

7 racketeers held with arms, drugs in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police arrested a gang of seven smugglers with arms, huge quantity of drugs, and equipment for producing and selling drugs from Chandgaon area in Chittagong city early yesterday.

The arrestees are Shamim Sarder, 40, his wife Champa, 25; and his accomplices – Lutfar Rahman, 26, Md Faruk, 22, Jahangir Alam, 20, Mamin Mia, 35, and Al-Amin, 25.

Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) North Zone Deputy Commissioner Harun-ur-Rashid Hazaree said a team of Chandgaon police arrested the people from a flat in the city's Chandgaon Residential area around 6:30am.

A pistol with a eight bullet loaded magazine, one air gun, two private cars, one microbus, 12kg of cannabis, seven gas cylinders used for carrying drug items, one jacket used to carry Phensedyl, some equipment used to produce and sell

drugs, Tk 1.97 lakh, seven fake number plates of vehicles were also seized from them, he said.

Earlier on April 25, Law enforcers recovered a private car in an abandoned condition from the same area. After investigation, police came to know that the car was owned by Champa, said CMP North Zone Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Md Shahidullah.

On Thursday, police recovered 7,400 Yaba pills from the car, and arrested the car's owner, he said.

"Though, we had information that the car was carrying Yaba pills. But, we could not find those drug items. Later, we opened the gear box of the car and found those items," he added.

The gang was involved in drug and arms smuggling, and vehicles stealing in the port city since 2007, said Shahidullah.

Two cases were filed with Chandgaon Police Station.

Ansar, VDP members get new uniforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Ansar and Village Defence Party (VDP) members have started wearing new uniforms.

"Some officials have already started using the new uniforms and it will be provided to others in phases," said Ansar Assistant Director (establishment) and Mass Communication Officer (additional charge) Moon Moon Sultana.

The home ministry some months ago approved three new types of uniforms for officers, and general Ansar and VDP members. Combat dresses for Ansar Battalions will remain unchanged.



Children take a dip in the Buriganga river near the capital's Basila to seek respite from the soaring temperature which reached a maximum 37.1 degree Celsius yesterday. The highest temperature 39.4 degree Celsius was recorded in Rajshahi.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



From left, Shaheed Jaya Shyamoli Nasrin Chowdhury, Professor Emeritus Anisuzzaman, Information and Communication Technology Minister Mostafa Faruque Mohammad, journalist Kamal Lohani, and Lt Col (retd) Abu Osman Chowdhury at a discussion at Women's Voluntary Association auditorium in the capital yesterday.

Transport strike starts in Panchagarh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Transport owners and workers in Panchagarh went on indefinite strike on Thursday night halting transport services on the district's internal routes.

The strike was called protesting assault on several transport workers, including bus drivers and helpers, on Panchagarh-Thakurgaon highway at Boda upazila on the same day.

Police and locals said on Thursday a bus owner intercepted a battery-run easy bike on Thakurgaon-Panchagarh highway and forced its passengers to get down from it.

The incident led to a clash between auto-bike owners and drivers and bus owners and workers. Following the clash, the transport owners and workers enforced the indefinite strike.

Meanwhile, the strike called by transport workers in Thakurgaon on April 30 is still continuing in the district.

JAHANARA IMAM'S MOVEMENT Gonojagoron Mancha to continue

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The youths of Gonojagoron Mancha will continue the movement of Shaheed Janani (mother of martyrs) Jahanara Imam to bring the war criminals of 1971 to book, hope speakers at a discussion yesterday.

Referring to the demands of Hefajat-e Islam, they expressed their worry about the stance of the government against "the extremist forces" who opposed the country's Liberation War.

They were speaking at a discussion titled "From Jahanara Imam's Gono Adalat (People's Court) to Gonojagoron Mancha" at WVA auditorium in the capital. Ekatturer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee organised the event marking the 84th birth anniversary of Jahanara Imam.

The Gono Adalat was formed under the leadership of Jahanara Imam in 1992. It held a mock trial which gave death sentence to Jamaat leader Ghulam Azam for his role during the Liberation War.

Dhaka University Professor Emeritus Anisuzzaman, Information and Communication Technology Minister, Mostafa Faruque Mohammad, Ekatturer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee Acting President Shahrir Kabir, and online activist Nadia Nandita Islam also spoke.

Mostafa Faruque Mohammad said the government is firm in its ideal. "We will not bow to any communal force," he said. Shahrir Kabir said the government must include IT experts in the committee formed to investigate accusation against the bloggers of maligning Islam.

Tiger pilot census in Sundarbans begins today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A five-day pilot survey of Bengal Tigers, which is the first phase of the Bengal Tiger Census and Monitoring project, will begin in the Sundarbans today.

More than a thousand field workers will use camera traps to count the total tiger population in the Bangladesh part of the world's largest mangrove forest, which also covers parts of India.

The camera trapping method was demonstrated to census takers and persons concerned at a training workshop at CSS Ava Centre in Khulna city yesterday, organised by Bangladesh Forest Department and Ministry of Environment and Forest.

Dr Tapon Kumar Dey, conservator of Forests (Wildlife and Nature Conservation Circle) of the department, explained that cameras would be planted in a certain area for a certain period of time to identify individual tigers.

In response to a question, he said there

was no scope of a tiger being counted twice because the stripes of each Bengal Tiger were unique like thumb prints.

The pilot survey will be conducted in Kotka-Kochikhali area of Bagerhat. The second phase of the census, funded by the World Bank under "Strengthening Regional Co-operation for Wildlife Protection Project", will be 45 days long. It will take place in September-October.

A 2004 survey showed that the total Bengal Tiger population in Bangladesh part was 440. The UNDP conducted the census using pugmarks (footprints).

Md Yunus Ali, chief conservator of forests, Bangladesh Forest Department, said the major threats to the Bengal Tiger were poaching of tiger and its prey, deer, and habitat loss.

Bangladesh has taken a number of steps for tiger conservation, including Bangladesh Tiger Action Plan 2009-2017, National Tiger Recovery Programme, and an amendment to the Forest Act 2012, he said.

Hefajat urged to call off May 5 programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cultural personalities yesterday called upon Hefajat-e Islam to withdraw their May 5 Dhaka siege programme.

They said speeches, using Islam, delivered by leaders of Hefajat will only create further violence and bloody feud.

They were addressing a press conference organised by Sammilito Sangskritik Jote at the Liberation War Museum in the capital.

Sammilito Sangskritik Jote announced a rally for May 10 to chalk out their programmes to solve the ongoing political crisis.

Nasiruddin Yusuf Bachchu, president of the jote, spoke among others.

DEATHS OF COPS, PROTESTERS HRW wants probe by independent body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human Rights Watch (HRW) demanded that the Bangladesh government appoints an independent commission to investigate the deaths of protesters and police officers since February and prosecute those responsible, and a stop to use of excessive force against protesters.

"Security forces confronted with large groups of demonstrators have opened fire on crowds, often without warning, killing unarmed protesters and bystanders," said HRW Asia Division Executive Director Brad Adams.

"It is the government's responsibility to ensure that this stops, and to replace officials who have failed to properly supervise forces under their control," he said.

The New York-based HRW also called on opposition parties to stop carrying out unlawful attacks on law enforcers and the public with different political views.

The government blamed Jamaat-e-Islami and BNP for the killing of eight police officers during protests. Based upon the family's accounts and medical reports, HRW said protesters were shot in the head, chest or stomach and there were at least six instances where the victims were children.

HRW called on the government to order the security forces to follow the UN's Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials.

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