

# 3 hurt in BCL-Shibir gunfight at RU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Three Rajshahi University students, including two Shibir activists, were injured in a daylight gunfight between Chhatra League and Chhatra Shibir on the campus yesterday.

The activists of Chhatra League, pro-Awami League student body, clashed with those of Islami Chhatra Shibir, student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami, over establishing supremacy on the campus.

Besides, the BCL men also assaulted Nazim Mridha, RU correspondent of the New Age, while he was taking photos of the incident.

However, the BCL RU unit president apologised

for the unsolicited matter.

Police and witnesses said a group of BCL activists chased a contingent of Shibir men to Shahidullah Arts Building as they were crossing the central library around 11:45am.

At one stage, both the groups exchanged several rounds of gunshots, leaving the three students injured.

Patrol police shot several rubber bullets in the air to tame the situation, said Abdus Subhan, officer-in-charge of Motihar Police Station.

Finally, the rowdy Shibir activists fled the building.

Abu Sufian, Motihar Hall unit Shibir president, was admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

Police also arrested him.

Al Imran, general secretary of Shibir science faculty unit, was taking treatment at Islami Bank Hospital in the divisional city.

A general student named Firoz Ahmed, a fourth-year student of linguistics department, took first aid.

Saifuddin Yeahia, general secretary of RU unit Shibir, alleged that the BCL men, backed by police, opened fire on their party men when they took shelter at the building.

He binned the allegation of Shibir men's firing.

Mizanur Rahman Rana, BCL RU unit president, alleged that the Shibir men sprayed bullets on his party activists.

# Businesses worried at violence

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garment units, owners from Ashulia and Savar sat at the BGMEA office and called upon the government to ensure security of their factories.

"We have met Labour and Employment Minister Rajiuddin Ahmed Raju, and will meet other ministers concerned, seeking security of the factories," said Abdus Salam Murshedy, president of Ashulia zone RMG factory owners' association.

"We fear that a massive labour unrest will take place if the situation is not immediately brought under control," said Murshedy, also a former president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

In a statement, Federation of Bangladesh

Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), the apex trade body, urged the government to take measures to bring back normalcy in the industry.

The unrest is taking place at a time when the country is trying to get back the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) in the US market, the statement added.

The trade body says it supports a legitimate wage structure for the garment workers, as they are the key players in the sector.

Talking to The Daily Star, Shahidullah Azim, vice-president of the BGMEA, said the workers should wait until an independent wage board finalises the salary structures for them.

"Everybody should come forward to protect the garment sector," Azim

said. "Workers never vandalise factories. It is the outsiders who instigate the violence."

If the ongoing unrest continues, many units would not be able to make shipment in time. As a result, the owners would face difficulty in paying the salaries and bonuses for the upcoming Eid-ul-Azha, he added.

Gazipur-based garment owners had already been facing trouble for low pressure of gas over the last one week, he said, adding that the latest spell of unrest would worsen their sufferings.

Yesterday, more than 100 people, including 20 police personnel, were injured as the RMG workers clashed with the law enforcers at Pagar un in Tongi Police Station in Gazipur, our district corre-

spondent reports.

The workers of Jabel & Jubayer Textiles and Hamid Garment Factory went on the rampage in and around the factories after the lunch break demanding a hike in their monthly salary, said Alamgir Hossain Gazi, sub-inspector of Tongi Police Station.

As police tried to resist them, he added, the workers threw brickbats on the law enforcers, leaving Officer-in-Charge Abul Kalam Azad and other police personnel injured.

Police fired several shots and teargas shells.

The situation, however, became normal after the agitating workers left the area around 4:30pm.

In another incident, the RMG workers went on work abstention, and

staged demonstration in the district's Kaliakair upazila in the morning for better pay.

More than 15,000 workers of different factories gathered on the Dhaka-Tangail highway around 9:30am, and vandalised 20 vehicles. Production at several garments units there was suspended.

The agitating workers also vandalised six garment units in Chandra area.

Movement of traffic on the highway resumed around 11:30am after the law enforcers with the help of industrial police flushed out the agitating workers.

Garment workers also vandalised factories in Savar, Konabari, Kashimpur, Shafipur, Ashulia and Uttara recently.

# Takes along biggest ever entourage

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Thani, the emir of Qatar, for 15 minutes.

But no appointment has been fixed with any American dignitaries.

Taking such a big entourage on a trip at the expense of taxpayers' money raises questions as most of the delegates do not at all match with UN events.

"There is no justification of such a huge delegation spending huge hard-earned money of poor people by way of comfortable air travels and staying in luxurious hotels because only a few officials from the Prime Minister's Office, foreign ministry and Bangladesh missions in USA have the engagement with UN," said a senior official at the foreign ministry.

"A vast majority of her delegation members will have no work in UN and they have nothing but to enjoy a pleasure trip, shop-

ping, sight seeing etc during the six days' visit to the United States."

The foreign ministry sources said the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to UN in New York booked 61 luxurious rooms in expensive Hotel Grand Hyatt and seven rooms at Hotel Hampton Inn in Manhattan for six days.

Most delegate members will stay in single rooms while media and some eminent personalities and junior officials will stay on twin share basis, according to the programme book published by the foreign ministry yesterday.

They said the cost for each entourage member would be between Tk 3 lakh and Tk 6 lakh including air travel, hotel room rent, daily allowance, local transportation and other charges.

Usually the hotel cost is very high during the UNGA and the hotels booked for

the PM's entourage members are located in a posh area.

In the past nearly five years since she took office Sheikh Hasina paid 47 visits overseas taking along with her large entourage of officials, personal staff and her party's supporters on missions that apparently brought little diplomatic gains for the country.

In this tenure, all her four visits to US was to attend the UNGA, and her government miserably failed to arrange a single bilateral meeting with US President Obama at the White House.

This time the number of delegation members is higher than previous years as the numbers were 81, 102, 87 and 89 in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively.

## ENTOURAGE MEMBERS

The delegation includes Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, Ambassador-At-Large

Mohammad Ziauddin and Prime Minister's Information Affairs Adviser Iqbal Siddique.

There are nine MPs drawn from the grand alliance: Tofail Ahmed, Amir Hossain Amu, Rashed Khan Menon, Anisul Islam Mahmud, Moinuddin Khan Badal, Mujibul Haq, Atiur Rahman Atik, Iqbalur Rahim and Shah Zikrul Ahmed.

Fifteen officials from the PMO, including Principal Secretary Sheikh Md Wahid Uz-Zaman and Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad, are travelling with Hasina.

The delegation includes 18 "eminent personalities", mostly from various front organisations of Awami League like Juba Mohila League, Chhatra League, Mohila Awami League and Krishak League and grand alliance components like Jatiya Sramik Jote and

Ganatantri Party.

One upazila chairman, one municipality chairman, leaders of Peshajibi Nari Samaj, director of BIRDEM, and president and secretary general of Bangladesh non-government primary school teachers' association are among the "eminent personalities".

The PM has chosen five "eminent media personalities" - Munni Saha, head of news of ATN News; Moniur Rahman, chief reporter of ATN Bangla; Alamgir Kabir, senior cameraman of ATN Bangla; Ali Asgar, chief cameraman of Channel-i, and Mahmudul Haq Nayon, staff reporter of The Daily Janakantha at Bogra.

There are 15 delegation members from the foreign ministry and they include Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque, Director General (UN) Said a Muna

Tasneem, Director General (Economic Affairs) Riaz Hamidullah and Chief of Protocol Khandakar Mohammad Talha.

ERD Secretary Abul Kalam Azad, Social Welfare Ministry Secretary Suraiya Begum, Planning Commission Member Shamsul Alam and Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation Chairman Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, Bangladesh Permanent Representative in New York AK Abdul Momen and Ambassador in Washington DC Akramul Qader are also in the delegation.

An 18-member security team, nine media men from the Prime Minister's Press Wing and a 41-member business delegation are in the entourage list. The businessmen usually travel at their own expense.

# Wombs for hire

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An Indian woman to have their children.

Veronica, who is from a large family in Russia, also wanted a family but could not fall pregnant because she had been born with an abnormally small uterus. The couple tried IVF four times, but each attempt failed.

They finally resigned themselves to living without children -- until last summer when they heard of the Akanksha Infertility Clinic, where up to 100 Indian women at any time carry the children of Western clients.

Michael and Veronica quickly signed up.

Britain bans commercial surrogacy to prevent exploitation. But more than a quarter of British couples are now bypassing the law to find surrogate mothers overseas.

India is the most popular country, largely because its clinics charge less than half the rate demanded in

America.

At the centre of this £620million industry is the Akanksha Infertility Clinic, set on a dusty backstreet in Anand, a small city in rural India, some 600 miles from Delhi. It is run by Nayna Patel, a fertility specialist.

Dr Patel admits to running a "baby-making factory", charging clients from 34 countries around \$28,000 (£17,000) to match them with one of dozens of local surrogate mothers.

She pays each of the women about £5,000. Michael and Veronica flew out in March and have met their surrogate mother -- Kokilla, 28.

They were made to sign an agreement promising to collect their children even if they are born with a disability.

Next week Veronica will fly out to stay near the hospital, carrying a case laden with gifts for Kokilla, with whom she wants to keep in touch after the birth.

# False campaign over witness

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Rahman Nizami.

The person, who was seen talking in the clip titled "war crimes trial exposed", claimed that he was compelled to give deposition against Nizami before the tribunal.

But in reality, it was not Nannu who testified against Nizami on June 20.

He himself at a press briefing at the office of the prosecution of the international crimes tribunal on Saturday said he had never given the interview and denied being the man seen in the video clip.

British newspaper Telegraph, however, published a report titled "Islamist leader sentenced to death in Bangladesh" on September 17 in which it questioned the whole trial process based on the video clip.

Though it was not clear who was the person talking in the video clip and who



Nannu, a witness in Nizami case



Fake Nannu who was seen in an YouTube video

took the interview.

In the video clip, the person, wearing a dark trousers, a white-striped shirt and a red-striped tie, were seen sitting on a chair in a relaxed mood. He had a broad forehead but no moustache.

Claiming himself a Jamaat supporter, the person in the clip blamed the government, prime minister and the state minister for home affairs for forcing him to testify against

Nizami.

In the briefing, Nannu told journalists that soon after he had learnt about the report, he went through the newspaper. He also downloaded the video.

"The person in the video is not me. I have been keeping moustache for a long time but the person in the YouTube does not have any moustache," he said.

"I have long curly hair for a long time but the person (in the clip) does

not have so," said the witness.

"The voice of the person in the clip also does not match with my voice," he said adding, "Above all the speech given by the person is not mine."

Nannu also said: "I firmly believe that a quarter, who supports the war criminals, is trying to harm my reputation and has been trying to endanger the life of my family members. I'm praying to the govern-

ment to save me."

Contacted, Tajul Islam, the defence counsel in Nizami's case, said he was cent percent sure that the video clip was of Nannu.

"All the claims made by him in the video are also true," he said, adding, "The scenario is same as in the case of every other witness."

Refuting the defence's claim, prosecutor Tureen Afroz said, "How could the defence be so sure without being involved in the matter? We've seen the video again and again but we did not find any similarity."

The witness himself came to the office of the prosecution on Saturday around 8:00pm and sought help.

"We've been going through different kinds of conspiracy for a long time. It won't cause any hindrance to the Nizami's trial process," she said.

# Trial at final stage

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According to the law, the defence can produce its witnesses after the testimonies of prosecution witnesses. But state-appointed defence counsels could not produce any witness.

After the closing arguments of both the prosecution and the defence, the court will either designate the case as awaiting a verdict or fix a date for delivering it.

Mueen and Ashraf, who are now abroad, are facing 11 charges for alleged involvement in the abduction and killing of 18 intellectuals in the last week of the nine-month-long Liberation War in 1971.

Earlier on the day, state-appointed defence counsels Salma Hai Tuny and Abdus Shukur Khan completed cross-examining Ataur Rahman, one of the two investigation officers of the case, and the court asked the prosecution to start its arguments today.

On May 27, the tribunal decided to hold the trial of "Al-Badr leaders" in absentia because its attempts to have the accused in court had failed. Mueen and Ashraf are living in London and New York, the prosecution said.

Salma told The Daily Star last night that they tried to contact the family of the accused but they did not cooperate. That is why the defence could not produce any witnesses.

"We informed the court about the matter in black and white," said Tuny, adding that they, however, had submitted some documents to defend the accused.

The prosecution has produced 25 witnesses, including two investigation officers of the case, and submitted several documents including newspaper reports to prove the charges. Most of the witnesses were family members of martyred victims.

# Large pit coal

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very big deposit. But we cannot say for sure whether it is bigger than the Gopalganj coal reserve until the survey is completed next year," said GSB Director (Geology) Nehal Uddin, who heads the survey project.

The reserve was originally discovered by a GSB team in 1984 through a survey of water bodies stretching over an area of 60 square kilometres. The team had estimated the pit coal reserve to be only 6.2 million tonnes.

With renewed interest in finding minerals, the GSB undertook a Tk 5.96 crore project in June 2011 to accurately calculate the pit coal reserve there. And a four-member team started the survey in the area on January 25 last year.

The team is comprised of GSB's Additional Director Nazuanun Haq, Mohammad Masum, Anwar Sadat and Md Azahar Hossain.

Nazuanun told The Daily Star that they found layers of dry and wet pit coal up to a depth of 2.5 feet from the surface, drilling holes in an area of four to six square kilometres.

There is a layer of clay followed by a huge deposit of the mineral fathoming up to 30 feet, he said.

"The pit coal is about 7,000 years old, and its samples are being examined in laboratory to determine its chemical composition," said Nazuanun, adding that the coal could be a substitute for gas.

GSB Director Nehal said one third of the survey was yet to be completed, and two teams would be assigned to complete the remaining task by the end of this year.

"The teams will be able to prepare a final report by February or March next year."

The GSB conducted surveys in different areas of Bijoynagar upazila in Brahmanbaria between December 2011 and March last year, and found reserves of around 13 million tonnes of pit coal.

# 78 killed in Pak church

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believe militants have to be tackled by tough military action.

Explosions struck the historic white-stone All Saints Church in the city of Peshawar as hundreds of parishioners, many of them women and children, streamed out of the building.

"I heard two explosions. People started to run. Human remains were strewn all over the church," said one parishioner, who only gave her first name, Margrette.

Her voice breaking with emotion, she said she had not seen her sister since the explosions ripped through the gate area outside the Anglican church.

Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan said the death toll of 78 included 34 women and seven children, in remarks televised live from Peshawar. More than 100 were wounded.

Provincial health minister Shaukat Ali Yousufzai confirmed the death toll and told AFP the provincial government had announced a three-day period of mourning in the state.

The Taliban-linked militant group TTP Jundullah claimed responsibility within hours of the attack.

"They are the enemies of Islam, therefore we target them," said the group's spokesman, Ahmed Marwat. "We will continue our attacks on non-Muslims on Pakistani land."

Christians make up about four percent of Pakistan's population of 180 million and tend to keep a low profile in a country where Sunni Muslim militants frequently bomb targets they see as heretical, including Christians, Sufis and Shias.

The attacks could complicate efforts by Sharif to engage militants in mean-

ingful peace negotiations at a time when roadside bombs, targeted killings and suicide attacks continue unabated.

"The Prime Minister said that terrorists have no religion and targeting innocent people is against the teachings of Islam and all religions," his office said in a statement.

"He added that such cruel acts of terrorism reflect the brutality and inhumane mind set of the terrorists."

Pakistan's Ulema Council, an association of leading Muslim scholars, strongly condemned the church attack and said killing innocent people breaches the tenets of Islam.

Attacks on Christian areas occur sporadically around the country but yesterday's assault, in a densely populated Christian residential area in the old walled city in Peshawar, was the most violent in recent history.

# Downgrading sparks protest

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Under the banner of Diploma Engineering Peshajibi Chhatra-Shikkhak Sangram Parishad, they also held rallies in Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Sylhet and many other places as part of an earlier announced programme for realising their demands.

The demands include elimination of "professional discrimination" against diploma engineers and "timely promotion" of diploma teachers at the polytechnic institutes -- both public and private.

The parishad will submit a memorandum containing the demands to the Speaker on September 25.

Leaders of the parishad yesterday alleged that police attacked their "peaceful demonstrations" in Dinajpur, Comilla and Patuakhali.

In Dhaka, several hun-

dred diploma engineers and teachers and students of polytechnic institutes blocked Satrasta intersection at Tejgaon around 12:00noon, halting traffic for about an hour that resulted in a huge tailback.

They withdrew the blockade following assurance from Home Minister Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir that their demands would be met soon, said the demonstrators and police.

"We want the government to remove the professional discrimination through changes in the gazette concerning diploma engineers issued in 2008," said Idris Ali, president of Bangladesh Polytechnic Shikkhak Samity.

The gazette downgraded the rank of diploma engineers by defining them as supervisors, instead of engineers. "It's a discrimination against diploma engineers," Idris told this correspon-

dent.

Many of them end up being in the same position for 20-25 years, he alleged. "We demand introducing a new system of promotion for diploma engineers so that they are not kept without promotion for years," he said.

Idris said despite repeated instructions from the highest level of the government in this regard, the authorities concerned have not taken any step yet.

AKMA Hamid, president of the Institute of Diploma Engineers, said, "It is [two-point] our longstanding demand but it is yet to be met."

He claimed that around 4 lakh diploma engineers, teachers and students of 400 polytechnic institutes are making the two-point demand.

The situation was brought under control at about 1:00pm.

Yesterday, the demonstrators barricaded Gate No-

2 intersection in Chittagong city, halting traffic on the main road for more than an hour and a half, reported our correspondent.

Around 700 students and teachers of the polytechnic institute and diploma engineers from different government organisations brought out a procession and blocked the intersection at about 11:00am.

Police calmed down the demonstrators and freed the road around 12:30pm.

In Dinajpur, police fired nine tear gas shells as the demonstrators resorted to vandalism in the district town, reported our correspondent.

The demonstrators blocked Dinajpur-Rangpur highway passing by Dinajpur Polytechnic Institute around 11:00am and damaged a battery-run auto-rickshaw. The situation was brought under control around two hours later.