

COASTGUARDS-ROBBERS FIERCE GUNFIGHT

4 abducted fishermen rescued, arms seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*
Coastguards rescued four fishermen, kidnapped for ransom a few days ago, following a gunfight with forest robbers in Dudmukhi canal under Sharonkhola range in the Sundarbans in Bagerhat district yesterday. The law enforcers also seized four firearms, 77 bullets and a sharp weapon from the spot, said a press release issued by operation officer Lt. Commander M Mohiuddin Mojumder of Coastguard Mongla west zone.

Acting on a tip-off, members of the coastguard surrounded the spot on Dudmukhi canal from 4.00am to 9.45am yesterday and later swooped on the den of the notorious 'Shirsho Bahini' led by robber Rezaul in the area. Sensing the presence of the coastguard members, the robbers opened fire, prompting the law enforcers to retaliate. After an hour-long gunfight from 7:30am, coastguards rescued the four abducted fishermen and seized one single barrel gun, three shooter guns, 77 bul-

lets, one billhook and a boat from the den while the members of the gang managed to flee the scene. The rescued fishermen are Md. Sekender Fakir, 36, son of Md. Kutub Uddin, Md. Aziz Sheikh, 26, son of Motaleb Mia, Md. Abu Zafar, 22, son of Farid Uddin and Md. Zalal Uddin, 40, son of Sohag Mia of Sonaitala village under Mongla upazila in Bagerhat. The rescued fishermen were taken to a safe place while the seized arms and ammunition deposited in Sharonkhola police station.

AM COLLEGE Protesters give 7-day deadline to nab killer of Afsari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*
Teachers and students of Government Ananda Mahan College in the town yesterday gave a seven-day fresh ultimatum to the authorities to arrest the alleged killer of a female student. The ultimatum was announced during human chain and sit-in programmes organised by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad Mymensingh unit. On September 1, Abdus Samad Raju, a fourth year student of the college and son of Abdus Salam of the town, allegedly hit Afsari Akhtar Swarna, 17, a first year student of the institution, with a brick, leaving her critically injured at the botanical garden of Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU). Swarna was rushed to Mymensingh Medical College and Hospital where she died on September 6. Students of different colleges and veteran dramatist Prof Momtaj Uddin Ahmed also joined yesterday's protest programmes. The speakers at the programmes expressed concern as police were yet to arrest Raju. Meanwhile, the college authorities have taken steps to cancel the studentship of Raju considering a demand by the agitators. Chairman of Bangla Department at the college Prof Ratan Siddique threatened that they would go for tougher programmes if Raju was not arrested within the next seven days. Chairman of Human Rights Commission Mizanur Rahman also expressed solidarity with the ongoing movement over telephone yesterday, he said. Contacted, Golam Sarwar, officer in-charge of Kotwali police station, said police were raiding different areas to arrest the accused. Earlier, a case was filed with the police station in connection with the killing.



Huge quantities of hilsa, mostly from Bhola, Barisal and Barguna districts, arrive at Chandpur during the ongoing peak catching season. However, the famous Padma hilsa, the variety of the popular fish, most in demand, is not that much available this season.

Tree looting from reserve forest on near Kuakata

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*
A gang backed by a section of influential people have continued to loot trees from Gangamoti reserve forest near Kuakata. The gang cut down five trees on Friday night and Saturday. They also took away 7 more trees 15 days ago from the same area. Locals said five rain trees, each over 20 years old, were felled by a gang on Friday night and Saturday morning. On hearing the news that a gang cutting down trees on the flood control dam at Char Kawa under Gangamoti reserve forest, a team of local newsmen visited the spot on Saturday morning. They found two woodcutters, Faruque Akon and Khokon Howlader of same village, were engaged to fell the trees. The team identified at least five trunks of trees that were cut down by the gang. Both the woodcutters told journalists that they were hired by some Humayun Jomaddar and Hemayet Hossain Pannu of the area.



Trunks of felled trees, often seen in different reserve forests in Patuakhali district, bear testimony to the rampant looting of forest resources. The photo was taken from Kawar Char in Kuakata a few days ago.

Earlier, the same gang looted at least seven more big trees from the spot, local people alleged. A staff at Gongamoti forest office said they recently seized 30 cft trees from a gang. But he refused to identify the culprits for reason unknown. This correspondent tried to talk with Humayun Jomaddar but his cell phone

Boy abducted from N'ganj murdered in Sherpur

UNB, *Sherpur*
Police recovered the body of a minor boy from near a bridge in Nakla upazila early yesterday, two days after he had been kidnapped by a gang from Narayanganj district for ransom. The deceased was identified as Ramzan, 9, son of Ismail Shikdar of Jalkuri area in Siddhirganj upazila of Narayanganj. Police and locals said, on an information from Siddhirganj police station that some kidnapers abducted a minor boy from Siddhirganj and took him to Nakla, a team of Nakla police raided different areas of the upazila. During the drive, they arrested two people on suspicion -- Ripon, 20, of Baromaisa village and

Boy abducted from N'ganj murdered in Sherpur

Hamidul Islam, 21, of Dhamna village of the upazila. Officer in-charge of Nakla police station Fasihur Rahman said the body of Ramzan was recovered from near Chapa Jhuri Bridge at about 12.05am, on the basis of the confessional statement of the arrestees. Quoting Ripon and Hamidul, OC Fasihur Rahman said that the duo had abducted the boy from his house for ransom on Saturday night and brought him to Nakla. Later they strangled the boy early Sunday and dumped the body near the bridge. The two killed Ramzan as they were seized by the fear of getting caught when the boy began to cry, the OC said.

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS

Two missing in boat capsized

UNB, *Sirajganj*
Two people went missing as a boat capsized in the Jamuna River near Moti Shaheb Ghat in the town yesterday. The two were identified as day labourers Sohel and Liton. Witnesses said a sand-laden boat sank in the river near Moti Shaheb Ghat with 18 labourers onboard at around 11:30am. Of them, 16 managed to swim ashore while the rest two remained missing. On information, divers from Sirajganj Fire Service rushed to the spot and conducted a search in the area. The search continued as of filing this report at 12:40pm.

BGB detains two

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Jhenidah*
The members of Border Guard Bangladesh early yesterday detained two people from Moheshpur frontier in the district. The two are Shishir Kumar Majumder, 27, son of Ashoke Kumar Majumder and Nazmul Gazi, 22, son of Ilias Gazi of village Ganna-Madhhabpur in Jhenidah Sadar upazila. BGB sources said Shishir was a citizen of both Bangladesh and India. He was allegedly involved in drug smuggling for a long time. Moheshpur police said that the arrestees were trying to enter the Indian territory without any valid papers. The BGB men challenged and arrested them with copies of income tax paying receipts, cellular phones, SIM cards and other materials.

Polybags, urea seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*
Polythene bags worth Tk. 30 lakh were seized from a market in the district town on Sunday. Acting on a tip-off, a mobile court led by executive magistrate Md. Mashfaqur Rahman along with magistrate Md. Abdullah Al Zakir raided Chawkbazar around 10.00pm and seized a truck laden with polybags. The polybags were brought to Dinajpur from Dhaka for selling those across the district. In another raid, Parbatipur police seized at least 360 sacks of urea while being taken to Pulbari upazila of the district. Police said the urea loaded from Parbatipur warehouse of Bangladesh Fertilizer Association on Saturday night was seized as the truck driver failed to produce any legal documents. Police arrested the truck driver and sent him to Dinajpur jail on Sunday.

2 BNP-Jamaat leaders attacked

UNB, *Benapole, Jessore*
Two local leaders of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Jamaat-e-Islami were injured in an attack by Jubo League (JL) men at Narayanpur village in Sharsha upazila on Sunday night. The injured were identified as Zamirul Islam, 48, vice-president of union level BNP and son of Junab Ali of Shubarnakhali village in the upazila, and Sirajul Islam, 42, a leader of Nabharan Burujbagan ward unit Jamaat and son of Year Ali of the same area. Witnesses said, a group of armed activists of the youth front of the ruling Awami League, numbering 7/8, swooped on Zamirul and Sirajul and bludgeoned them and also stabbed them as they allegedly were making objectionable remarks about Awami League while gossiping at a tea stall at night. Critically injured, they were admitted to Jessore Medical College Hospital.

SATURDAY'S INCIDENT IN C'NAWABGANJ Dist Jubo Dal chief sues MP Papiya, 43 others

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Chapainawabganj*
Forty-four leaders and activists of district BNP and its front organisations, including general secretary of BNP and lawmaker Syeda Asifa Ashrafi Papiya, were sued on Sunday evening on charge of attacking and vandalising business office of a top Jubo Dal leader. Obaidul Islam Pathan, president of district Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal, filed two separate cases with Sadar Model police station. He filed a case against 19 named, including Syeda Asifa Ashrafi Papiya, and 25 other unidentified BNP men. He also filed another case

against 18 named (excluding Papiya) and 25 other unidentified BNP men. All the accused in this case are the same people, said Bazlur Rashid, officer in-charge (OC) of Sadar PS. According to the case statement, Jubo Dal brought out a procession in town on Saturday, demanding expulsion of Papiya for her alleged bad comments against BNP senior vice chairman Tarique Rahman. After that, a group, ordered by Papiya, suddenly attacked Pathan's business office with sticks, sharp weapons, handmade bombs and pistol at Circuit House intersection at around 5:00pm on Saturday. They went on

rampage and vandalised his business office room and exploded a bomb injuring one Rocky, the complainant said. In the other case, he further stated that the accused also hurled brick chips and two handmade bombs at his rented house at Kanthalbagicha in town on the same day at around 7:00pm. On Saturday, Jubo Dal brought out a broom procession in the district town, demanding expulsion of BNP leader Asifa Ashrafi Papiya from the party. The pro-Papiya BNP men also brought out a procession in town on the same day protesting the Jubo Dal procession.



Workers unload sacks of urea fertilizer from a truck on the premises of Gaibandha buffer stock godown, and right, officials examine samples of the fertilizer that was found coagulated at the time of its arrival there.

Farmers worried as dealers stop drawing 'clotted' urea

KM REZAUL HOQUE, *Gaibandha*
Fertiliser dealers and traders have stopped drawing urea fertiliser allocated for September from the buffer stock, alleging that farmers are not receiving the dirty and clotted fertiliser that is also supplied in torn sacks. The situation worries farmers in the peak period of aman cultivation. "Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) has been supplying dirty and clotted urea fertiliser imported from China for the last few months. Farmers are showing unwillingness to purchase the fertiliser, which is supplied in torn sacks and has less than stipulated weight," said Kazi Abdul Hamid, president of district fertiliser association. Many of the dealers, who have already lifted urea fertiliser from buffer stock, are to sell per bag for Tk 30 to 40 less prices, he said. Frustrated fertiliser dealers in a recent meeting decided not to lift fertiliser allocated for September from the buffer stock until the

present stock is replaced by fresh sacks of fertiliser. The dealers also decided not to deposit money against their allocations. Leaders of fertiliser association meanwhile appealed to the BCIC authorities not to send dirty and clotted fertiliser any more. They also filed allegations with the president of district fertiliser and seed monitoring committee and the deputy commissioner of Gaibandha in this regard. Contrary to the allegation of fertiliser traders, high officials of BCIC opined that clotting of fertiliser does not mean that it is below standard, said Hyder Ali Khan, in-charge of Gaibandha buffer stock. "The Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) has come to know of farmers' anxiety about dirty and clotted fertiliser. The farmers should be informed that clotting of fertiliser does not identify it as below standard," said Mir Abdur Razzaque, deputy director of DAE in Gaibandha.

46 held on Benapole border, 8 at Hili

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Benapole, Jessore*
Members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) early yesterday arrested 46 people from Sadipur border in Sharsha upazila while entering Bangladesh from India illegally. Being tipped off that a large group of people were trying to enter the Bangladesh territory through the border point from India, a BGB team raided the spot and arrested them, said BGB 26 Battalion Jessore camp in-charge Lt Col Matiar Rahman. The arrestees include five children and 11 women. However, the arrestees claimed that they hailed from different areas of Faridpur, Narail, Barisal, Khulna and Bagerhat districts.

They were later handed over to Benapole port police station and a case was filed in this connection. Meanwhile, eight Bangladeshis, including two children and a woman, were rescued yesterday at Hili border under Hakimpur upazila of Dinajpur while being trafficked to India, reports our Dinajpur correspondent. All the rescued people hailed from different areas of Kurigram district. Camp commander of Hili check post Atahar Ali said, acting on a tip-off, a BGB team raided a place at Fakirpara village under Hakimpur upazila of Dinajpur around 2:30pm yesterday and rescued them.

Fugitive trucker arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Comilla*
Police early yesterday arrested a truck driver from Tejgaon truck stand in the capital in connection with the deaths of seven school children in a road crash at Natherpetua in Monohorganj upazila of the district on March 16 this year. The arrestee was identified as Mohammad Sohel, 30, son of Nurul Amin of Kalikapur village in Sonaimuri upazila of Noakhali district. Officer in-charge of Mainamati highway police station Mashiur Rahman said, on a tip-off a highway police team with the help of a team from Tejgaon PS raided the area at about 2:30am and arrested Sohel.



Members of different cultural, political and professional organisations form a human chain at Satmatha intersection in Bogra town yesterday protesting Saturday's attack on dramatist Arif Noor, also an activist of Gonojagoron Mancha, in the capital.