

Two die, 13 missing in Padma

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Two people, including a minor girl, were found dead while 13 others went missing in a boat capsized in the river Padma under Godagari upazila of Rajshahi yesterday.

The dead were three and a half years old girl Itrat Jahan and Mohammad Badsha, an imam. They were from Kodalkati village of the same upazila.

The engine boat some 50 passengers on board was going to Char Alatali in Chapainwabganj Sadar upazila from Rail Bazar of Godagari.

On the river route, the boat fell prey to rough river condition and subsequently sank in the river around 12:00 noon, said Khowaj Ali, chairman of Char Alatali Union Parishad.

All but 15 passengers were rescued, the chairman added.

Later, locals rescued two bodies from the river.

Four Chinese ships enter disputed waters: Japan

AFP, Tokyo

Four Chinese ships yesterday entered waters around islands at the centre of a bitter dispute with Japan with no sign of a compromise seen between Asia's two largest powers.

The four Chinese coast-guard vessels sailed into the 12-nautical-mile territorial waters around the Tokyo-controlled Senkaku islands - which Beijing calls the Diaoyu - Saturday morning, the Japanese coastguard said.

They had all left the waters more than four hours later and were in contiguous waters just outside of the 12-nautical-mile band Saturday afternoon, the Japanese guards said.

The moves came after the first anniversary Wednesday of Tokyo's nationalisation of part of the chain. On the eve of the anniversary, a flotilla of eight Chinese ships entered the territorial band of waters.

Often-testy ties have soured dramatically over the last 12 months, with frequent confrontations between official ships from both sides.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Thursday vowed to beef up his country's defence capability amid the row with China.

Regional powers fear Rwandan invasion of DR Congo

AFP, Windhoek

Southern African nations yesterday expressed concern at the growing number of Rwandan troops on the border of the Democratic Republic of Congo and said it hoped an invasion was not imminent.

A statement from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) regional body said it was concerned "at the deployment of Rwandan troops along the common border" and "expressed the hope that Rwanda is not contemplating to invade".

Issued from a summit in Namibia attended by Congolese President Joseph Kabila, the statement called on the country's neighbours to "contribute to peace, security and stability of the DRC."

Congolese troops backed by a special United Nations force launched a fresh assault against M23 rebels late last month in DR Congo's north east.

The SADC also praised DR Congo's government troops and the UN brigade for "continuing to exert military pressure on M23 and other negative forces in eastern DRC".

Girl faces acid attacks 4 times in a month

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kusthia

She was not lucky enough this time when she came under acid attack by her spurned suitor, who had been successful to burn her face on the fourth go after three futile attempts in a month.

Newly wed Kakoli Khatun, who was attacked on Thursday night, is now fighting for life at burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Hafiz Uddin of Nischiyantabaria under Khoksa upazila in Kushtia threw acid on Kakoli, wife of Panju Mia of Boriochara village in the upazila, through a window when she along with her husband was taking preparation to go to bed at her husband's house around 10:30pm.

She sustained severe burn injuries on the left side of her face and left hand. Panju also sustained burn injuries on his hand.

Critically injured Kakoli, daughter of farmer Kamrul Islam of Nischiyantabaria in the upazila, was rushed to Kushtia Medical College Hospital on the night. She was referred to the DMCH

on Friday.

Kamrul said Hafiz had also previously attempted to throw acid on his daughter thrice after being refused to marry her. He went to police to file cases against Hafiz after the second and third attempts. But police refused to receive case, and advised him to solve the matter through village arbitration.

Sources said police did not dare to file case against Hafiz as he is an employee of a sawmill of Khoksa Upazila Chairman Sadar Uddin Khan, also Awami League (AL) central working committee member. Hafiz himself is also known as an AL activist.

Police, however, received the case yesterday after Kakoli received severe burn injuries in the acid attack at the fourth attempt.

"Police has filed the case when my daughter's life is ruined by the brutal acid attack," helpless Kamrul lamented.

Contacted, Horendranath Sarkar, officer-in-charge (OC) of Khoksa Police Station, said, "We have to investigate the matter to find out the reason behind the incident."

When asked about the delay in Hafiz's arrest, Mofiz Uddin Ahmed, superintendent of police in Kushtia, said he had ordered to arrest the culprit.

According to the case statement, Kakoli was a student of class seven at Shomospur High School.

Hafiz had proposed Kakoli, which she denied. But Hafiz continued disturbing her on her way to school, the statement said.

As a result, she stopped going to school. In the meantime, Hafiz proposed to marry her, which was also turned down. Infuriated, Hafiz threatened to change the girl's face throwing acid.

Following the threat, Kakoli's father married her off to Panju Mia on August 16.

Out of revenge, Hafiz threw acid on Kakoli for the first time on the night of August 23 when she was sleeping at her father's house -- the first visit after the marriage. The attempt was misdirected.

Kakoli also came under acid attack at her husband's house on August 30 and September 7, but narrowly escaped.

Two Thai soldiers killed by roadside bomb

AFP, Bangkok

A roadside bomb killed two soldiers in Thailand's insurgency-ridden deep south yesterday, police said, the latest in a series of deadly attacks that have overshadowed flagging peace efforts.

The blast, which also wounded four other soldiers, struck an army truck in Pattani province shortly before midday, the authorities said.

"A 21-year-old sergeant and a 27-year-old lance corporal were killed," Police Major Somjet Thongpan told AFP by telephone.

"One of them died on the

spot and the other passed away in hospital," he added.

Over the past week more than a dozen security personnel have been killed in the restive southern region, where a shadowy conflict waged by Muslim militants has left more than 5,700 people dead since 2004.

On Thursday three paramilitary rangers building a public restroom were killed by suspected insurgents who escaped with assault rifles and a pistol.

Earlier in the week five police officers were killed in an ambush and two soldiers perished in an attack at a school.

The violence comes despite several rounds of peace talks with the rebels, who are seeking some form of autonomy for the region, which was annexed by Buddhist-dominated Thailand a century ago.

Thailand's chief negotiator said last week the negotiations should continue despite the recent wave of bloodshed.

Talks began on March 28 in neighbouring Malaysia but have so far failed to halt nearly-daily violence, raising questions about the rebel leaders' influence over grassroots insurgents.

Subhan involved

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Subhan was made vice-president this time, said Hannan.

Later, thana-level peace committees were formed under his leadership, according to the probe. During the Liberation War, Subhan used to prepare lists of freedom fighters, members of the Hindu community and Awami League leaders and submit those to the Pakistani army, Hannan said.

Subhan took part in murders and genocide by leading the Pakistani army and Razakars in those crimes, he said, adding Subhan used to give speeches against the Liberation War at public meetings in Pabna and Dhaka.

Sensing defeat when the war was nearing the end, he along with former Jamaat chief Ghulam Azam, a convicted war criminal, fled to Pakistani, Hannan said.

The probe agency has selected 43 people to testify as prosecution witnesses in the case against Subhan. On August 19, the International Crimes Tribunal-1 asked the prosecution to submit formal charges against Abdus Subhan or a progress report of the investigation today.

ALLEGATIONS: Sanaul Huq, a senior member of the agency, said the evidence they had found during the probe would be able to prove Subhan's guilt. He gave in brief information about the other eight incidents of war crimes that Subhan had been involved in.

In the presence of Subhan and under his leadership, five people of Juktitala village under Iswardi upazil were allegedly killed and three others injured on April 13, 1971.

persons, who had taken shelter at a local mosque, on April 17 and 18 in 1971. Later, they were killed before Subhan, Sanaul said.

Led by Subhan, the Pakistani army raided Sahapur village under Iswardi on May 2, 1971 and killed several people there and looted many houses before setting those on fire, as per the probe findings.

Subhan allegedly abducted two persons from Arankhola cattle market in Iswardi on May 16, 1971. The hostages were tortured at District Dak Banglo in Iswardi, Sanaul said.

Subhan also led the Pakistani army in alleged attacks at Kulniya and Dogachi villages under Pabna Sadar on May 11, 1971. Seven people were killed and several houses were torched at that time, Sanaul said.

On May 20, 1971, under the leadership of Subhan, the Pakistani army allegedly picked 18 people from Varara village in Pabna and killed one of them instantly, said Sanaul, adding the others had been tortured at Nurpur Power Plant. Later, some of them were killed near Debottar Bazar.

In the first week of September 1971, Subhan, accompanied by local Razakars, abducted two pro-liberation persons from Dubla Bazar under Pabna Sadar upazila and killed them inside a temple at Kuciarama village, said Sanaul.

On October 30, 1971, Subhan and local Razakars attacked Berbaria village under Iswardi upazila and looted several houses before setting those on fire, said Sanaul, referring to the probe findings. Four people were also abducted from the village and later killed, he added.

Subhan, accompanied by local Jamaat leaders and Biharies, abducted three

Two soldiers killed, eight wounded in Yemen attacks

AFP, Aden

Two attacks by gunmen in the southeastern province of Hadramawt killed two Yemeni soldiers and wounded eight others, security sources said yesterday.

Gunmen ambushed a military vehicle near the Al-Qatn area on Friday, killing two soldiers and wounding one more before fleeing, a security source said.

Elsewhere, the military escort for a convoy of petrol tankers driving in the Al-Hura region came under fire on Friday evening as they drove along a road to the Al-Massila oilfield, another security source told AFP.

Seven soldiers were wounded in the attack, and the gunmen fled without seizing the tankers after military reinforcements arrived.

Traders

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BEA, which commands over 5,000 chemical fertiliser dealers in the country, has long been demanding removal of the price disparity in urea delivered from mill gates and buffer godowns.

"The dealers have to procure urea from the government's buffers at a higher price than they usually pay at the mill gate," BFA Chairman Kamrul Ashraf Khan told The Daily Star.

Industry sources said the disparity between the factory price and the buffer price continues to exist, even after the recent cut in urea price by the government.

Against Tk 700 factory price of urea (per 50 kg sack), the buffer price is Tk 735, according to Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC), the state-run body that operates the six urea manufacturing factories in the country.

Through a press conference on September 21, the BEA plans to go for tough programmes including indefinite strikes if the government fails to keep its "commitment" to reducing the buffer price of urea.

BFA Chairman Kamrul Ashraf Khan told The Daily Star that while attending the annual general meeting of the association back in April this year, Industries Minister Dilip Barua and State Minister for Industries Omar Faruq Chowdhury had promised to remove the price disparity.

Since then, said Khan, "We have reminded the government on several occasions about this commitment, but to no avail so far."

None of the urea factories are in north Bengal, the rice-rich region of the country, and "our dealers have to buy urea from buffer godowns there at a higher price," the BFA chairman added.

Contacted by phone, Industries Minister Dilip Barua told this correspondent that he was aware of the fertiliser dealers' threat of strike.

He acknowledged that he had assured the BFA of considering the disparity problem but declined that he had made any promise in that respect.

Barua, however, said he would discuss the issue with the agriculture minister.

Talking to The Daily Star, Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury said the issue had been taken up with the finance minister. She hoped there would soon be a solution to the issue of urea pricing.

Urea constitutes a major portion of chemical fertilisers that farmers apply to rice -- both the rainy-season Aman and dry-season Boro.

Government provides Tk 6,000 crore to Tk 9,000 crore worth of subsidies for urea prices each year as the country turns heavily dependent on the import of the chemical fertiliser.

Most of the BCIC urea factories remain out of operation half the year thanks to a persistent supply crunch of gas, compelling the government to meet the yearly domestic requirement of urea by importing up to 1.7 million tonnes, against the total demand of 2.4 million tonnes.

4 more months needed

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first step towards the trial of the party that had opposed the birth of Bangladesh in 1971.

On that day, Abdul Hannan Khan, the coordinator of the agency, told The Daily Star, "It might take one and a half months or two to complete the investigation.... Collecting and analysing documents will be the focus of the probe."

Yesterday, he said: "We have to collect many documents. Besides, we have to arrange the documents which we have already produced before the tribunal in previous cases [against Jamaat leaders]. That's why we need more time."

"[It probe against Jamaat] would be the fastest one if we could complete the probe within the next three or four months," he said adding that usually it had taken the investigation agency more than one year to complete each of the previous probes against the war crimes suspects.

Sanaul Huq said they were trying to collect documents even from Pakistan about the role of Jamaat-e-Islami and its founder Abul Ala Maududi.

"We are facing difficulties in finding documents of 1971 which is killing our time. Besides, trial against a party is a big issue. So it is usual that it would take more time," he added.

The senior investigator also informed reporters that they were at the same time probing allegations against 12 more war crimes suspects.

The demand for trying the Jamaat-e-Islami as a party received fresh impetus after February 5 when thousands of youths occupied the Shahbagh intersection in the capital demanding highest punishment for war criminals, and a ban on Jamaat and its student body Islami Chhatra Shibir.

Against this backdrop, parliament on February 17 amended the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973, allowing the state to

appeal against any inadequate sentencing of a convict. The amendment also incorporated a provision for trying organisations for their criminal activities during the Liberation War.

Besides, two international crimes tribunals, set up to deal with war-time offences, through several verdicts put the spotlight on Jamaat-e-Islami's role in 1971.

The tribunal-1 in the verdict against Ghulam Azam observed, "...Jamaat-e-Islami, as a political party under the leadership of accused Prof Ghulam Azam, intentionally functioned as a criminal organisation especially during the War of Liberation of Bangladesh in 1971."

Established by controversial theologian Abul Ala Maududi in 1941, Jamaat was banned twice, in 1959 and 1964, for its communal role. It got banned again just after the country's independence in 1971, but was allowed to resume politics during the tenure of late president Ziaur Rahman.

Mexico police clash with teachers in capital

AFP, Mexico City

Hundreds of anti-riot police have regained control of Mexico City's historic center using water cannons and tear gas to clear the area of striking teachers, who responded with firebombs.

At least 40 people were wounded in Friday's clashes at Zocalo square after a few hundred demonstrators

violated a deadline to vacate the area to make room for the nation's independence day celebrations this weekend after weeks of protests against education reform.

The teachers, many armed with sticks and wearing masks, had set trash on fire and placed metal barriers in adjoining streets to block the police from entering the Zocalo, home to the

National Palace, Aztec ruins and the city's cathedral.

Thousands of teachers had been occupying the plaza for the past three weeks, but most had left before the deadline, leaving makeshift tents and trash behind. Local businesses had shut their doors before the raid.

Police cleared the Zocalo within half an hour and put out small fires.

Bangladeshis lead

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They are already making changes to their livelihoods, including migrating for work or growing different crops, the survey says.

"Bangladeshis are feeling the effects of complex changes in their environment. However, we have found that communities are already doing a lot to cope with the situation and are keen to do more," said Charlotte Imbert, country director in Bangladesh for BBC Media Action, at the launch of the study report in Dhaka yesterday.

As part of Climate Asia, a BBC Media Action initiative, 33,500 people were surveyed in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal, China, Indonesia and Vietnam to know people's daily experience on climate change.

This is the largest climate survey in Asia, claims Media Action (formerly BBC World Service Trust). BBC's charity for international development.

Dr Saleemul Haq, direc-

tor of International Centre for Climate Change and Development, who was also present at the programme, said Bangladesh's vulnerability to climate change is yesterday's story.

"Lots of resilience activities going on to fight climate change at community level. The government agencies and non-government organisations are doing a lot of stuff. There are so many more to say about Bangladesh," said Dr Haq, also a member of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

The survey in Nepal has found people there are most concerned about their future environment; 85 percent of the respondents feel like changing livelihood, but they hardly have been doing it.

In India, the research got the highest number of respondents who are struggling or finding it impossible to take any action at all. The biggest worry in five

Indian states, where the survey was conducted, was shortage of water.

While the Indonesian people expressed their concern about food and drinking water, the Chinese were least informed about climate impact.

Pakistani respondent reported the lowest levels of trust in the government; they are taking matters into their own hands.

After the unveiling of the report, a workshop was held for government and non-government officials, climate activists and journalists to find a way to ensure the study findings are used to better support people to adapt to their changing environments.

BBC Media Action will soon arrange similar programmes in the six other countries.

Damian Wilson, project director of Climate Asia, and Sonia Whitehead, senior research manger of BBC Media Action, replied to queries about the survey.

Hasina sees

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decorated central mosques like the Baitul Mokarram in every district and upazila in phases."

The BNP-Jamaat is carrying out propaganda in the name of Islam, Hasina said, and asked the grassroots leaders to remain alert so that people do not get confused by such propaganda.

The premier termed false and baseless rights body Odhikar's claim of 61 deaths in the law enforcers' May 5 actions to flush out the Hefajat men from Shapla Chhattar in the capital.

About the 15th amendment to the constitution that abolished caretaker government system, she said

it is intended to ensure that no one can take over the state power in an unconstitutional manner. "The next general election will be held as per the constitution. We want the country to run as per the constitution," she added.

Referring to Bangladesh's victory in maritime boundary dispute, the PM said said, "As long as Awami League is in power, no one will be able to grab any assets of the country. But BNP will not hesitate to sell out the country in its self-interest."

Party leaders from AL units in districts, upazilas and municipalities in Barisal, Moulvibazar,

Chuadanga, Nilphamari, Pirojpur, Bogra, Gopalganj and Habiganj attended the meeting. Besides, AL president member Nuh-Ul Alam Lenin, Joint Secretary Mahbulul Alam Hanif, among others, were present.

The meeting was organised to step up organisational activities of the party and to have the grassroots leaders' opinion about probable party candidates for the next general election.

Hasina asked the grassroots to propose at least three candidates for each constituency of their respective districts. Nomination will be given on the basis of their proposal and a subsequent survey, she said.

No headway in investigation

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ants avoided the room of Bokhtiar's grandmother since she was known to have a buzzer fitted in her room where Bokhtiar was shot.

Deceased's uncle Mir Ahsan said they suspected that the thugs had been to the house previously as they made a beeline to the master bedroom occupied by Bokhtiar and his parents during the incident.

"The house has seven rooms and it is not easy to find out the one which had gold jewellery stored in it," he noted.

Besides, police found it suspicious that the assail-

ants avoided the room of Bokhtiar's grandmother since she was known to have a buzzer fitted in her room where Bokhtiar was shot.

Victim's cousin Mir Yeameen Zaiem, who had given him the pet, said the dog was only about five years old and had no health issues. "I suspect that it [dog] was poisoned. It had blood pouring out of its mouth and nostrils."

Police were looking for an earth-laded truck which was seen moving around the house before the incident.

A case was lodged with Jatrabari Police Station in this connection.

dog foamed at the mouth and dropped dead," Bokhtiar's father Jahid-al Latif told The Daily Star.

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