

# 'ROBBERY ATTEMPT' Mob beats 3 youths to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Three youths were beaten to death by a mob in the early hours yesterday in Hadal village of the district's Faridpur upazila.

The victims were identified as Md Milon Hossain, 23, from Thanapara village, Md Joynal Pramanik, 24, from Nespara village and Jalu Pramanik, 26, from Berhawlia village of the same upazila.

The trio were attacked by the mob around 3:00am near the Hadal Madrasa as they were suspected of committing robbery in the area, said Faridpur Police Station Officer-in-charge Md Faruk Hossain.

"Seven to eight suspected criminals entered the village in a three wheeler around 2:00am. The village guards had announced their presence over the loudspeaker from the village madrasa. The mob was able to capture and beat to death the three, while the rest escaped. Their bodies were taken to the Pabna Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsies," he told The Daily Star.

He, however, could not confirm if any robbery took place and added there were no cases filed against any of the trio.

Faridpur Technical School and College Principal Abu Sayeed, a resident of Hadal village, said that the locals told him that the allegedly armed youths came to Hadal to steal a Nasiman -- a local motorised three-wheeler -- from a garage.

Four other suspected criminals were beaten to death by another mob in the same upazila on November 29, 2012.

## US, Canadian

FROM PAGE 16  
Iraq, Libya and Pakistan, were linked to al-Qaeda.

Unarmed US officials said the Washington alert had been issued after they intercepted electronic communications in which senior al-Qaeda operatives discussed strikes on US interests in the Muslim world.

The US State Department warned American citizens on Friday about terror attacks, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa with a possible attack coming from the Arabian Peninsula.

Friday's US advisory prompted Canada's foreign affairs department to release its own warning for travelers and diplomats in the Middle East and North African region, CBC News reported.

The department stated that Canadians were at a reasonably "elevated risk" of attacks due to the threat of attacks due to the threat of a "close friend and ally".

Of particular concern is Yemen, where the government is "on high alert" against possible attacks in the days to come," a senior US security official told Xinhua.

On Saturday, security around the US embassy in Yemen was even tighter than last year when the embassy was raided by protesters. At least 12 tanks are stationed within 500 metres of the building, he added.

Meanwhile, security measures have been tightened in the diplomatic zone at Gulshan-Baridhara in Dhaka after the US embassy was shut yesterday over security threats.

Deputy Commissioner of the Chancery Division of Police Chowdhury Monjurul Kabir told The Daily Star that they had no specific information about security threats to the American embassy but they were on high alert to prevent any untoward situation.



Iftar items of Chawkbazar, Old Dhaka. Inset, a whole lamb roast, ready to be partaken of at break of fast. PHOTO: STAR

## OLD DHAKA

# Culinary charm too hard to resist

ZYMA ISLAM

Urban legends proclaim Pura Dhaka's biriyani to be one of the best of its kind. The month of Ramadan that is nearly gone by has proven that its popularity remains unfaltering even in the middle of the night, with hotels reporting a high level of human traffic.

While Hotel Royal in Lalbagh and Amania in Chawkbazar disappointingly close shop around midnight, Al-Razzaq on North-South road, offering mutton whole-leg roast, chicken chutney, fragrant biryanis, and molasses-infused firni, is one of those places that do remain open for sehri.

Beginning from midnight, this historic restaurant has crowds spilling over the sidewalk waiting for a table.

Manager of Al-Razzaq Hossain Mollah said, "Unfortunately our restaurant can only seat a hundred at a time."

However, the jubilant Hossain Mollah said that they serve around 700 customers each night.

"Facebook has boosted our popularity during the past two years," he claims.

Tiqwan, a private service holder, went here out of sheer curiosity after seeing many of his Facebook friends use

the "check-in" option to broadcast that they had gone to Al-Razzaq for sehri.

Different socioeconomic classes shared the special meal in the same restaurant that was open for all. Kalam, a rickshaw-van puller, stoically made his way through daal-bhaat sitting at a table next to a group hailing from Gulshan.

Shahed, a resident of Mirpur, said he chose to come to Al-Razzaq because the wide North-South Road beside which the shop is located provides parking space.

"The other hotels are tucked inside narrow alleys that cannot fit a car, and I can't travel long distances this late at night without one," he said.

For similar reasons, a small restaurant called Al-Mizan in Chankharpool appeals to those who need a parking spot within eyeshot.

However, just across the street lies the main attraction of Kazi Alauddin Road which offers more restaurants than can be counted.

Haji'r Biriyani, located on this street, is a place that pulls down the shutters at night, but plenty more like it invite the taste buds.

The famous Bismillah Kabab Ghar

remains open throughout the night, offering beef chaap, liver stew, chicken tikka masala, or even uncommon fancies like mutton heart stew served with hot fluffy parathas that flake off at touch.

"Our items finish off quickly. It is only 2:00am and we only have the heart stew left to serve," said Habibur Rahman, claiming to be the present owner of the shop.

A gang of youths on bicycles, proclaiming themselves to be a part of BDcyclists, hovered around Madina Biriyani around 2:00 am, said they cycle around the town and often finish off with biriyani.

Hotel One-Star, claiming to belong to the same line of chain restaurants as Hotel Star and Super Star, has a variety of chicken preparations for its guests with borhani and labang to wash it down with, and lacchi and faluda for the sweet tooth afterwards.

Nineteen-year-old Suraiya, who had been driven to the restaurant from Malibagh by her brother, said, "Plenty of other restaurants have equally good food but they do not serve this late at night. All I wanted was to eat out for sehri."

# 'I was involved'

FROM PAGE 1

Lopa, 25, is the wife of Maruf Reza Sagar, acting secretary of Dhaka city Jubo League (south) ward-10, who is an eyewitness to Milky's murder.

Sagar drove Milky to Shoppers World, a shopping mall in the capital's Gulshan, in the early hours of July 30. During an interrogation by Rab, he later identified Tarek as Milky's killer.

In her three-hour statement to Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate's Court-28, Lopa said she got the information from Sagar that Milky would go out with him for shopping

around 11:30pm on July 29.

She admitted to passing the information to Tarek, joint secretary of Dhaka City (south) unit Jubo League. Tarek later tracked down Milky and killed him in front of Shoppers World at 1:07am on July 30.

Lopa said she had a dislike for Milky, as her husband Sagar used to spend most of his time with him.

She also said Milky had been in conflict with Zahidul Islam Tipu, general secretary of Awami League's Motijheel unit, and Wahidul Alam Arif, general secretary of Dhaka

city (south) Jubo League.

Both the men, who have been on the run, are on the list of suspects in the Milky murder case filed by Milky's brother Major Rashedul Haque Khan.

The case, which was lodged with the Gulshan Police Station, was transferred to Rab-1 on Thursday, a day after it made a request to the home ministry for transferring the case to it from the police.

Rab arrested Lopa on Saturday acting on a clue from text messages she had sent to Tarek's cell phone while watching TV news on the "shootout"

between Rab and Tarek's cohorts on July 31 night, said the elite force.

Rab officials claimed Lopa sent those messages to Tarek, as she could not believe that he was killed in the "shootout".

The "shootout" took place at Kaola near Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport while Rab was taking him to Gulshan Police Station from a hospital in the capital's Uttara that night.

Rab had arrested Tarek in the early hours of July 30 at Fortune Hospital in Uttara, where he had been reportedly receiving treatment for a bullet wound.

# Jamaat-hit trains not yet fit

FROM PAGE 1

"We have been able to repair three slightly damaged coaches of Subarna Express. The rest are still lying at Pahartali workshop for lack of fund and repair," said a senior rail official in Chittagong asking not to be identified.

He added each coach of Subarna Express had cost the railway Tk 3-4 crore.

Coaches of Upakul and Silk City have been kept at Kamalapur and Saidpur for repair. Each coach of

Upakul cost the railway Tk 60 lakh and each coach of Silk City Tk 4 crore.

A senior rail official in Rajshahi said repairing of the burned down Silk City coaches would require at least Tk 1 crore.

To cope with the Eid rush as much as possible, the railways ministry is going to launch 10 special train services on important routes like Dhaka-Chittagong, Dhaka-Sylhet, Dhaka-Khulna and Dhaka-Nilphamari by renovating

old coaches to ferry people from August 6.

One more such train could be introduced using the burned coaches now awaiting repair.

The ministry has meanwhile decided not to operate Maitree Express on Dhaka-Kolkata route for a week before and after the Eid so that its coaches can be added to the existing express trains.

Coaches from some unscheduled trains would also be used for the special

and existing trains.

Director General of Bangladesh Railway Abu Taher said despite limitations they were trying to give the people their best services.

"We have fund crisis, but we will soon repair the damaged coaches and add those to the respective intercity trains," he added.

The intercity trains leaving Kamalapur for different destinations offer around 17,000 seats every day.

# JS polls to be free, fair

FROM PAGE 1

"What can we do if people cast their votes for the corrupt and terrorists, ignoring patriots and honest candidates? We have nothing to say."

She urged people to cast their votes in favour of patriots and honest, pro-development candidates.

Referring to the elections held under the current government Hasina said no one could raise any question about those polls.

"In the recent elections to

five city corporations, our candidates were defeated despite being the ruling party-backed hopefuls," she said, adding that the government did not try to win the polls through ballot rigging.

Referring to the opposition leader's speech on governing the country 'in a new way', Hasina said the opposition leader would, in fact, run the country by opening a new 'Hawa Bhaban'.

Terming the Kuril flyover

a new milestone in the development of Dhaka city's communication network, she urged all to protect the environment of the capital.

Earlier, Hasina inaugurated the Purbachal Balu Bridge over the River Balu in Rupganj. The four-lane bridge was her Eid gift to the people in the area, she said.

With the construction of the 300-meter-wide Kuril Purbachal Link Road and the opening of Balu Bridge

to traffic would raise the living standards of Rupganj people, she added.

Hasina also assured the locals of providing necessary compensation for their lands in the Purbachal project area.

Post and Telecommunications Minister Shahara Khatun and State Minister for Housing and Public Works Abdul Mannan Khan, among others, spoke on the occasion.

# Justice Mizanur cleared

FROM PAGE 16

activist of Gonojagoron Moncho, a murtad (deviated from Islam) citing his alleged blog posts.

The Moncho was set up to demand the highest punishment for all war criminals during the Liberation War.

Rajib was hacked to death near his Palash Nagar home in the capital's Pallabi on February 15.

Yesterday, the three-member judicial council sent a short report to the law ministry to forward it to the president, a high official of the law ministry told The Daily Star.

The ministry will also send the report to the Prime Minister's Office to forward it to the Bangabhaban, he said.

The official, however, declined to give details of

the report.

Contacted, Law Minister Shafique Ahmed said he did not get any report from the judicial council although he was in office till 3:00pm yesterday.

Supreme Court Registrar AKM Shamsul Islam, however, said his office sent the report to the law secretary by an official messenger at around noon yesterday.

On February 25, the then president Zillur Rahman ordered Chief Justice Md Muzammel Hossain to constitute the Supreme Judicial Council to investigate the allegations against Justice Mizanur.

The two other members of the council are Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha and Justice MA Wahhab Miah, judges of the SC.

On February 28, the council issued a notice

asking Mizanur to explain the allegations against him.

He responded to the notice on March 14, according to SC sources.

This is the second such council to probe allegations against an HC judge. Mizanur was appointed additional HC judge on July 29, 2002, and his job was confirmed after two years during the rule of the BNP-led alliance.

In 2004, HC additional judge Syed Shahidur Rahman was removed from office on the basis of the first ever judicial council's probe into a judge's misconduct, and its recommendations.

Shahidur was charged with taking Tk 50,000 in bribe to fix bail for an accused in a women repression case.

# Tk 100cr payback

FROM PAGE 1

granted Jasmine bail in all the 11 cases filed against her.

Earlier on February 7, the same court passed her bail order with a similar condition that the loan that had been taken out on forged documents had to be repaid.

In response to appeals challenging the bail order, the High Court cancelled the ruling and asked law enforcers to arrest Jasmine, wife of the company's Managing Director Tanvir Mahmud, if she did not surrender to the Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court as per the trial court order.

The CMM court sent Jasmine to jail on February 19 hours after she surrendered to it in connection with the corruption cases.

Jasmine was first

arrested in Manikgonj on November 7 last year.

The Anti-Corruption Commission on October 4 that year filed the cases against 27 top officials of Sonali Bank and Hall-Mark Group for their involvement in the scam.

According to a Bangladesh Bank investigation in May 2012, Hall-Mark and five other companies with the connivance of some bank officials had taken out loans of Tk 3,547 crore from the Ruposhi Bangla Hotel branch of Sonali Bank, using forged documents.

Of the money, Hall-Mark alone took away around Tk 2,600 crore while T and Brothers commandeered Tk 609.69 crore, Paragon Group Tk 146.60 crore, Nakshi Knit Tk 66.36 crore, DN Sports Tk 33.25 crore and

Khanjahan Ali Tk 4.96 crore.

The scam, according to bankers and analysts, is unprecedented in the history of the country's banking sector because the borrowers were neither well-known nor well-established.

The bank's Ruposhi Bangla Hotel branch gave out the loans in complete violation of banking norms.

Following the revelation of the scam, Sonali Bank suspended 17 of its officials, including two deputy managing directors and the branch manager, over their involvement in the illegal lending of the huge sum of money.

Tanvir Mahmud, mastermind of the scam, and Tushar Ahmed, general manager of Hall-Mark and a close relative of Tanvir, are now in jail.

# First talking robot

FROM PAGE 16

creators, was among five tons of supplies on a rocket taking off from Tanegashima, in southwestern Japan, bound for the International Space Station, the country's space agency said yesterday.

The small, child-like, robot -- whose name is derived from the Japanese words for "hope" and "robot" -- is designed to provide companionship for human astronaut Koichi Wakata.

According to Tomotaka Takahashi, the android's developer, Kirobo will "remember Mr Wakata's face so it can recognise him when they reunite up in space".

Takahashi, from the

University of Tokyo, was joined by advertiser Dentsu and carmaker Toyota in Kirobo's creation.

It is hoped that Kirobo will provide emotional support to Wakata, who is expected to arrive at the space station in November. Kirobo will then communicate to another robot back on earth.

The biggest challenge was making sure it could move and talk where there was no gravity.

Ahead of the launch, the 34cm tall Kirobo told reporters: "One small step for me, a giant leap for robots."

Japan boasts the most sophisticated robotics in the world, but because of its

"manga" culture, it tends to favor cute robots with human-like characteristics with emotional appeal, a use of technology that has at times drawn criticism for being not productive.

Kirobo's design is said to have been inspired by the legendary cartoon character Astro Boy.

But designer Takahashi said sending a robot into space could help write a new chapter in the history of communication.

JAXA, Japan's equivalent of Nasa, said the rocket launch was successful, and the separation of a cargo vehicle, carrying the robot to the space station, was confirmed about 15 minutes after lift off.

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