

Arrest 2 Hazaris

FROM PAGE 1
Forum (JAF), was scheduled to be held on the High Court premises but police did not allow it, triggering an hour-long altercation at the HC Mazar Gate. At least 30 lawyers were detained from the venue.

Then the pro-BNP lawyers' body shifted the programme, organised to protest killings, abductions and forced disappearances, to the Jatiya Press Club. Later, the forum announced five-day programmes, including work abstention today, to protest the police action. In her speech at the programme, Khaleda warned of bringing the people in Hasina government to book for "their involvement in different criminal activities including killings, abductions and forced disappearances". "Someday you [Hasina] will have to account for all these crimes as you will not stay in power for long. You will surely be placed under trial and the court will question you [about the misdeeds]," she said. "The Hasina administration wants to retain power by using the arms power of police and with the assistance of the Rab," she said adding, "This situation will not continue for long". The former premier said her party was waiting for the right moment to wage a fresh movement against the "rotten" government. "We are giving the government

some time so that some good sense arises in them. But the situation might take a different direction. In fact, it even may go out of control of everyone," she warned. Khaleda, who repeatedly demanded the abolition of the Rapid Action Battalion, yesterday said the BNP will try to make sure that no foreign country gives training to the elite force. "We will campaign so that no one abroad trains the Rab members. It cannot be tolerated that the Rab will kill people after getting the trainings," the BNP chairperson said. Khaleda also reiterated her demand that law enforcement agencies do not arrest anyone in plainclothes and relatives be informed of the whereabouts of the arrestees. The BNP chief demanded that all the 15 cases against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina be revived. "It cannot be accepted that since you are the prime minister, your cases will be withdrawn whereas our cases will be tried," Khaleda said, pointing to Hasina. Mentioning that 7000 cases filed against AL men have been withdrawn since 2009, Khaleda said, "Courts do not punish ruling party men even though they commit crimes but the opposition men and general people are punished even if they are innocent". She also questioned the legitimacy

of the current government and said Sheikh Hasina's government has no right to place budget in parliament as the lawmakers are "unelected". **LAWYERS PROTEST COP ACTION**
The pro-BNP lawyers' forum will boycott court proceedings across the country for two and a half hours today as part of its five-day programmes in protest against the police obstruction to holding the rally on the HC premises yesterday. Rafiqul Islam Mia, president of the JAF, made the announcement at the rally at the Jatiya Press Club. Earlier, the law enforcers put up barbed wire barricades at HC Mazar Gate in the early morning to bar the lawyers from entering the court premises. Police said the BNP lawyers were not allowed to hold the programme as they had not taken permission from the court authorities. The law enforcers detained around 30 lawyers while they were attempting to defy police barricade to enter the venue. However, police released all the detainees last night. In protest, the pro-BNP lawyers have decided to abstain from court proceedings between 10:30am and 1:00pm today, bring out black-flag processions on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday and form human chains on the court premises across the country on Tuesday.



A lawyer being put inside a prison van on the Supreme Court premises yesterday after police foiled pro-BNP lawyers' body Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum's attempt to hold a rally there. PHOTO: STAR

Still a wasteland

FROM PAGE 1
Without a few pockets, the villages are not cultivable now due to salinity. Only two villages have deep tube-wells for drinking water. People of other villages have to drink refined pond or canal water or have to collect water from far away, as they did not get fresh water even after digging to 800 feet, said the Gabura union parishad chairman. The main problem is that crops and trees do not grow in the area, said the chairman, Masudul Alam, adding that the place looked like a desert. "There is no good road for vehicles to ply. The water development board has repaired the embankment but it [rebuilt with only earth] may collapse anytime," he added. Thousands of people had to live on the embankment for over two years until it was repaired. By the time, the soil, the surface water and even the ground water turned saline. The majority of them have rebuilt their houses with the help of the government and non-government organisations. A few hundred families from Leububunia and Jaulakhali, however, are still living on the embankment as their houses either were eroded or could not be saved by being kept inside the embankment during the repair work. Sirajul Gazi, from Leububunia, who had a house on a two bighas of land, is now living on the embankment. "It seems my whole life will be spent here. My son got married and began his new life on the embankment and my grandson has been born and is

growing up here. I am not sure what is in their fate." Sirajul told this correspondent to look at the two sides of the embankment. The water level of the river is higher than the land inside the embankment, he pointed out. The embankment was rebuilt, excluding his house as it was too close to the Kobadak river bank. Sirajul's son Amirul went to Gopalganj to work as a labourer in the paddy field as there is no livelihood in Gabura other than fishing or catching shrimps in the river. Even those who were somewhat well off and returned to their homes are not doing well. Rashida Begum, from Chawk Bera, mother of Abul Bashar, a teacher of Gabura High School, said her family lived in better economic conditions with a shrimp farm and a good house. The family tried to regain shrimp production but failed due to a virus attack, she said. "Now seven members of our family are entirely dependent on my son, Abul Bashar, as there is no other means of income." The soil has become so saline that we are not able to cultivate vegetables, Rashida added. People will not be able to live in Gabura for long, said noted climate expert Prof Ainun Nishat, vice-chancellor of Brac University, adding that they would have to leave the place soon as it would become unlivable. Except for working on the government's road building project, fishing in

the Kholpetua or Kobadak rivers or catching shrimp fries, there is no other livelihood for the Gabura people, unless they go to the Sundarbans for logging or killing deer, local people said. Halim, a local journalist, said hunters with venison had been captured twice in the last one month. Besides, people often enter the forest for logging. The lack of opportunities to earn a living is mounting pressure on the Sundarbans, said Zahir Uddin, divisional forest officer, Sundarbans (West) division. Under a project, the forest department has been giving money to some 45,000 out of six lakh local forest dwellers in Khulna, Bagerhat and Satkhira to open poultry farms and grocery shops, begin fish culture and goat rearing or to buy sewing machines. "For Aila-damaged areas like Gabura, the government should intervene in a bigger way," Zahir said. Tabibur Rahman, Shyamnagar upazila nirbahi officer (UNO), however, rejected the perception that there was a lack of income sources in the area. People of Gabura can earn a living through shrimp cultivation, honey collection and fishing, he added. Apart from the government's Vulnerable Group Feeding project and pensions for widows and elderly people, the government has arranged food for work for around 1,000 people of Gabura. Under the scheme, there are jobs for 40 days at a time, twice a year, for Tk200 a day. Besides, people receive huge quantities of relief materials from NGOs and so do not have much of a problem, the UNO said.

Most of them Nizam's men

FROM PAGE 1
Intra-party feuds and rivalry over establishing supremacy in Phulgazi were the reasons behind the murder, Rab said. The eight were taken to Feni yesterday. The other arrestees are Chowdhury Md Nasir Uddin alias Anik, Shahjalal Uddin alias Shipon, Helal Uddin and Jahid Hossain. They are aged between 20 and 24 years. Meanwhile, another suspect -- Abdullahil Mahmud Shiblu, councillor of ward-5 of Feni municipality -- surrendered to the Feni police yesterday. He is in police custody now. Shiblu and Jihad oversaw the entire mission from some 30 yards away, Rab said, quoting Shanan, one of the arrestees. The Bilashi cinema hall area where the killing took place is controlled by Shiblu, once a key member of Jinal Hazari's so-called steering committee. He started to get closer to Nizam Hazari after the AL took office in 2009 and subsequently became president of ward-5 AL. Soheli used to work at a restaurant. He emerged as a notorious cadre under the wings of Shiblu, locals said. Shiblu, however, said he was not involved in the killing. Ekramul, who was also president of Phulgazi AL, was shot and then burned

alive in his car in broad daylight in Feni on Tuesday. His driver and three other people in the car were injured, as the attackers stabbed them with sharp weapons and beat them up. Ekram's rivalry with Jihad, joint general secretary of Phulgazi AL, intensified following the election of Anandapur union under Phulgazi upazila in 2011. Jihad competed in the polls but lost to Harunur Rashid, whom Ekram backed. Enraged, Jihad supported BNP-backed candidate Mahtab Uddin Chowdhury Minar, instead of supporting Ekram, in the upazila election early this year. Ekram, however, beat Mahtab. Irked by Jihad's activities, Ekram had suspended him from the local AL committee. But his suspension was withdrawn in the face of pressure from Nizam Hazari, reports our Feni correspondent. Abid told reporters that in a meeting on Monday evening, the day before the murder, they decided to just beat up Ekram and vandalise his car. But around 11:30pm, Jihad asked him over the phone to meet him near Eidgah Maidan on Mizan road. There they held another meeting and planned to kill Ekram, thinking Ekram would kill him otherwise. About 50 to 60 people in three groups took part in the attack, Rab said.

Jihad briefed some of the attackers, including Abid, about the plan after they started gathering in the Academy and its adjacent areas around 8:00am on Tuesday. On the previous night, Abid called about 10 of his accomplices and asked them to come there. Soheli sent 10 to 12 people for the mission. The two groups went to the cinema hall area around 10:30am, about one and a half hours after Jihad. During primary interrogation, Saikat said he saw about 25 unknown people, equipped with sharp weapons. According to Shanan, the "juniors" were assigned to set fire to the car. They collected Kerosene from nearby shops for the purpose. He said Jihad also distributed sharp weapons and sticks among the attackers. Abid, whose mother Anjumana Ara is general secretary of Feni Mahila AL, however, claimed he did not shoot Ekram but fired only into the air. Another arrestee, Shipon, told journalists that he was asked by some of his "big brothers" to go to the Academy area for a showdown of Chhatra League. Shipon claimed to be a Chhatra League activist. Meanwhile, Feni police yesterday arrested another person, Alamgir Hossain, in connection with the case.

Lahm, Neuer join training

FROM PAGE 1
Friday having missed the first few days in north Italy where Loew's squad assembled on Wednesday for their 10-day camp. The Bayern Munich pair had remained in the Bavarian capital to receive intense treatment from the German Football Association (DFB) medical staff under head doctor Hans-Wilhelm Mueller-Wohlfahrt. Arsenal centre-back Per Mertesacker has also joined the Germans having missed the first three days after the birth of his second child. His Gunners teammate, attacking midfielder Mesut Ozil, was unable to

train on Saturday due to a slight cold. "I'm glad that in addition to Per Mertesacker, now Philipp and Manu have joined the team," said Loew. "Even if they could not initially train with us, their presence is important. "The squad is almost complete, now we are only missing (Real Madrid's) Sami Khedira, who will join us after the Champions League final." For the first time since the Germans have been in camp, Loew trained behind closed doors on Saturday with a match against Germany's Under-20 squad planned for Sunday. After defensive midfielder Lars Bender dropped out of the World Cup

on Friday with a thigh injury, Loew has opted not to replace the Bayer Leverkusen star. Germany's vice-captain Bastian Schweinsteiger (knee tendinitis), Lahm and Neuer all trained individually in the German camp's fitness centre on Saturday morning as they recover from injuries as Loew was able to put 19 of his 25-man squad through their paces. Germany have two final pre-World Cup friendlies, before flying to Brazil on June 7, when they play Cameroon in Moenchengladbach on June 1 and Armenia in June 6 in Mainz ahead of their opening Group C game in Salvador on June 16.

Thai military

FROM PAGE 16
corralled potential opponents to its takeover. "The Senate is dismissed. Responsibility for any laws needing the approval of the parliament or Senate will instead be assumed by the leader (of the junta)," said an army bulletin on national television. Thailand's fragile democracy has been repeatedly stunted by 19 actual or attempted coups since 1932. Analysts called yesterday's developments an ominous sign that the junta led by the army chief, General Prayut Chan-O-cha, could be digging in for a long-term, pervasive takeover, as it had earlier said the Senate would be retained. Sporadic protests flared in Bangkok for a second straight day, with hundreds of demonstrators defying a ban on political gatherings to denounce the coup, echoing calls from Washington, the EU and elsewhere around the world for the restoration of civilian rule. Prayut seized control Thursday after anti-government forces had waged a several-month campaign, marked by deadly Bangkok street protests, to oust Thailand's civilian leaders. Civil liberties have been curbed, media restrictions imposed, most of the constitution abrogated, and rival protesters from both sides of the political divide cleared from the capital. Political analysts view the coup as part of a long-running effort by a Bangkok-based power elite -- aligned with the monarchy and military -- to eliminate the political dominance of Yingluck's elder brother Thaksin Shinawatra. Thaksin, a billionaire telecoms tycoon, shook up Thai politics by winning devotion among millions of rural poor with populist measures, catapulting him to prime minister in 2001 polls.

A Saarc summit!

FROM PAGE 16
would be in the Indian capital on May 26 and 27. Hasina will be in Japan at that time, and she will be represented by Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhary. Among those who promptly responded positively to Modi's invite to attend the oath-taking are Presidents Mahinda Rajapaksha (Sri Lanka), Hamid Karzai (Afghanistan) and Abdulla Yameen of the Maldives and Prime Ministers Sushil Koirala (Nepal) and Tshering Tobgay (Bhutan). The last time a Saarc summit was held was in Male in November 2011, but the next which was to have been hosted by Nepal last year had to be put off due to political unrest in the Himalayan country. Like the Saarc summit format, each of the visiting foreign leaders will have separate meetings with the prime minister of the host country and they will be hosted to a banquet by the host. The only notable absence will be speech-making, the retreat of the leaders and Saarc Declaration. In fact, Modi's invite to Saarc leaders for his oath-taking has given the regional grouping an unprecedented media exposure in India where it is mostly underplayed, undermined and dismissed as a mere talking shop having very little in terms of concrete achievements. Indian media, electronic and print, has for the last few days are full of pictures of Hasina and other Saarc leaders, articles and debate about the merits of Modi's invite to South Asian leaders and the importance of India's neighbourhood policy. However, as is the case with the Indian media, coverage of Saarc summits or the forthcoming gathering of Saarc leaders at Modi's swearing-in is set to be overshadowed by the focus on the presence of Pakistan Premier Sharif and his meeting with Modi. Activities of the regional grouping have always found much smaller space than India-Pakistan engagements on the margin of Saarc summits. That is nothing surprising considering the fact India-Pakistan relations have always cast a shadow on Saarc and its progress.

Shamim Osman

FROM PAGE 1
The officials said Shamim's possible involvement in the murders needs to be investigated because he had patronised both Hossain and Nazrul Islam, the latter being one of the seven men murdered. Besides, he had been in touch with Hossain before and after the murder, they told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity. Shamim, much feared by locals as a crime lord of Narayanganj, admitted to having the phone conversation with Hossain but claimed the media had published it partially. The victims' families, however, demanded his arrest and trial. On April 27, Nazrul, his four aides, senior lawyer Chandan Sarker and his driver were kidnapped from the Dhaka-Narayanganj link road. Of them, six, including Nazrul and Chandan, were found dead and floating in the Shitalakkhya on April 30. Another body was found the following day. The other victims are Moniruzzaman Swapan, Tajul Islam, Liton, Jahangir and Ibrahim. At least twenty people have been taken on remand in connection with the murder -- several of them up to two times -- but none of them have yet given any confessional statement to a magistrate. The arrested include Nur Hossain's personal assistant, driver and bodyguards. Police officials told The Daily Star that one of the arrested men had described how the abduction and murder took place. The arrested individual narrated how the group had picked up Nazrul Islam and the six others near Fatullah stadium by making them unconscious. Later, the seven were transferred to Nur Hossain at his truck stand, from where they were taken away by the prime accused and his associates. However, the arrestee later withdrew the statement, claiming he had said so in the heat of the interrogation. The truth of this statement cannot be investigated because of an oversight by law enforcers and doctors who conducted the autopsies. No viscera samples

of the deceased have been collected, thus making it impossible to determine whether Nazrul and the other six had indeed been made unconscious. The civil surgeon of Narayanganj, Dulal Chandra Chowdhury, said, "We did not keep any viscera because the cause of death was ascertained during autopsies." Meanwhile, police officials told this correspondent that only after the arrest of all the accused would they be able to know whether Rab officials had indeed aided in the murders in exchange for Tk 6 crore, as alleged by Nazrul's father-in-law Shahid Chairman. Over the allegation, three ex-Rab officials -- including Rab-11 commanding officer Lt Col Tareque Sayeed Mohammad, Maj Arif Hossain and Lt Commander SM Masud -- were detained as suspects on May 17 and 18. There were six accused in the case until police on Thursday accused Lt Col Tareque and Maj Arif of involvement in the murder. Today, the probe committee will interrogate former superintendent of Narayanganj police Syed Nurul Islam and former deputy commissioner Manoj Kanti Boral at the secretariat. Both of them were transferred following allegations by the victims' families and locals that they had continuously overlooked the crimes committed by Hossain. **SHAMIM'S ARREST DEMANDED**
Victims' families last night demanded the arrest of Shamim Osman as they believed he is an obstacle to arresting the main accused in the sensational seven-murder case. Family members and supporters of the slain councillor Nazrul Islam brought out a procession in front of Nazrul's residence at Mijhmijhi of Siddhirganj around 8:00pm. They chanted slogans demanding Shamim's arrest and punishment, reports our Narayanganj correspondent. Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad was inside Nazrul's house at that time. He went there to console the family. It was the first procession that sought arrest of Shamim Osman.

Celebrating poetry's rebel

FROM PAGE 16
And yet, for all this lament over what might have been, Nazrul remains that embodiment of the human will to explore the diversity of life, to give it newer shades of meaning. And who better than he to inform a politically conscious people that life could be lived on a higher plane, that for such a plane to be scaled it was often necessary to give oneself to rebellion? And that is when songs like *durgomo giri kantar moru* come our way. Patriotism was an integral part of the Nazrul psyche; and into that patriotism he injected the spirit of resistance through such songs of grandeur as *ei shikol pora chhol moder ei shikol pora chhol*. Poetry for Nazrul subsisted on a level higher than the idealistic. It had to be lived from day to day. And that for him, as for millions of his countrymen, was the reality of eking out a bare existence under British colonial rule, a phase in life that needed to be put an end to through concerted resistance. Or call it militancy. You spot that militancy in the high notes of *chol chol chol*. In *Bidrohi*, it is a clear, unambiguous call to divinely ordained rebellion on the part of the poet. Nazrul's genius was in many ways a reflection of the myriad qualities of the Bengali soul. The Bengali was nothing if not a symbol of the fundamental characteristics of the human personality. In his poetry, love came in waves, sometimes in the placidity of ripples. There is that primordial desire to see the beloved in all the raiment of beauty, which is when you hear the song *mor priya hobe esho rani / debo khonpa-e tarar phool*. It is melody where the poet takes care to adorn his lover in every aspect of poetic charm he can bring forth. And then hear the poet sing *Laily tomar esheche phiriya or mora ar jonome hongsho mithun chhilam*. You will not miss the ripples meshing into the waves, or the waves going peacefully into the state of being happy ripples. The versatility in Nazrul is all. Every poem and every song is tinged strongly with vibrancy; and that includes his

thoughts on religion. His speeches on different occasions were proof of the profound scholarship which informed his works. In 1937, at an Eid reunion, he held forth on such difficult subjects as literature, life and youth. Not one to genuflect before power, Nazrul was forever ready to describe reality for what it truly was. His spell in prison, one of those rare times when a man given to producing verses is sent into incarceration, was one of the earliest signs of the spirit of rebellion which would characterise his personality all his productive life. The story of Kazi Nazrul Islam is essentially the tale of a struggling soul. There are all the images of despair, of deprivation you associate with the poet. Poverty dogged him for nearly the entirety of the early phase of his life. He acted as imam in a mosque to meet his needs. And he worked in a bread shop to keep himself going. And yet there was in him an absolute sense of self-esteem and confidence which would not let him submit to anything that demeaned the individual. Poetry came naturally to him. He could set tunes to a song on the spur of the moment. His Islamic *ghazals*, like the songs he fashioned on various Hindu religious aspects, demonstrated the natural flair and vigour he brought into an expression of his literary sensibilities. Nazrul lived life in all the intensity of romance. He shaped his poetry in the piercing sounds of thunder. He saw in women, all women, a pristine epitome of beauty. And sadness he knew from up close, through death in the family. Remember that piercing number, *shumyo e buuke pakhi mor aaye / phire aaye?* We celebrate Nazrul. And yet it was Nazrul who celebrated us, the collective spirit in us, long before we knew what poetic rebellion and active resistance to authority were all about. Why, then, must we not hum the old song, *amar aponar cheye apon je jon / khunji tare aami aponaye?* (Kazi Nazrul Islam, born on 11 Jaishtha 1306, died on 12 Bhadra 1383)