

Quizzical raid

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As the BGB men were leaving the house for Chakoria Police Station with the detainees around 10:00am, Nandoram pleaded that he is a licensed gold businessman.

He said he also lends money to other businessmen as a pawnbroker.

At that time, a journalist who tried to take photos was assaulted by the border guards. They also snatched his camera, reports our Cox's Bazar correspondent.

The arrest left locals and jewelers fuming. They said Nandoram is an honest businessman.

Around noon, they laid a siege to the police station, triggering the clash with BGB.

Protesting the arrest, Cox's Bazar District Jewellery Samity called an indefinite strike from yesterday.

Lt Col Khandaker Saiful Alam, commander of BGB-17 Battalion in Cox's Bazar, said they were examining the passports and papers seized in the raid.

Nandoram has made several trips to India and he might have been involved in gold smuggling, added Saiful.

BGB Subedar Md Mozammel Haque filed a case with Chakoria Police Station in this connection.

General Secretary of Chakoria Jewellery Samity Shulal Kumar Sushil said Nandoram is a trusted man and he often lends money to gold traders against refundable deposit of ornaments.

"He is no smuggler and there is no smuggled gold in his possession."

Govt plans

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She said this when Michael Sommer, president of the International Trade Union Confederation, called on her at her parliament office.

Hasina told Sommer that the first initiatives in all countries are always unplanned but later they take a concrete shape through planned measures.

She said the government was making sincere efforts to improve the working environment of RMG workers, the PM's special assistance Mahbulul Hoque Shakil quoted her as saying while briefing reporters after the meeting.

If the buyers pay higher prices for RMG items, it would be helpful for the government to put pressure on garment factory owners to increase wages of workers, she said.

Sommer, also chairman of the German Confederation of Trade Unions, highly appreciated the government's initiative after the Rana Plaza disaster. He said the efforts were acclaimed across the world.

He praised the government's recent move to amend the labour law and appoint factory inspectors. "These are the positive moves of the Bangladesh government for the welfare of workers," he said.

German Ambassador Albrecht Conze and Ambassador-at-Large M Ziauddin were present during the meeting.

Honey bees

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pesticides, radioactive substances, reactive oxygen or nitrogen and fertilisers largely endanger honey bees, he added.

Pesticides might kill bees quickly or slowly, which was even worse, he said. If not immediately killed, bees carry the contaminated pollen back to their colony where it enters their food chain and kills many more, Dr Mahbub added.

Introduction of such toxic chemicals to a bee's environment by human activities results in abnormal or unusual behaviour, disorientation and even deaths among the species.

Mobile towers and networks may also affect bees and even cause deaths, while climatic condition or fluctuation of temperature with foggy weather may kill them.

Experts put emphasis on conducting more research to find out the reasons behind the deaths and decline of honey bees. They also advise the block supervisors of the agriculture department to instruct farmers to use insecticides in the afternoon as bees forage on crops and fruits until noon.

BNP activists

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However, Enamur told The Daily Star that there was a heated exchange between the BNP leaders and police, but he did not say anything about Biplob's escape.

Police arrested Hasibul Ibna Sayed, pro-BNP chairman of Bangram union parishad, on the same charge, a few minutes before proceeding for Biplob.

Gold seized at Ctg airport, again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs intelligence officials seized 53 gold bars, weighing 6.18 kg and worth around Tk 2.65 crore, from a passenger of Biman Bangladesh Airlines at Shah Amanat International Airport in Chittagong yesterday.

They also detained the passenger, Anis Chowdhury, who hails from Boalkhali upazila of Chittagong. He arrived on flight BG-048 from Dubai around 7:30am.

Officials searched Anis and

recovered the gold bars hidden inside his socks, said Nahid Nawshad Mukul, assistant director of Airport Customs Intelligence.

Since January 1, customs officials and law enforcers seized around 260kg gold worth over Tk 100 crore.

Officials say the alarming rise in gold smuggling via Bangladesh has resulted mainly from import duty hike on gold in India. Smuggling syndicates are using Bangladesh as a transit point to smuggle the yellow metal to the neighbouring country.

Subhan, his cohorts

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Nasim, now a local journalist, yesterday identified Subhan at the dock, as he concluded the almost two-hour testimony against the Jamaat leader.

Subhan is now facing nine charges of crimes against humanity and genocide that he allegedly committed during the war.

Defence counsel Mizanur Islam yesterday asked the witness only two questions before the three-member tribunal led by Justice Obaidul Hassan with member justices Md Mozibur Rahman Miah, and Md Shahinur Islam adjourned the case proceedings.

Nasim is to be cross-examined further today.

The witness said as a Chhatra Union leader, he had taken part in the 11-pont movement in 1968-69. In 1971, he was an SSC candidate and leader of Ishwardi Chhatra Sangram Parishad.

He said that on March 25, 1971, the Pakistan army had swooped on Pabna Police Lines, but soon retreated in the face of resistance from the police and locals. On the 29th, the locals killed several Pakistani army personnel, including a major.

Pabna was free until April 10, 1971, said Nasim, adding that the following day the Pakistan army returned and unleashed violence on their way to Pabna Sadar. They set up camps in different places of the district.

Shaken up by the brutality, Nasim took shelter in Ishwardi Kendriyo Jame Masjid where around 200 people, including his maternal uncle Moazzem Hossain, brother-in-law Matleb Ahmed Khan and nephew Nazmul Haque Khan Helal, had already taken refuge.

Nasim said his brother-in-law and others had requested him to leave the mosque since he directly resisted the Pakistan army in Pabna. But, the freedom fighter decided to spend the night there.

The next afternoon, Imam of the mosque announced that the army and [pro-Pakistan] leaders would visit the mosque. Before the Asr prayers (around 5:00pm), Subhan did come there and said his prayers.

"When done, he [Subhan] announced that the Pakistan army and local leaders would come there to test the Iman [faith] of the refugees, and that they would detain those who failed the test. He said,

"Work for Pakistan with Iman, and there won't be any problem," Nasim testified.

The next day, after Fajr prayers, Nasim secretly went back home. His house was almost seven kilometres from the mosque.

"But my parents asked me to bring my brother-in-law and nephew from Ishwardi," said Nasim. Although fully aware of the risk, he on April 17 got on a bicycle and secretly reached the eastern side of the mosque.

Nasim said near the mosque, he had seen some Bihari people and a car by which Subhan had come to say his prayers the other day.

"After some time, I saw Maulana Subhan and his Jamaat accomplices Khoda Box, Ismail, Abdul Hamid alias Hares Uddin, Ishaq Ali and Abdur Rakib enter the mosque and drag my uncle out," added Nasim.

He said they had taken his uncle near a coal depot, about 300-foot from where Nasim was hiding. Several Bihari men wielded with rifles and swords followed Subhan and his accomplices.

"I saw Maulana Subhan Shaheb fold his panjabi sleeves, and someone passing him a sword. He hacked my uncle with the sword," said Nasim, adding that Subhan's cohorts then stabbed his uncle to death.

Witnessing the killing, Nasim returned home, but his parents kept urging him to bring his brother-in-law and nephew back home. So, he went to the mosque again the following day.

This time too, he found Subhan and his accomplices there.

"From behind a bush in the mosque's backyard, I saw Maulana [Subhan] and his cohorts taking my brother-in-law and nephew to the coal depot. At first, Subhan stabbed my brother-in-law with a sword and then his cohorts started using their swords indiscriminately on the two until they died," said an emotion-choked Nasim.

After the incident, he went to India. He took training there to fight with the Pakistan army and avenge the deaths of his relatives.

Nasim said he on his return had heard a rumour that Subhan and Motiur Rahman Nizami, another war crimes accused, had fled to Pakistan and that Subhan in collusion with the Pakistan army had killed around 5,000 people of Ishwardi during the war.

Govt starts probe

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within 15 working days, Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque told The Daily Star last night.

"After getting the investigation report, we will take actions against the people involved," he added.

The shields, given to foreign friends and organisations for their outstanding contribution to the country's Liberation War, was supposed to have 11.664 grams of gold and 350 grams of silver, according to a report run by a Bangla daily on Sunday.

However, following the tests Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institute (BSTI) carried out in 2012, it was found that the shields only had 2.363 grams of gold and an alloy was used instead of silver.

A BSTI deputy director had told the Bangla daily that the government took no action against the shield supplying company Amecon despite having the report about the shields being of lesser material worth.

A month after the delivery of the shields, Amecon received full payment for them, not according to the value of the alleged substandard products they supplied.

Minister Mozammel told The Daily Star Sunday night, "I have already asked the officials of my ministry to get all related documents ready. I will go through them. Actions will be taken against the people responsible immediately if the documents prove them guilty."

He had said a probe body would be formed if the paper trail failed to identify the guilty people. "Deception with foreign friends is a huge matter," he added.

A total of 338 foreign friends and organisations were given the awards in seven phases during the tenure of previous Awami League-led government.

Out of the 338 shields, Amecon supplied 278 and who supplied the remaining 60 could not be known. The shields were purchased without any tender.

Interestingly, Ershad Ali, claiming to be the manager of Amecon, told The Daily Star over the phone that they had prepared the shields in accordance with the Liberation War ministry's order. "We used 15 grams of gold in the shields," he said.

Cabinet Secretary M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan on Sunday said, "Although the functions were jointly organised by the Cabinet Division, the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Cabinet Division only looked after the citations of the awardees, their distribution, the guest lists, and planning the seating arrangements."

Interestingly, the then state minister for Liberation War Affairs Ministry Captain (ret'd) AB Tajul Islam dismissed the allegation saying that what the Bangla paper reported was not true.

"I myself looked after the shield made for honouring Indira Gandhi," he said.

Rab microbus 'torched by criminals' in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Criminals torched a microbus of Rab in Madhupur Rubber Garden in Tangail yesterday afternoon.

Golam Mostofa Mondol, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Madhupur Police Station, said a plainclothes team of Rab-11 from Jamalpur had come to the remote Fulbagchala area in Madhupur upazila by a microbus around 4:30pm to arrest one Helal Member.

A group of criminals set fire to the vehicle when the Rab members left the microbus unguarded to nab Helal, he quoted locals as saying.

"The Rab men, however, did not inform the Madhupur police of the incident," the police official said, adding that on information from locals, they had gone to the spot to look into the matter, he added.

ADP allocation

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Later, the planning ministry on request from the communications ministry slashed Tk 510 crore from the allocation and diverted the fund to road projects.

Following yesterday's decision, the revised allocation for the Padma bridge project would stand at Tk 5,310 crore.

A finance ministry official said the allocation would remain on paper only as the progress made so far in the bridge project shows that the money would not be required in this FY.

According to planning ministry statistics, in the first eight months of the current FY, Tk 362 crore or 5.28 percent of the total allocation for the project has been spent.

In the revised budget, the government's bank borrowing has increased on paper due to more allocation. But the ministries would not be able to spend the allocated amount, mentioned the official.

The ministries, he added, might at best spend Tk 50,000 crore in the current FY, which would keep the budget deficit within the target set in the original budget.

In yesterday's meeting, Tk 5,000 crore was allocated for ministries, of which the highest Tk 875 crore went for the Local Government Division, followed by the Railway Division Tk 475 crore, education ministry Tk 475 crore, primary and mass education ministry Tk 375 crore, Rural Development and Cooperatives Division Tk 300 crore, water resources ministry Tk 375 crore, Roads Division Tk 350 crore, Power Division Tk 262 crore, Energy Division Tk 270 crore and agriculture ministry Tk 160 crore.

A heroic

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camera, the little one is finally plucked to safety by his brave father. Photographer Evan Schiller took the spectacular shots in November while he and his wife Lisa Holzwarth were on a game drive in northern Botswana's Selinda Camp.

Holzwarth later wrote about the experience in a post on her blog, The LEO Chronicles.

She explains how the big cat enthusiasts were watching a leopard when they noticed it becoming anxious.

"Then the baboons started screaming as four large lionesses had emerged from the tall grass and rushed at the baboons," Holzwarth wrote.

Three baboons suddenly attempted to 'make a run for it' to another group of trees. Two arrived unscathed but a third got snapped up in the jaws of a lioness.

"We noticed a little baby (less than a month old) slowly disengaging from its mother's dying body," she explained.

The baby baboon immediately tried to find safety in a tree. At that point, the lionesses noticed the baby baboon.

However, they didn't go in for the kill. Instead, one of the lionesses began playing 'cat and mouse' with the little one and allowed the baby to 'suckle' for a while.

But then the lionesses became distracted by two male lions, giving the baboon's father the opportunity to rescue the helpless infant.

One killed

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trains from other districts to Chittagong, however, operated as usual, he added.

A four-member committee headed by Mahbulul will investigate the incident.

RU deadlock

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demanding proper investigation into the case.

RU Vice Chancellor Prof Muhammad Mizanuddin told The Daily Star that classes will resume soon.

RU Registrar Prof Entajul Haque filed a general diary with Motihar Police Station in connection with the murder on Sunday night, he said.

Though witnesses and campus sources suggest the involvement of BCL men in the killing, police have arrested two Shibir activists in this connection.

On Sunday, law enforcers arrested the Shibir men on the basis of a murder case.

RU BCL Vice-President Mehedi Hasan filed the case with Motihar Police Station around 12:30 am on Saturday.

However, none of the two arrestees are students of the university.

In the case statement, Mehedi alleged that Shibir had threatened Rustam several times before the killing.

On Saturday, witnesses told The Daily Star that soon after the shooting of Rustam, two BCL activists were seen by his side, with one of them holding a pistol.

A giant leap backward

FROM PAGE 1

of the 45 parliamentary bodies, which are constitutionally empowered to play a pivotal role in the discharging of parliament's oversight functions.

The AL finalised the formation of the committees last week by making its own MPs chiefs of all the parliamentary bodies. Of them, 39 committees are on the same number of ministries.

This has annoyed even the AL's handmaiden main opposition Jatiya Party that had expected some chairmen posts for its MPs.

"It's a deviation from the convention that began in last parliament," said Jatiya Party Secretary General ABM Ruhul Amin Hawlader. "We will meet the prime minister to this effect."

Not even any of the MPs belonging to the Workers Party and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, two components of the ruling AL-led alliance, was made chief of any standing committee. The two MPs of the component parties who were chiefs of two parliamentary bodies in the last parliament have, however, been made ministers this time.

The 16 independent MPs have also faced a similar fate. Opposition MPs have, however, been made members of different parliamentary bodies.

Parliamentary affairs expert Prof Nizam Ahmed, a teacher at Chittagong University,

thinks the denial of any chairman posts to opposition MPs has proved that the ruling AL does not consider the JP as a genuine opposition in parliament.

The AL thinks the JP is a part of the government as three of its MPs are ministers, he observed.

"But the truth is the Jatiya Party is at least an official opposition. So, some of its MPs should have been made chiefs of the parliamentary bodies for continuation of the convention born in the last parliament," Nizam asserted.

Sheikh Hasina, leader of the House, picked the MPs who will be leading the parliamentary bodies and accordingly the chief whip proposed the formation of the bodies. The House passed them by voice vote.

Of the 50 committees, the speaker was ex-officio chiefs of four committees. The deputy speaker headed one.

By refusing to give even the handmaiden opposition party any chairman posts, the AL has also brought into question the government's sincerity in making sacrifices to achieve something better.

This has also undermined the AL's electoral pledge to take all necessary measures to make effective a House constituted through a controversial and voter-less January 5 election held amid a boycott by the BNP-led alliance.

Bangladesh, India

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upper house of the parliament ... it was placed in the upper house with a deliberate purpose so that it does not expire with the expiry of the term of the lower house."

On a question about Tipaimukh Dam Project, the envoy said Bangladesh and India discussed the issue quite elaborately and set up a group under the joint rivers commission.

"We have assured your government that India will do nothing which will adversely impact on Bangladesh."

Responding to a question about the current status of the project, he said, "To my knowledge, the construction work (of the project) has not started."

On trade issues, he said India wants to give Bangladesh more facilities, but narrowness of Bangladesh's export basket was a problem as it creates trade imbalance.

BIISS Director General Maj Gen Shafiuddin Ahmed also spoke on the occasion with Chairman of BIISS Board of Governors Munshi Faiz Ahmad in the chair.

GENOCIDE COMMEMORATIONS

Rwanda president slams France

AFP, Kigali

Rwandan President Paul Kagame took a thinly-veiled swipe at France yesterday, saying it was impossible to "change the facts" about the genocide 20 years ago.

"The passage of time should not obscure the facts, lessen the responsibility, or turn victims into villains," he said in a speech

during commemorations marking the 20th anniversary of the genocide.

"People cannot be bribed or forced into changing their history, and no country is powerful enough, even when they think they are, to change the facts... After all, les faits sont tets (facts are facts)," he said, saying the final phrase in French and drawing loud applause in the national stadium.



Tender Invitation

Islamic Development Bank-Bangladesh Islamic Solidarity Educational Wakf (IDB-BISEW) invites proposals from interested well-equipped reputed firms for providing security services to IDB Bhaban Complex. Interested firms should have experience in providing complete security services to high-rise commercial building of international standard/embassy/5-star hotel or in any other KPI.

To collect tender document please contact at the following address:

IDB-BISEW, IDB Bhaban (4th Floor), E/8-A, Rokeya Sharani, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka 1207

You may also visit www.idb-bisew.org for further information.

Deadline for collecting the tender document: 20 April 2014



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Ashuganj, Brahmanbaria-3402, Bangladesh

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E-mail: procurement@apscl.com, Website: www.apscl.com

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি	
০১) মন্বাপন / বিভাগ	১) বিদ্যুৎ, জ্বালানী ও খনিজ সম্পদ মন্ত্রণালয় / বিদ্যুৎ বিভাগ
০২) প্রকল্প / প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম	২) আশুগঞ্জ পাওয়ার স্টেশন কোম্পানী লিমিটেড (এপিএসসিএল)
০৩) সম্বাহক সরকার নাম ও জেলা	৩) আশুগঞ্জ পাওয়ার স্টেশন কোম্পানী লিমিটেড, আশুগঞ্জ, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়ীয়া
০৪) দরপত্র আহ্বানের নাম	৪) আশুগঞ্জ পাওয়ার স্টেশন কোম্পানী লিমিটেড (এপিএসসিএল)-এর বি.টাইপ আবাসিক এলাকার বাউন্ডারীর দক্ষিণ দিকের সীউ জমি জরাজি করা।
০৫) আহ্বানের সূত্র নং ও তারিখ	৫) এপিএসসিএল/প্রকিউরমেন্ট-০২/২০১৪/৪৮৭, তারিখ ১/০৩/০৪/২০১৪ই
০৬) সরেবে পদ্ধতি	৬) খোলা দরপত্র
০৭) বাজেট ও টাকার উৎস	৭) জিএনবি
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ii) দরপত্র দাখিল বিক্রির দর (প্রমাণ)	২) সরকারী প্রথম কোম্পানী (উৎপাদন), বিজিও, গ্রেডালা ভবন (২য় তলা), মতিঝিল কা/৫, ঢাকা
iii) দরপত্র দাখিল দাখিল ও খোলার স্থান	৩) ব্যবস্থাপক (প্রকিউরমেন্ট), এপিএসসিএল, আশুগঞ্জ, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়ীয়া-এর দরপত্র
১৩) বি-টাইপের মিষ্টি (স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়)	৪) প্রমোজা নহে
১৪) দরপত্র দাতার যোগ্যতা	৫) প্রকৃত ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠান (দরপত্র দাখিলে বর্ণিত শর্ত মতোকরে)
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২২) দরপত্র আহ্বানের নাম ও পদবী	১৩) মোঃ রফিকুল্লাহ, ব্যবস্থাপক (প্রকিউরমেন্ট), এপিএসসিএল
২৩) দরপত্র আহ্বানের ঠিকানা	১৪) আশুগঞ্জ পাওয়ার স্টেশন কোম্পানী লিমিটেড (এপিএসসিএল), আশুগঞ্জ, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়ীয়া-৩৪০২
২৪) দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ	১৫) বি.টাইপ আবাসিক এলাকার বাউন্ডারীর দক্ষিণ দিকের সীউ জমি জরাজি করা।
২৫) দরপত্র দাখিলের সময়	১৬) ২৩/০৪/২০১৪ই তারিখ বেলা ১২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত
২৬) দরপত্র আহ্বানের নাম ও পদবী	১৭) মোঃ রফিকুল্লাহ, ব্যবস্থাপক (প্রকিউরমেন্ট), এপিএসসিএল
২৭) দরপত্র আহ্বানের ঠিকানা	১৮) আশুগঞ্জ পাওয়ার স্টেশন কোম্পানী লিমিটেড (এপি