamdanga police station in Chuadanga.

A gang on Sunday night abducted Bellal from the house. They killed him by slitting his throat and left the body at a field. He was a member of outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party (Janajuddha), police said.

Bellal was released from prison on bail only two days before the Eid-ul-Azha festival. He was also an accused in Jony Ahmed abduction case. He along with his cohorts had realised over Tk 2 lakh ransom from his family members, the OC said.

A case was filed with Harinakundu police station and the body was sent to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital morgue for postmortem.



PHOTO: STAR
The Dharla continues to devour homesteads and farmland at two villages in Kulaghat union of Lalmonirhat district. At least 25 families of the two villages have been made homeless in the last two days.

EROSION BY DHARLA RIVER 25 families homeless in Lalmonirhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Erosion by the River Dharla rendered more than 25 families of two villages in Sadar upazila homeless in the last 2-3 days.

The erosion-hit people of Noyatari and Jummapara villages have taken shelter on nearby roads, said Water Development Board (WDB) sources.

Sohor Ali, 48, of Noyarhat village, said "The erosion took serious turn on Saturday morning and devoured my homestead".

Tobarok Ali, 60, of Jummapara, said at least 25 of 42 families at the village have become homeless

during the period due to the erosion.

Idris Ali, chairman of Kulaghat union parishad, said the erosion took a serious turn at the villages since Saturday, devouring a large number of homesteads and aman paddy on vast areas.

"At least 80 other families of the villages are now under threat of the erosion", said the chairman.

Many villagers are leaving their homesteads to shift to safer places in fear of further erosion, he added.

Contacted, Lalmonirhat WDB executive engineer Enayet Ullah said, they have sent letter to the higher authorities seeking fund to check the erosion.

Rana smells a rat in Tangail bypoll

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Ruling Awami League (AL) leader Amanur Rahman Khan Rana, contesting in Tangail-3 (Ghatail) by-election as an independent candidate, has alleged that an interest group from inside the government has been hatching conspiracy to make the election controversial.

"The naked conspiracy has started after it became clear that the ruling party nominated candidate will be defeated in the by-election," Rana, religious affairs secretary of Tangail district unit of AL, said at a press conference at Tangail Press Club yesterday morning.

"The law enforcers are raiding my election camps, houses of my workers and supporters regularly to create panic among them. They are ransacking the election camps and beating my supporters there," said the 'rebel' AL candidate.

"The law enforcers have arrested my chief election coordinator and former joint secretary of the upazila unit AL Masudur Rahman Azad, former upazila Jubo League president Sultan Mahmud Talukder Sujon and general secretary Kamruzzaman Jewel from their houses and sent them to jail after filing false cases against them."

"My workers and supporters are panicked as the AL nominated candidate Shahidul Islam Lebu and his men have been threatening them to send to jail if they take part in my campaign," Rana said.

Rana demanded immediate release of his workers and supporters and urged the administration including law enforcement agencies to perform their duty neutrally.

He also reiterated his demand for deployment of army to make the election free and fair.

The wives and children of three pro-Rana AL leaders -- Masudur Rahman Azad, Sultan Mahmud Talukder Sujon, and Kamruzzaman Jewel, arrested allegedly



PHOTO: STAR
Amanur Rahman Rana, rebel Awami League candidate in Tangail-3 (Ghatail) by-polls addresses a press conference along with other leaders at Tangail Press Club yesterday.

with arms by the law enforcers on November 10, also attended the press conference.

They termed the three leaders innocent and demanded immediate release of them.

"The law enforcers arrested my husband just for his stance in favour of Amanur Rahman Khan Rana in the by-election. Actually the law enforcers did not recover any arms from our house," Sohela Azad, wife of Masudur Rahman Azad, said at the press conference.

Among others, Tangail district AL leader Atoar Rahman Khan, convener of the recently dissolved Ghatail upazila unit of AL Azmol Hossain, joint convener Hasan Ali, central leader of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) Saniyat Khan Bappa spoke at the press conference.

Refuting the allegations made by Rana, Shahidul Islam Lebu said, "Actually Rana, who is accused in a number of criminal cases, has brought outsiders to threaten my supporters in the constituency. If the law enforcers were not active enough, my workers would not be able to make any move for election campaign."

The parliamentary seat fell vacant after the death of ruling AL lawmaker Dr Matiur Rahman on September 14.

The AL Parliamentary Board nominated Shahidul Islam Lebu, former general secretary of Ghatail upazila unit of AL, as the party candidate but Tangail district AL Religious Affairs Secretary Amanur Rahman Khan Rana is also in the polls race as an independent candidate.

Jatiya Party (Ershad) backed candidate Syed Abu Yousuf Abdullah Tuhin is another candidate in the by-polls.

No candidate from the main opposition BNP is contesting the election.

On November 4, a few central leaders of AL went to Ghatail and warned 'rebel' candidate Rana of expulsion from the party if he does not withdraw his candidature within three days while Rana on the same day declared that he will be on the polls race as a 'candidate of Ghatail people'.

The same day, Azmol Hossain, convener of Ghatail upazila unit of AL, and Hasan Ali, its joint convener, were expelled from the party for supporting 'rebel' candidate Rana and the convening committee of upazila AL was simultaneously dissolved.

Two days later, the central unit of Jubo League issued a letter, declaring the Ghatail upazila unit of the organisation dissolved.

The upazila unit of BCL was also declared dissolved a couple of days later.



PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKKI
An artisan gives last-minute finishing touches to the clay idol of Goddess Kali at Laxmi Narayan Temple at Bakchar in Jessore yesterday as Hindus across the country will celebrate Shyama Puja, one of their biggest religious festivals, today.

IU stalemate continues

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Teachers of Islamic University (IU) brought out a silent procession on the campus yesterday, demanding removal of vice chancellor, pro-vice-chancellor and treasurer of the university.

Held under the banner of Islamic University Teachers Association (IUTA), the procession started from the main faculty area in the morning and terminated at the administration building.

A rally was chaired by IUTA president Professor Yakub there and it was addressed, among others, by IUTA general secretary Prof ASM Toriqul Islam, IU unit Bangabandhu Parishad general secretary Prof Ruhul Kuddus Md. Saleh, president of IU unit Zia Parishad Professor Alinoor Rahman, former IU unit Bangabandhu Parishad general secretary Prof Mahbubur Rahman, vice-president of IUTA Prof Dr. Abu Sinha and Prof Mueed Rahman.

The teachers blamed the university

authorities for creating a deadlock at the university through their various activities including recent illegal recruitment.

"We want removal of the trio for the greater interest of the university. We will not work under this 'corrupt' administration," Prof Yakub Ali, said.

The university administration has tarnished the image of the government through a massive recruitment trade, said Prof Saleh.

"The stalemate at the university will end only after removal of the VC, pro-VC and treasurer," Prof Saleh said.

A deadlock has been prevailing at the university since September 8 after a syndicate meeting appointed 132 teachers and staffs including daughter of the vice-chancellor as a lecturer at the department of Applied Chemistry, sources said.

The teachers during its agitation today will wear black badges and hold a human chain on Wednesday on the campus, said IUTA sources.

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