Jamaat-Shibir men on list of prime minister's grant!

Allegation in Gaibandha

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Gaibandha*

The district administration will investigate the alleged inclusion of some BNP and Jamaat-Shibir activists in the victims' list for getting the Prime Minister's grant as Gaibandha Deputy Commissioner Ehsan E Elahi received a written complaint yesterday.

The complainant, Khairul Islam, a local ward unit president of Awami League (AL) in Laxmipur union under Sadar upazila, named four people 'belonging' to BNP and four others to Jamaat-Shibir, as recipients of the grant. He also demanded cancellation of the grant for the eight people.

"The district administration will form a committee to probe the matter," the DC told the journalists yesterday evening.

Contacted, Khairul Islam said the eight people included in the list for prime minister's grant are supporters of BNP and Jamaat.

"I don't want to say the positions held by them in BNP or Jamaat. The authori-ties should investigate the matter. I have prepared the list in presence of UP members and leaders of local Awami League," Khairul told this correspondent.

"Maidul, a Shibir activist, got Tk 20,000 from the prime minister's grant. Mozammel Hazi, another person on the list, is a Jamaat activist. There is a ward level secretary of BNP among the beneficiaries," he said.

On January 8, Khairul Islam filed a case against 17 people for vandalism and arson in the area centring the January 5 polls.

However, none of the eight people, mentioned in his complaint submitted to the DC yesterday, had been named as accused in that case.

Meanwhile, Hafizur Rahman, assistant commissioner (Land) of Gaibandha Sadar, who visited areas in Laxmipur union on Tuesday, said, "I have enrolled as many as 17 victims of the polls-related violence, who had been dropped out from the earlier prepared list of the victims."

SCHOOLGIRL GOLAPI MURDER

Main accused held after two weeks

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Thakurgaon*

Detective Branch (DB) of police on Tuesday night arrested the main accused in the case for killing a schoolgirl at Majhkuria village under Paria union in Baliadangi upazila, after 14 days of the incident.

The arrestee is Ekramul Haque, 21, alias Eakra, son of Md. Mofizul Haque of the same village.

Sub-Inspector of DB police Rowshan Ara told this correspondent that acting on a tip-off, a team led by herself raided the village and arrested Ekramul at about 9:00pm.

Ekramul allegedly killed schoolgirl Golapi, 15, near Bhanor Eidgah in Baliadangi upazila on the night of 13 January.

Ekramul told this correspondent at Thakurgaon DB police office that about 8-9 months ago, he and Golapi, 15, daughter of late Goffar Ali of Bothpaligaon village in Pirganj upazila and student of Class VIII at Roghunathpur High School, came to know each other over cell phone and developed an affair gradually.

As per proposal of Ekramul, Golapi came to Lahiri Bazar in Baliadangi upazila on 13 January.

After passing intimate hours together, Ekramul brought Golapi to a lonely place near Bhanore Eidgah in the evening.

At one stage there they locked in an altercation and following which he strangled Golapi with the help of her scarf and fled the scene.

The next day, local people saw the girl's body lying on the ground and informed the police.

The same day, OC of Baliadangi police station Ruhul Quddus filed a case with the police station in this connection.

Later DB police was given the task to investigate the case.

Letters ask 20 Hindu families to quit area

A CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

At least 20 Hindu families of Palashpole Sabujbagh area in the town on Tuesday received letters that allegedly asked them to leave the area immediately.

Advocate Arun Kuman Sarkar, one of the inhabitants of the area, said he and 19 others of the area received the letters posted from Khulna GPO by a so-called human rights organisation, Satkhira, in the afternoon.

He filed a general diary (GD) with Sadar police station the same day, seeking security of the families.

Advocate Raghunath Mondol, Arun Kuman, Sanaton Shil, Kantilal Sarkar, Bappa Dey, Samir Sarkar, Paritosh Bose, Robin Sarkar, Swapan, Prosenjit Chakraborty, Chitralekha Bose and Mongal Sarkar of Palashpole Sabujbagh area said they received identical letters at around 4:00pm.

The handwritten letter reads: "Sir, it's been a long time and its enough now. Your ruling era is over. You have to leave your kingdom either by selling or abandoning it. You must quit your area, seeking. We won't request you further".

Inamul Haq, officer in-charge of Sadar Police Station, said advocate Arun Kumar filed a GD on behalf of 20 Hindu families of the area on Tuesday evening.

"We are investigating the matter," he said.

PHOTO: STAR

District adminstration in Patuakhali on Tuesday razes to the ground the illegal structures built on *khas* land in Galachipa upazila by Mokbul Khan, brother-in-law of former lawmaker of the district Golam Maula Rony.

MOVE TO RECOVER KHAS LAND IN GALACHIPA

Illegal structures by Rony's brother-in-law bulldozed, finally

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

Galachipa upazila administration has finally started removing illegal structures from the bank of Ronogopaldi River in Ulania and Pardakua areas.

Upazila land office sources said, a gang led by Mokbul Khan, brother-in-law of former lawmaker from Patuakhali-3 (Galachipa-Dashmina) constituency Golam Maula Rony, grabbed around 4.50 acres of *khas* land on the bank of the river in 2009.

The gang also grabbed over eight acres of land on the bank of the river at Pardakua point, sources added.

The upazila administration launched the drive on Tuesday, just two days after Mokbul Khan was sent to jail in two criminal cases.

Mokbul Khan, also chairman of Dakua Union Parishad (UP) under the upazila, and his supporters Nityahori Debnath, Motaleb Gazi and Mahjib Khan filled up the *khas* land in the two areas and erected illegal structures to set up markets.

They also made several hundred plots on the *khas* land (each on a half decimal of land) and have already sold over 100 of the plots, locals said.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Md Mahbubur Rahman said they have decided to remove illegal structures from government land in the two areas.

The upazila administration will recover all *khas* land in the upazila from the grabbers, the UNO added.

PHOTO: STAR

Defying a ban, polythene bags are being used at fish wholesale market at Port Road in Barisal city and dumped in Kirtankhola River after use. The photo was taken a few days ago.

Shirin elected Speaker

Hamid administered oath to the new Speaker and her deputy at his office in the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

On Tuesday, Shirin was elected unopposed in a by-election from Rangpur-6 constituency. She was sworn in as MP yesterday morning. The seat had been vacated by Prime Minister and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina.

Shirin became lawmaker to a seat reserved for women in the immediate past parliament. She had been state minister for women and children affairs in Hasina's previous government before she was elected the country's first woman Speaker in April 2013.

LGRD Minister Syed Ashraful Islam and Industries Minister Amir Hossain Amu proposed and seconded respectively Shirin's candidacy for the Speaker's post.

Lawmakers elected her by voice vote.

Meanwhile, Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed and Chief Whip ASM Feroz proposed and seconded respectively Rabbi's candidacy for the deputy speaker's post.

He too was elected by voice vote.

Rabbi, who has been elected MP six times since 1986, was chairman of a parliamentary standing committee in the last parliament.

In her inaugural speech, Shirin said the 10th parliament had added a new chapter to the journey of parliamentary democracy in the country.

"All power belongs to the people. This parliament will play an effective role in ensuring transparency and accountability of the government," she said.

"Through this function, parliament will be transformed into the focal point of all activities and centre of the people's expectations," hopes Shirin.

Yaba recovered from Naf

UNB, *Cox's Bazar*

Bangladesh Coast Guard recovered 20,000 pieces of Yaba tablet in a drive on the river Naf in Teknaf upazila on Tuesday.

Coast Guard headquarters sources said, on secret information, the law enforcers conducted the drive at sluice gate no. 1 of the river at about 1:00pm and recovered 20,000 pieces of the contraband tablet worth about Tk 1.4 crore.

Sunken launch salvaged

No bodies found

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

The single-decker launch MV Shathil-1 was salvaged on Tuesday, a day after it capsized in Lohalia River in the town.

However, Divers searched inside it, but no body was found in the vessel that capsized near the district town, said Md Shahidullah, joint director of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA).

Salvage vessel of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) MV Rustom reached the spot at 7:00pm on Tuesday and carried out its operation for about four hours. BIWTA and district adminstration officials and police were present.

Earlier, a three-member team, comprised of joint directors Shahidullah, Abul Bashar, and Ashraf Hossain of BIWTA, was formed to salvage the sunken launch.

The accident took place as a Dhaka-bound double-decker launch hit MV Shathil-1 around 6:30pm on Monday when the vessel was being loaded with fish in the river in Board Office area under Sadar upazila.