

# MUGGERS' GANG Cop among 3 hurt in gunfight

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A policeman and two from a gang of muggers in a stolen car were wounded in a gunfight at Rupganj of Narayanganj yesterday.

Injured Sub-inspector Khandakar Halaluddin of Shyampur Police Station and the two wounded criminals -- Abdul Halim, 30, and Zillur Rahman Zakir, 35 -- were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The two injured muggers are now under police custody.

Halaluddin was later taken to the National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopedic

Rehabilitation for his serious injuries. He was shot in the abdomen and both the left and right legs, while Zakir was hit in the right leg and Halim in the right hand.

SI Harunur Rashid, from the same police station, said they were tipped-off about the muggers roaming about in a stolen car in Shyampur since Monday. Following the lead, the police team had positioned themselves to arrest the criminals at Arsalan area around 1:30am.

"They sped away defying our signals to stop. We then chased them to Tarabo of Rupganj, where they opened fire on us. We returned fire,"

said SI Harunur Rashid. The police team arrested Md Badsha, one of the muggers, and confiscated a cocktail and two knives from the hijacked car.

At his DMCH bed, Zakir told The Daily Star that their four-member gang was making rounds in the stolen car to mug people when the police intercepted them. Their leader Babu Miah, who had stolen the car, fled the scene as he shot the cops and threw cocktails at them.

"We tried to run away as driver Halim was shot. I was shot next when I tried to escape as the cops kept firing at us," he added.

# US intercepts 'ricin' letter to Obama

AFP, Washington

A letter addressed to US President Barack Obama has been preliminarily tested positive for the deadly poison ricin, the Federal Bureau of Investigation said yesterday.

In a statement, the FBI said the investigation into the letter sent to Obama and another sent to Senator Roger Wicker was ongoing, adding there was "no indication of a connection" to the Boston Marathon bombings.

The FBI said additional tests would be carried out over the next 24 to 48 hours to confirm the presence of ricin.

The US Secret Service said the letter had been intercepted at a mail screening facility outside the White House on Tuesday, the same day authorities said a letter was sent to Wicker that also showed traces of ricin.

Secret Service spokesman Edwin Donovan said the agency, which protects the president and his family, was working closely with the US Capitol Police and the FBI to trace the origins of the letter.

At the US Capitol, sections of two Senate office buildings were briefly cordoned off amid reports of a suspicious package.

Capitol Police later said results of tests conducted at the Hart Senate office building were negative and the closed-off areas were reopened.

US Capitol Police confirmed one man was being questioned.

"Right now they are interviewing a person but that person is not in custody. He has not been detained," a US Capitol Police officer told AFP.

Senator Carl Levin issued a statement saying one of his staffers had discovered a "suspicious-looking letter" at a regional office in

Michigan and handed it over to authorities for further investigation.

The discovery of the letters rattled nerves following the bomb attacks near the finish line at the Boston Marathon on Monday that killed three people and injured more than 180 others, though it was not clear if the incidents were linked.

The episode also recalled the mysterious series of letters laced with anthrax that were sent to lawmakers and some journalists following the September 11 attacks in 2001, which killed five people.

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Congressional mail has been screened off-site since the 2001 incident.

Three Senate office buildings were shut in 2004 after tests found ricin in mail that had been sent to the Senate majority leader's office.

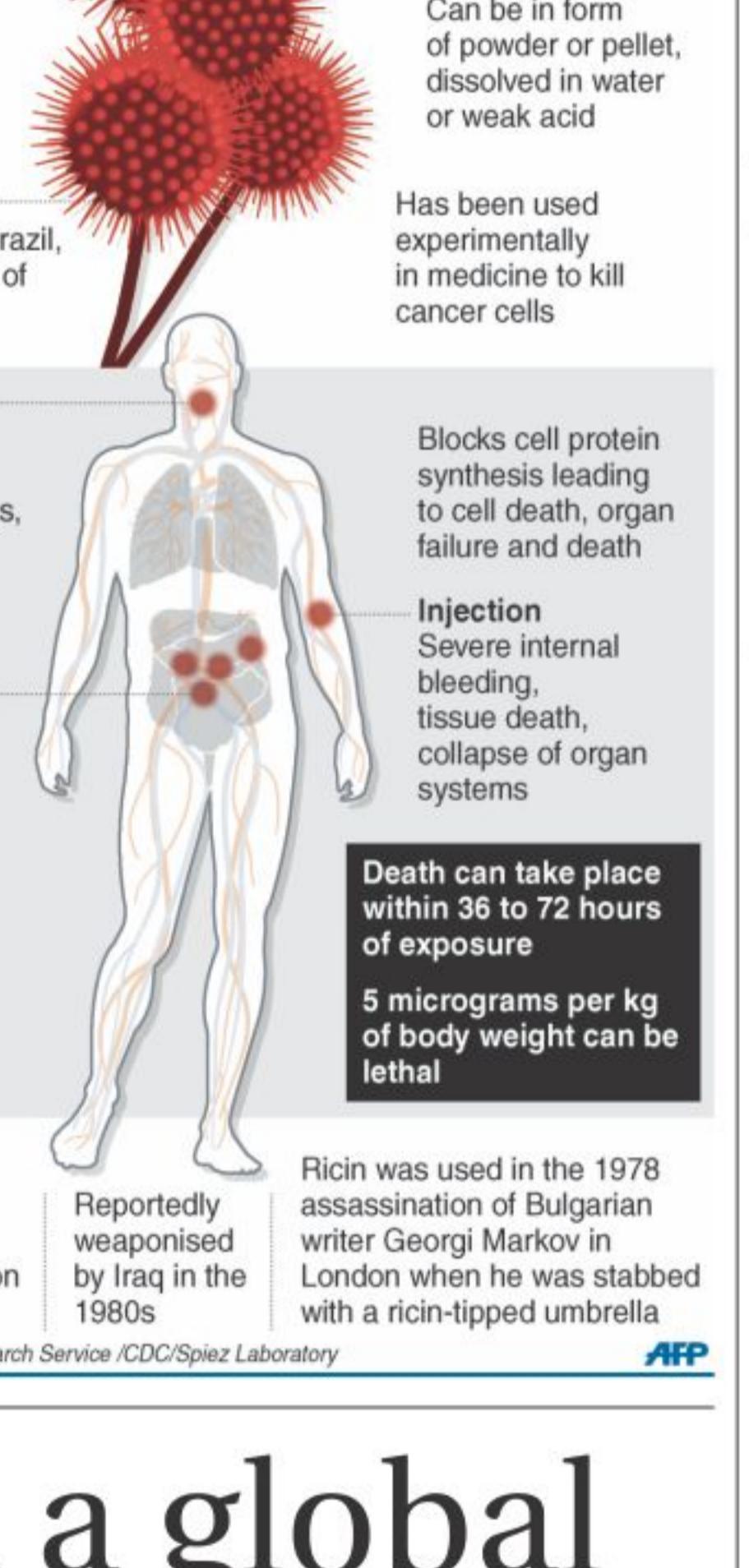
The biological agent was also sent to the White House and the Department of Transportation in November 2003. There were no injuries in those incidents.

Ricin, when inhaled, can cause respiratory problems. Ingested orally, the protein is lethal in even minuscule quantities.

## Ricin: potential bioterror weapon

What is it?

Poison found naturally in the seeds of the castor plant, provides plant with natural pesticide



## BNP threatens hartal in 2 divs Sunday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The main opposition BNP yesterday warned of dawn-to-dusk hartal for Sunday in Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions, if its leaders are not released by Saturday.

Joint Secretary General of the party Mizanur Rahman Minu made the announcement at a press conference in Rajshahi city.

He said the party had also decided to bring out processions and hold protest rallies in the divisions on Saturday to press home its demands.

The other demands Minu mentioned in the media briefing include putting an end to "mass killing", restoration of caretaker government, withdrawal of leaders and activists, and release of Amar Desh acting editor Mahmudur Rahman.

Party leaders Asadul Habib Dulu, Harunur Rashid and Mosaddeq Hossain Bulbul were also present in the press conference.

## RECRUITMENT GRAFT Mridha, four others sued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed four cases against five railway officials and staff including its suspended general manager (east zone) Yusuf Ali Mridha for the alleged anomalies and corruption in recruitment.

Three ACC officials filed the cases with Kotwali Police Station, said Kotwali police.

The other accused are Senior Welfare Officer (east zone) Golam Kibria, senior data entry operator Mohammad Hamidullah, carpenter Gias Uddin and Chandan Kumar Roy, a teacher at Bangladesh Railway Govt Children Park High School in Lalmonirhat.

## Army rocket fire kills 12 in Syrian village

APP, Beirut

Army rocket fire on a central Syrian village yesterday killed at least 12 people including women and children, a watchdog said, as warplanes attacked rebel enclaves near central Qusayr.

Aircraft also struck Karam Huweimed and Tariq al-Bab in the northern city of Aleppo, as well as a rebel-held town nearby, said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

"The number of people killed in rocket fire by the army on eastern Bweida has risen to 12, among them a boy and a girl, two women, and eight men," said the Observatory, referring to the village in the central province of Homs.

Nearby, clashes killed three rebel fighters close to the town of Abel, said the Britain-based group, adding that "regime troops used warplanes and rocket fire".

Fighting also raged in other flashpoint areas of Homs province.

"The regime is relying on fighters loyal to (Lebanese Shi'ite movement) Hezbollah and the (pro-regime paramilitary) National Defence Forces to root out rebel fighters in the Homs countryside," said the Observatory's Rami Abdel Rahman.

## Nasim Osman

FROM PAGE 20  
the press club.

"We have made a list of journalists like you and decided your fate," Halim quoted Nasim assaying.

The incident took place after a monthly meeting of district law and order committee at the deputy commissioner's office.

A member of the committee, Halim is also the member secretary of the newly-formed "Santras Nirmul Toki Mancha".

The journalist later filed a general diary with Narayanganj Sadar Police Station in this connection.

Meanwhile, Nasim Osman in a press statement claimed that Halim made "provocative" statements in the meeting which was enough to irk him.

The prosecution on January

# Yunus given rare honour

FROM PAGE 1

"Professor Yunus set out to do what may be the biggest thing of all, and that is liberating people to seek a better life. And not just any people, but men and women who had only known misery, who had been told they were no good," House Speaker John Boehner said during the award ceremony in the Rotunda of the United States Capitol in Washington DC.

"To do all this, he first had to teach himself how to run a bank from scratch. That was when he realised he had to do the exact opposite of what a bank normally does to make his idea work. Then there was actually getting people to borrow the money, to see value in themselves, to spark their sense of wonder. He had to convince them that they too didn't need rank or status to advance their place in life," he said.

House and Senate leaders presented Prof Yunus with the Congressional Gold Medal, which was announced in 2010. Party leaders Asadul Habib Dulu, Harunur Rashid and Mosaddeq Hossain Bulbul were also present in the press conference.

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# Weathermen forecast more nor'westers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Country's middle and northern parts might witness two or three medium or major nor'westers while other parts might experience one more light or medium nor'wester in this month, said the Met office yesterday.

Rain or thunderstorm accompanied by nor'wester is likely to occur today in different parts, especially in the south.

Light and medium nor'westers lashed many areas of the country in the last two days.

Meanwhile, after 6:00pm Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla maritime ports have been advised to hoist local cautionary signal number three as a severe thunderstorm with nor'wester is likely to affect North Bay and its adjoining coastal areas.

The three ports have been put on alert, said a special bulletin of the Met office.

All fishing boats and trawlers at the North Bay have been advised to stay close to the coast and navigate with caution till further notice.

This month there might be more than average rainfall across the country and one heat wave especially in the northern and middle parts, said the forecast. One more depression might form in the Bay of Bengal, it added.