



PHOTO: STAR

Suchitra Sen's ancestral home, occupied by a Jamaat-backed organisation, at Gopalpur in Pabna.

## 8 arrestees

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Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members arrested the eight from different parts of the country recently, and paraded them before the media at Uttara Rab headquarters in the capital on Wednesday.

The arrestees were later handed over to Detective Branch (DB) of police in Mymensingh.

Mazedur Rahman, an officer-in-charge of DB, said they produced the detainees before Cognizance Court-4 on Thursday, seeking 10 days' remand for each.

The court fixed yesterday for hearing on the remand prayer, and sent the arrestees to Mymensingh jail.

After hearing the prayer, Farzana Yeasmin, judge of the cognizance court, yesterday granted each of the arrestees 10 days' remand.

## Modi questions

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Bihar and western Uttar Pradesh.

"I am putting serious allegations against you. You have failed to stop rigging and violence in these areas. False cases have been filed against our candidate Babul Supriyo. Election Commission's work is to protect people. I request you to fulfill your responsibilities in the right way."

He said that the poll watchdog has all the government machinery at its disposal and has more powers than even the Prime Minister.

"Democracy doesn't work like this; I know that in the elections on 30th, how much rigging took place. Will this game go on?" he asked.

Modi recalled that he had said in Uttar Pradesh also that in some areas problems are going to happen.

"But Election Commission could do nothing. Today I am saying it again that in Bengal, Bihar and western Uttar Pradesh the same thing is going to happen. Is it not the responsibility of the Election Commission that elections should be peaceful, there should be no rigging, no violence?" he said.

Election Commission had taken serious note of the Gujarat chief minister's violation of the electoral laws, under which no person can display any election matter or address a meeting in a polling booth on the day of election, and an FIR against Modi following its direction.

Modi had told a poll campaign at Tirupati that he had not committed any offence.

## UN chides donors for not enough aid to Syria refugees

AFP, Zaatar Refugee Camp

The United Nations yesterday rebuked donors for not doing enough to help millions of Syrian refugees in the region as well as host countries, saying "massive" aid is needed.

"These countries received about three million registered and unregistered Syrian refugees... the truth is that this enormous impact is not being fully recognised by the international community," UN High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres said at a meeting of senior diplomats and officials from Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon and Turkey.

"Let me be very clear, there has been very little support," he said at northern Jordan's Zaatar refugee camp, which is home to more than 100,000 Syrians.

"There must be massive support from the international community at the level of government budgets and development projects related to education, health, water and infrastructure."

## SUCHITRA SEN'S ANCESTRAL HOME

# SC clears way for govt to recover it

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday cleared the way for the government to recover and preserve the ancestral house of Bangla film icon Suchitra Sen in Pabna.

Imam Gazzali Trust, a Jamaat-e-Islami-backed organisation, has been occupying Suchitra Sen's first ancestral home at Gopalpur in the town for more than two decades. The organisation runs a kindergarten named Imam Gazzali Institute there.

Suchitra, whose original name was Krishna Dasgupta, left Pabna along with her family a few months before the partition of the subcontinent in 1947 and settled in India.

The Appellate Division yesterday dismissed an appeal filed by Imam Gazzali Trust challenging a High Court verdict that had directed the government to take over the house of the silver screen legend.

The apex court also rejected a prayer of Imam Gazzali Trust to order the government to allocate it an alternative piece of land in Pabna to run the school.

Additional Attorney General Murad Reza and Deputy Attorney General Ekramul Haque Tutul told The Daily Star that there was no legal bar for the government to evict Imam Gazzali Trust from that house after the verdict.

They also said the government could possess the land for protecting and preserving Suchitra Sen's memories there.

Deputy Commissioner Kazi Ashraf Uddin of Pabna said his office would take necessary steps in this regard after receiving the SC order.

Imam Gazzali Trust's lawyer barrister Emran Siddiq told The Daily Star that he had not received instructions from his client about their next course of legal action.

Sultana, principal of Imam Gazzali Institute, said they would comply with the SC order, reports our Pabna correspondent. The kindergarten was found closed during a visit yesterday.

Following two separate writ petitions, the HC on August 21, 2011, directed Imam Gazzali Trust to forgo

the possession of the house in two months and also directed the government to take necessary steps to safeguard and protect the memory of the legendary actress.

One of the petitions was filed by Imam Gazzali Trust in 2009 challenging a government order asking it to leave Suchitra's home.

The other petition, filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh in July, 2011, was regarding protection and maintenance of the house.

The Jamaat-backed organisation later filed an appeal with the SC challenging the HC verdict.

After holding hearing on the appeal, an Appellate Division bench of Justice Surendhra Kumer Sinha, Justice Md Abdul Wahhab Miah and Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik yesterday affirmed the HC verdict.

People of Pabna have hailed the SC order, reports our Pabna correspondent.

"The residents of Pabna are delighted as the ancestral home of Suchitra Sen is going to be free according to the Supreme Court order," said Md Saiful Haque Chunnun, president of Suchitra Sen Smrity Shangrakhhan Parishad.

In 1987, the district administration leased out Suchitra's home to Imam Gazzali Trust for a year but the organisation continued its occupation by renewing the lease every year.

A cross section of people of the district have been staging demonstrations to free the house from the occupation. Cultural activists and local elites formed Suchitra Sen Smrity Shangrakhhan Parishad in 2009.

Suchitra Sen, the legendry film actress of the subcontinent, was born on April 6, 1931, at her maternal grandfather's house at Bangabari of Sirajganj in Pabna. She passed her early life on Gopalpur Hem Sagor Lane of Pabna town.

The 0.21-acre house located on Gopalpur Hem Sagor Lane went under government custody as vested property.

Suchitra passed away on January 17 in Kolkata at the age of 82.

## Destiny high-ups

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tree plantation and multilevel marketing wings.

In July 2012, the ACC filed two cases against 22 Destiny officials on the charge of laundering Tk 4,200 crore.

After running probe for nearly 22 months, two ACC investigators – Mozahar Ali Sarder and Tawfiqul Islam – submitted charge sheets to the Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court yesterday.

Destiny top officials misappropriated about Tk 4,200 crore through its tree plantation project and the cooperative firm, and laundered money abroad, say the charge sheets.

The officials embezzled the money in the name of paying salaries, honorarium, commission, incentives and promotional costs. They transferred the money to their bank accounts and those of the Group's 20 companies.

They misappropriated Tk 2,433 crore from 17.5 lakh investors by selling 6.18 crore saplings under the tree plantation project. In reality, the group planted only 32 lakh trees, according to ACC findings.

The company lured people into investing money in the plantation project saying if anyone invested Tk 8,000 under the Golden Package, the person would get Tk 20,000 after six years, and an investment of Tk 5,000 under the Silver Package would fetch Tk 30,000 after 12 years.

The DMCSL swindled 8.5 lakh investors out of Tk 1,861 crore by promising them high interest rate – up to 46 percent, found the investigation.

The Group siphoned off around Tk 100 crore to Hong Kong in the name of

importing electrical and electronic goods, cosmetics and agro products, and leasing aircraft for Destiny Air System. In fact, no goods were imported and no aircraft was leased by the company.

Destiny officials laundered the money with the help of Hong Kong national Noel G Kerry, a business partner of Rafiqul, the probe found.

Rafiqul, Hossain and Harun were arrested after the cases were filed.

Later, Harun obtained bail from the High Court, but Rafiqul and Hossain were not granted bail. Two other Destiny officials Lt Col (ret) Didarul Alam and Rezaur Rahman Osmani are also in prison.

The other 46 accused, including Rafiqul's wife Farha Diba, a director of the Group, are on the run. The investigators appealed to the court for issuing arrest warrants against them.

## Death toll

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formed to find out the reason behind the mishap.

The committee has been asked to submit its findings to the shipping ministry within seven days, Patuakhali Port Officer Badrul Alam told The Daily Star.

Local administration has started distributing Tk 20,000 to the family of each of the victims for funeral expenses, said Amitav Sarkar, deputy commissioner of Patuakhali.

The launch sank around 2:30pm at Kalagasia while it was going to Patuakhali from Golachipa upazila.

# Khaleda blames govt for killings

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country like it was done during the post-Liberation War period," she said at a hunger strike held at the Jatiya Press Club yard.

The BNP's Dhaka city unit organised the eight-hour-long hunger strike from 9:00am as part of the party's protest against filing "false" cases against Khaleda and her son Tarique Rahman, and incidents of abductions, disappearances and killings.

Top leaders of the BNP-led 19-party alliance, Bikolpodhara Bangladesh and other parties expressed solidarity with the programme.

In her 30-minute speech, Khaleda called upon the civil society, professional bodies and political parties to take to the street to "save the country's people and democracy".

She claimed that the people were prepared and had been demanding tougher programmes to oust Sheikh Hasina's government.

"But we are giving time to the government hoping that good sense will prevail and they will hold a free, fair and inclusive election through discus-

sion," Khaleda said.

The former premier warned that if peaceful programmes like human chains, hunger strikes, rallies and processions failed [to stop ongoing abduction and disappearances], she would resort to tougher programmes.

Referring to tearful Hasina Begum and Miss Ruma, who during the hunger strike appealed to the government to bring their missing son and husband back, Khaleda said, "We don't want to see tears anymore. Now we will have to wage resistance against the government's criminal activities."

On the recent seven murders in Narayanganj, Khaleda alleged that "criminals" in ruling Awami League, Chhatra League and Jubo League were involved in murders across the country.

She also raised a question as to why Rapid Action Battalion and police had raided Nur Hossain's house on Saturday seven days after Nazrul Islam and others were abducted from Narayanganj.

The BNP chief alleged that the government was using police and Rab for

party purposes and officials hailing from a particular region were being preferred.

Hinting at those Rab and police officials, Khaleda said the AL government must step down one day. "Where will you go then? You must be accountable for all your misdeeds -- the murders you have committed and who ordered you to do so?"

**ERSHAD 'MURDERED' ZIA**  
Khaleda, wife of late president Ziaur Rahman, yesterday lambasted Jatiya Party chief HM Ershad terming him the "killer" of her husband and Maj Gen Mohammad Abul Manzur, who was assassinated in Chittagong in June 1981.

This was for the first time in many years that Khaleda accused Ershad of killing her husband, said BNP standing committee member Lt Gen (ret) Mahbubur Rahman.

"Ershad has to be tried. Why the verdict [of Manzur murder case where Ershad is one of the main accused] was postponed?" said Khaleda, adding that the verdict was postponed to keep Ershad with the government.

## Deadline over

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three-member committee on April 7 and asked it to submit a report within 15 working days from April 10.

Talking to The Daily Star, Dhaka Divisional Commissioner Zillar Rahman, the probe committee chief, said the investigators were at the final stage of the probe and that they required a couple of days more to submit the report.

"We are talking to all people concerned, including the previous state minister of the liberation war affairs ministry, government officials and Amecon authority [that supplied the shields], and so we need some time."

Zillar, however, declined to comment about the findings before submitting the report.

The ministry formed the probe committee after Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institute (BSTI) had found that every shield had only 2.363 grams of gold and 466.237 grams of brass instead of 22.5 grams of gold and 300 grams of silver.

A sample of the shields was sent to BSTI for test in October 2012.

Recently the investigation committee collected a shield from British citizen Julian Francis, a foreign friend honoured by the government, who is now working in Dhaka, and sent it to Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission. The commission did not find any gold in the shield, according to a report published in a Bangla daily.

Contacted, he said the honour that Bangladesh gave to its foreign friends was unique and it did not matter whether it was a certificate or a shield.

"It is, however, embarrassing for the government, especially for the president and the prime minister, who handed over the crests," Francis told The Daily Star. If somebody made money through corrupt practices, he should be punished under the law of the land.

Amecon that supplied most of the shields was paid the amount fixed as per the design. It got around Tk 2.63 lakh for each shield, ministry sources said.

After coming to office in 2009, the Awami League-led government initiated a move to honour foreign friends and organisations for their valuable contributions to the Liberation War in 1971. The ministry prepared 338 shields, of them 278 were supplied by Amecon and the rest by Ms Moshinul Hasan.

## Panama to elect a new leader amid close three-way race

AFP, Panama City

Voters in Panama went to the polls yesterday to pick the country's next president, after a campaign that revealed few major policy differences among the top candidates.

The campaign has gone down to the wire, with polls giving any of the three leading contenders a reasonable shot at victory.

Panamanians will choose among ruling party candidate Jose Domingo Arias, opposition politician Juan Carlos Navarro and Vice President Juan Carlos Varela -- a slate of options that leaves many people here shrugging their shoulders.

"Whoever wins, I still have to go to work on Monday," said Manuel Dominguez, a sidewalk merchant who makes his living selling batteries and TV remotes in the heart of Panama City, the capital.

Polls open across the country at 7:00 am (1300 GMT), with the first returns expected to trickle in about three hours later.

The winner of the seven-candidate race will take office July 1.

## Yes, they are the culprits

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He went on, "Hashu is *Boba Dakait* [silent dacoit]. I know him. He is the No 1 criminal. Money flows from him. His account should be checked to know where the money goes."

"I believe those accused in the case were involved in the killing ... They should be arrested immediately."

The Daily Star could not verify the claims.

Sources say Nur, Iqbal and Hashu were close to Shamim. They unleashed terror in Narayanganj and amassed money under his patronisation.

It was reflected in his speech as well. "It's true I believed Nur Hossain was my man," he said. "But I was proven wrong when I got a CD."

The ruling party leader claimed the CD contained a conversation during a meeting of Nur Hossain, former Chhatra league leader Sufian and one of his aides named Selim.

He said the trio at the meeting verbally abused his brothers. "These are the people who planned to kill Nazrul."

Little could be known about Selim.

According to Shamim, Sufian is a contractor and No 2 criminal of Narayanganj.

He, however, did not give any copy of the disk to journalists. A reporter of The Daily Star got a copy from a source but nothing in it was audible.

Responding to a query about Shamim Osman's claim of having a CD of the murder plan, State Minister for Home Asaduzzaman Khan said the ministry was yet to collect it.

"We talked with Shamim in this

regard and will collect the CD. After getting the CD, we will examine," he told BBC Bangla Service.

Accused of criminal activities during the previous AL rule, Shamim fled to India just after the 2001 election victory of BNP-led alliance. He returned in December 2006 but left again the day before the 1/11 changeover the next year. He was abroad until April 2009.

Lately, names of his family members came up as suspects in the murder of Twaki, son of Narayanganj Gonojagoran Mancha Convener Rafiur Rabbi.

At yesterday's rally, presided over by Nazrul's father-in-law Shahidul Islam, Shamim bragged, "I don't need administration. Shamim Osman doesn't need police protection. My people are my protection. With my people I will prevent terrorists."

On April 28, a day after Nazrul and six others were abducted in broad daylight, Nazrul's wife Selina Islam filed an abduction case accusing Nur, Iqbal, Hashu, Siddhirganj AL leader Haji Yasin, Aminul Islam Raju and Anwar Hossain.

Three days after the abduction, the bodies of the seven were found floating in the Shitalakkhya.

After her husband's body was recovered, Selina cried out: "Oh Allah ... what Shamim Osman has done ... the day before his [Nazrul] abduction, he met Shamim Osman and pleaded to bhaji [Shamim] to protect him, saying he would go to the court the next day."

Police are yet to arrest any of the accused.

## Jessore juveniles follow

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The clash between the police and juveniles left one boy, Nazmul, badly injured. He was rushed to Jessore Medical College Hospital.

The visitor was the girlfriend of an inmate named Jisan, said Mohammad Shahabuddin, assistant director of the centre, adding that inmates were furious because she had not been let in.

Jisan, however, told The Daily Star that the girl, aged 13, was his relative. "They [the policemen] slapped her, pushed her around and did not allow her to meet me."

The adolescents made a complaint in this regard yesterday morning around 10:00am during the assembly to the assistant superintendent of the centre, Abul Basar, and demanded an action, reported our correspondent from Jessore.

He instead castigated the children and hurled abuse, infuriating them, inmates said.

They then carried out the violence and slashed their wrists, arms and chests. At one point, they swooped on the policemen, leading to the baton-charging and firing.

Two police constables were also injured in the clash. Additional law enforcers were deployed to bring the situation under control, reported our correspondent.

The children said the protest had also been resulted from poor quality food and verbal abuse on a regular basis at the centre.

Deputy Commissioner Mostafizur Rahman and Superintendent of Police Anisur Rahman visited the centre. They formed a three-member committee headed by Additional District Magistrate Sohel Hasan to look into the matter. The body will submit the report within seven days.

SP Anisur said all the eight policemen at the centre had been replaced.

A similar committee headed by Meshkat Ahmed Chowdhury, director general of the Department of Social Services, had investigated the horrifying protest at the Tongi centre against the abuse by the superintendent.

The probe was termed "contradictory" by the High Court on April 3. It observed that the report had given the management of the centre a clean chit though the children complained of abuse.

The HC now awaits a response from the government to an order asking it to submit a report on the steps taken to deal with the mismanagement of the centre.

The next order will be given on May 14.

## Cops to restrict

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Police commissioners of all metropolitan areas, deputy inspector generals of all ranges and chiefs of all police units, including the Rapid Action Battalion, were present there.

The recent incidents of abduction dominated the discussion, meeting sources said.

The IGP instructed top police officials to prevent abduction with utmost sincerity and find out the reasons behind all abduction-related incidents.

The meeting observed that as the police were busy containing political unrest last year, the pace of investigations into different cases, including the abduction, slowed down.

So, ultimately no action was taken against the offenders.

The IGP also said the Supreme Court might deliver the verdict any day on the appeal of Jamaat leader Delawar Hossain Sayedee in a war crimes case.

He instructed the policemen to remain on high alert particularly in the Jamaat-dominated districts to thwart any possible violence following the announcement of the verdict.

Some officials, present in the meeting, demanded additional forces and other equipment to prevent any violence.

They observed that police had failed to contain anarchy created by Jamaat activists after the war crimes tribunal handed down death penalty to Sayedee.

The meeting also discussed that instructions had been given to vehicle owners to remove tinted glasses from their vehicles by the 10th of this month.

A crime statistics, presented at the meeting, shows that the number of crimes has gone down during January-March period, comparing to three months between October and December last year.