

# School kid stabbed to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified criminals stabbed a school student to death and injured two others at Rupnagar in the capital's Mirpur yesterday night.

The deceased was identified as Naziur Rahman Riyan Khan, 15, who appeared in the recently concluded JSC examination. He lived in the Rupnagar Tin-shed Colony.

The two wounded are Mehedi Siraz Imram, 16, and Hasib, 16. Both of them are students of class nine. They too are residents of the Rupnagar Tin-shed Colony.

Dhaka Medical College Hospital sources said they were rushed to the hospital around 8:45pm by locals where duty doctors declared Riyan dead.

There were stab marks in Riyan's chest and abdomen while Imram and Hasib bore stab marks in their abdomens, said DMCH sources.

Redoy, a friend of Riyan, told this correspondent that Riyan was returning home from a playground at Arifabad in Rupnagar. Sagor, Rajon and some other local goons attacked Riyan with knives on his way around 7:30pm.

Imram and Hasib also came under attack when they tried to rescue Riyan, Redoy added.

Shikdar Mohammad Shamim Hossain, Officer-in-Charge of Rupnagar police station, said they had an argument recently centring a game of badminton, which might have some link to the killing.

Two of Sagor's cohorts have been detained, he added.

# Move to build

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50 km in the waters through the world's largest mangrove forest, putting its biodiversity at risk.

Although similar accidents occurred in the forest in the past, the port authority did not take any step to reduce the risk facing its ecological balance.

When asked why, Chairman Habibur avoided giving a direct answer. He said the port had been non-functional between 2001 and 2008. The authority in 2008 resumed its operation and took up a number of development projects.

According to a draft of the National Marine Policy Contingency Plan written in 2000, Mongla Port, located 3 km North of the Sundarbans, should have the logistics to deal with oil spill and other environmental disasters.

The port authorities, however, have never been found to have acted in line with the draft, said environment department sources.

Forest officials said an oil tanker sank in the Shela river in 1994, causing harm to the biodiversity of the forest.

In 2000, a foreign ship dumped engine oil in the Poshur river near Mongla Port, and another tanker capsized in the Bishkhali river in 2012.

# Bangladeshi

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the spot, they found the Bangladeshi in a pool of blood.

The murder accused was arrested the same day. According to police, he was a psychiatric patient at a nearby hospital. His name, however, could not be known.

"Saudi police are investigating the matter. We will take action after receiving the police probe report," Mizanur said, adding that a local Sharia court would hear the murder case in the future.

Rafiq's brother Mohammad Ibrahim has demanded capital punishment to the killer.

"I want justice. My innocent brother was killed while he was praying," he said, adding that the victim had been working for the same employer for the last 16 years.

Rafiq left behind his wife and two children aged three and five years.

The body of the Bangladeshi was kept at Majmaah General Hospital, said Mohamed Sarwar Alam, labour counsellor at the Bangladesh embassy.

He said the embassy's legal team was sorting out the paperwork of the deceased and had informed his family about the tragedy.

The counsellor also said the victim's family could file a case with the Saudi court in connection with the murder and they could also go to the local labour court for compensation.

The other injured in Sunday's firing was an Indian man and he sustained two bullet injuries. He was being treated at King Khaled Hospital in Majmaah, said Arab News.

# Qaeda blames Obama for Yemen hostage deaths

AFP, Sanaa

Al-Qaeda has blamed President Barack Obama for the deaths of a US journalist and a South African during a failed hostage rescue attempt, warning "the lives of all Americans are in danger".

"Obama made the wrong decision, and signed the death warrant" of American Luke Somers, who was killed along with South African teacher Pierre Korkie, Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) official Nasser bin Ali al-Ansi said in a video released Thursday.

Somers and Korkie were shot and fatally wounded by their captors on Saturday when American commandos stormed an Al-Qaeda hideout where they were being held in southeastern Yemen, according to US officials.

The raid to free Somers, 33, came two days after the kidnappers issued a video in which they threatened to kill him within 72 hours unless Washington met unspecified demands.

Ansi said that Obama had ordered the assault "despite our warning that he should not do anything foolish".

He said the operation had cost the lives of both Somers and Korkie, "for whom negotiations were under way to release him."

The failed operation came just a day before Korkie, 57, was due to be freed under a deal with the kidnappers, although the US ambassador to South Africa has said Washington was unaware of his impending release.

"Obama made a decision that caused things to take a completely different turn to what we wanted," Ansi said.

"He could have avoided the fate of this hostage which was the inevitable consequence of the military solution," he added.

Ansi said AQAP was seeking the release of detainees held by the United States, including the blind Egyptian sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman and Pakistani Aafia Siddiqui, jailed on terrorism charges.

Somers was seized in the Yemeni capital in September 2013. Korkie was abducted together with his wife in May 2013, but she was released in January.

AQAP, considered by Washington as the most dangerous affiliate of Al-Qaeda, has exploited instability in the impoverished country since a 2011 uprising forced president Ali Abdullah Saleh to step down.

In recent years AQAP has carried out a growing number of abductions, with several hostages still in captivity.

Denouncing US policy towards the "Muslim nation," Ansi warned that "the lives of all Americans are in danger, in or outside the United States, in the air, on land and at sea."

He added: "Can your nation dream of security when it lives in such a situation? You cannot dream of security until security is a reality in Palestine and all Muslim countries."

Yemen is a key ally of the United States, allowing Washington to carry out a longstanding drone war on its territory against AQAP.

The Al-Anad air base in the southern province of Lahij -- where Yemen has acknowledged the deployment of US personnel to gather intelligence for drone strikes -- was targeted early Thursday by mortar rounds, a military source said.

# Gift didn't work

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in mind.

Wahidur Rahman didn't even get a farewell from his department. Instead, he had to leave office under police protection, as a group of LGED staffs chanted slogans against him, calling him "a fake freedom fighter".

They also burnt Wahidur's portrait at the main gate of the LGED building.

Wahidur was made chief engineer of the LGED in 2009. His tenure was supposed to end after two years. But he secured three years' job extension in two phases, providing a freedom fighter certificate.

There is nothing wrong in that. The problem was that his name was not on the freedom fighters' list (Red Book). Subsequently, the Anti-Corruption Commission found that the engineer resorted to cheating to get the certificate, sources said.

On December 12, 2013, he obtained a one-year contract to continue as LGED chief.

For the last few months, he lobbied the higher authorities for extension of his job. He even presented a Tk 3.5 crore project SUV to LGRD Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam. But it didn't work.

According to LGRD sources, Shyama Prosad Adhikari, additional chief engineer (Maintenance), is likely to be made the next LGED chief, superseding two of his seniors.

No gazette notification was issued yet in this regard.

Wahidur entered his office around 9:00am yesterday, the last day of his job as LGED chief.

Within minutes, a group of LGED employees gathered at their office premises and chanted slogan against Wahidur, saying they wouldn't serve further under "a fake freedom fighter".

Shahidul Islam Babu, president of Bangabandhu Karmochari Parishad, led the protest.

Later, more than 150 jobseekers joined the demonstration, saying Wahidur didn't keep his promise to give them jobs.

The jobseekers were staging agitation at the LGED building premises over the last three days.

Wahidur finally left his office at 10:00am under police protection, sources said.

Talking to The Daily Star, Shahidul said they wouldn't serve further under Wahidur in case he gets a job extension.

"It was unfortunate that we worked under a fake freedom fighter ... We staged demonstrations to send a message to the government that we don't want Wahidur Rahman here any more," he said.

Sarwar Jahan, sub-assistant engineer of the LGED, told this correspondent that they were now waiting to welcome a new boss.

"We are ready with both sticks and flowers ... if Wahidur Rahman gets a job extension, we will use sticks. On the other hand, if we get a new boss, we will welcome him with flowers," said Sarwar, also publicity secretary of Bangabandhu Diploma Engineers' Council.

# Joint secy forced

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conference that action would be taken as per law against the people who attended the meeting.

Yesterday's gazette notification, signed by the head of appointments, postings and deputations of the public administration ministry, Mohibul Haq, mentioned that Jahangir had completed 25 years in civil service and he could be sent on retirement as per the Public Servants (Retirement) Act, 1974.

It added that he would enjoy all retirement benefits.

Jahangir, who worked as the head of appointments, postings and deputations during the regime of BNP-Jamaat alliance government from 2001 to 2006, was made OSD a few days after Awami League assumed office in January 2009. He was among many whom the Awami League branded as BNP loyalists and were not considered for good postings and promotion in the last six years.

Jahangir is the first officer who was sent on forced retirement since the Awami League was re-elected a year ago. In its previous term, the Awami League had sent six senior bureaucrats on forced retirement without showing any reason.

When asked last night, Senior Secretary Kamal Abdul Naser declined to make comments whether the action against Jahangir was a result of their enquiry. He also refused to say if Jahangir had attended the meeting and if the action was its result.

Sources in the Secretariat said the action was taken according to reports of various intelligence agencies.

However, some officers who know Jahangir well claimed that he was not even in the country let alone be in a meeting with Khaleda.

There is, however, no confusion about Jahangir's involvement in the Uttara conspiracy eight years ago.

On November 24, 2006, a group of former and serving senior civil servants, known to be close to BNP, joined a secret party hosted by Mahmudur Rahman at his business Artisan's office in Uttara. Now in custody, Mahmudur Rahman was then energy adviser to Khaleda.

According to sources, more than 50 serving civil servants attended a meeting with Khaleda at her Gulshan office on December 4.

The officers included a joint secretary, three deputy secretaries and a senior assistant secretary. All of them were officers on special duty, a position considered a punishment, said sources in the BNP.

They said a few former secretaries, including an ex-cabinet secretary, led the group in the meeting.

Insiders in the BNP said the meeting was aimed at staging a Janatar Manch (people's platform) style movement for having a general election next year.

Some BNP leaders believe movements involving civil servants like what the Awami League had done in 1996 by forming the Janatar Mancha would be more effective than street agitations.

As per the Public Servants (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1985, public servants cannot hold meetings with political leaders.

# Quader Mollah murdered in name of execution

Says son of the war criminal; attorney general calls the statement tantamount to contempt of court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hasan Jamil, the son of war criminal Abdul Quader Mollah, yesterday claimed that the government had brutally murdered his father in the name of execution.

The United Nations, USA, European Union, many countries including Australia and Turkey, and international human rights bodies had urged the government to stay the execution but it rejected all the appeals and killed him, he told a press conference at the Supreme Court Bar Association, marking the first anniversary of his father's death.

Quader Mollah, a Jamaat-e-Islami leader, was hanged on December 12 last year after the Supreme Court dismissed his review petitions against the death sentence a tribunal passed on him for crimes against humanity in 1971.

Jamil said his father was not informed why the review petitions were dismissed, and that the family members were not given the opportunity to join his namz-e-janaza.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam told The Daily Star that the statement of Quader Mollah's son was tantamount to contempt of court because he was executed following after completion of all legal procedures.

# UN for ban

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Bangladesh, in a statement said: "Global experience shows that this kind of incident has long term environmental consequences and it requires coordinated multisectoral efforts to restore the affected areas."

It may also affect the people dependent on the water bodies around the forest, she added. "We're consulting with government, national and international partners to explore ways we can help government minimise the damage and rehabilitate this globally significant natural heritage."

The oil spill happened near the Chadpai Wildlife Sanctuary -- the largest aquatic protected area declared by the Bangladesh government and home of two threatened dolphin species: Ganges Dolphin and Irrawaddy Dolphin.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), however, appreciated the government's decision to shut down the Shale River route temporarily to all vessels as reported in newspapers.

The OT Southern Star 7, carrying some 3.57 lakh litres of furnace oil, sank in the river at Mrigamri under the East Zone of the Sundarbans after being hit by cargo vessel Total Cargo at 5:00am on Tuesday.

# DCCs to run

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city corporation in November 2011. Earlier, 12 administrators from admin cadre discharged duties as in-charge of the city corporations: two at a time for six months.

The government claims that it split DCC to improve civic services given to city dwellers but in reality, garbage management, mosquito control activities and maintenance of the city streets, which are the main jobs of the corporations, have deteriorated.

Residents of the capital have complained that they face difficulties while trying to obtain different certificates from 10 zonal offices of DSCC and DNCC.

Staff of both city corporations demand bribes for issuing certificates like citizenship certificates and heir certificates, they said, but earlier people could get certificates by paying nominal fees.

Elections to the 120 councilors' posts have also not been held since the bifurcation. Only 10 zonal officers, one in each zone, perform the duties of councilors.

Unlike councilors, the zonal officials ask people to submit a huge number of papers to get certificates. The process used to be very simple and bribe-free when councilors dealt with such matters, city residents say.

At a cabinet meeting on Monday, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina turned away a proposal for extending the office term of Dhaka city administrators to one year from six months.

She said mayoral elections would be held early next year.

The last election to the undivided Dhaka city corporation was held in 2002, in which BNP leader Sadeque Hossain Khoka won the mayoral post.

Though his tenure ended in May 2007, he stayed in office until November, 2011 before the Awami League-led grand alliance government split the city corporation, allocating 36 wards to DSCC and 56 to DNCC.

# Ukraine truce tatters as EU raises Russia fears

AFP, Donetsk

A three-day-old ceasefire in eastern Ukraine was under pressure yesterday after three government soldiers were killed, while European nations raised new fears about Russia's "unprecedented" military build-up.

On some parts of the frontline, there appeared to be a determined effort to keep the shaky truce from collapsing.

Government soldiers could be seen blithely ignoring rebel forces firing on their position at the hotly contested Donetsk airport.

"Our adversaries started to provoke us, to fire on our positions. I did not give the order (to fire back)," said a commander going by the name "Coup!".

"They ended up calming down." But the military said three soldiers had been killed and eight injured in the past 24 hours.

Rebel commanders in Donetsk denied they had carried out any attacks and said government forces had breached the ceasefire on five occasions.

The deaths will cast doubt on the prospects of this latest ceasefire -- the fourth since the conflict erupted in April.

The process is being closely watched in Europe, where concerns over Russia's support for the rebels has plunged East-West relations to their lowest ebb since the end of the Cold War.

The heightened atmosphere has also prompted Sweden to moot the possibility of recalling around 7,500 recent veterans to form a reserve voluntary force.

"The world has changed in a negative way, partly as a result of Russia's rearmament, partly due to the annexation of Crimea, and partly due to the armed conflict in Ukraine," Swedish Defence Minister Peter Hultqvist told local station SVT on Thursday.

# Top pilot sees risk in unregulated US drones

AFP, Washington

Small drones pose a danger in US skies so long as clear rules governing their operation are not in place, the head of the world's biggest pilots' union said.

Lee Moak, president of the Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA), issued the warning -- with his own personal drone in hand -- at a Capitol Hill hearing into unmanned aircraft vehicles, or UAVs.

"We recognize the potential benefits (of drone technology) to our nation's economic competitiveness," Moak told members of the House of Representatives transportation committee.

"But we also recognize the potential

Poland's defence minister meanwhile said he was concerned by the extent of Russia's recent military activity over the Baltic sea.

On Monday, Dutch F-16 fighters intercepted two Russian bombers over the Baltic Sea as part of their participation in Nato's Baltic air policing mission.

All told, more than 30 Russian aircraft were intercepted in international airspace "over the Baltic Sea and off the coast of Norway" on Monday, a NATO spokesman said.

"For a few days now, there has been unprecedented Russian activity, from its Baltic fleet to flights over the Baltic sea," Defence Minister Tomasz Siemoniak told Polish broadcaster TVN24.

Poland and the Baltics -- Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania -- have been on edge since Russia annexed the Crimean peninsula from Ukraine in March and, according to the West, began supporting the rebels battling government forces in eastern Ukraine.

Nato has deployed more aircraft, ships and personnel in a bid to reassure the four countries, all new members formerly dominated by Moscow.

There have been around 400 intercepts of Russian military flights near Nato member countries this year, the Western defence alliance said last month.

Lithuania put its military on higher alert on Monday after 22 Russian warships were spotted in the Baltic Sea.

Despite some ceasefire breaches in eastern Ukraine, the worst of the shelling appeared to have stopped.

In the main separatist stronghold of Donetsk, "the night passed without large bombardments", the city authorities said in a statement on Thursday.

Other parts of the frontline appeared peaceful on both sides.

In the village of Tonenka, a short distance from Donetsk airport, a Ukrainian military unit said there had been no exchanges.

# Top pilot sees risk in unregulated US drones

for a safety risk if we don't treat them for what they are -- airplanes in air space," he said.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has yet to come up with a dedicated set of rules for low-flying drones under 55 pounds (25 kilograms) -- a category that includes consumer models that are set to be this year's hot Christmas gift.

"We all agree that the project is taking too long," said Margaret Gilligan, the FAA's associate administrator for aviation safety.

Fellow FAA safety official Matthew Hampton acknowledged, however, that it was "uncertain" when final regulations would be published.

# BCL men 'seize buses'

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"A person claiming to be a BCL leader called him over the phone in the afternoon and demanded Tk five lakh for the release of the buses or else they would set them on fire," Sirajul said.

Later in the evening, Sirajul informed Darus Salam police of the matter. Police went to the college and retrieved the buses at 7:00pm.

"We are preparing to file a case," Sirajul said. He also added that the BCL leaders were threatening them with consequences if they lodged a case.

Sirajul claimed that police advised them to reach a compromise with the leaders to avoid problems.

Rafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Darus Salam police station, said they

got the buses released from the college campus. No case had been filed in this connection and none was arrested, he added.

Police, however, claimed that neither the bus owners nor the BCL leaders said anything about the toll.

Anik, however, denied the allegation of extortion and claimed that students took the buses inside the campus as a staff of the transport company injured a student while pushing him out of the bus in front of the college gate.

"President of the college unit of BCL Jahid and I were out of the campus during the incident," he said, adding that they rushed there after being informed of the matter by police.

# Five killed in bizarre

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Joypurhat fire service official Hafizar Rahman quoted eyewitnesses and locals as saying that after the engine along with other oil tankers went about 100 yards ahead, the guard, who was in one of the separated wagons, asked the driver over his mobile phone to stop the train.

The driver slammed on the brakes.

The separated wagons, still in motion, hit the main train from behind. On impact, the illegal passengers fell down.

The Daily Star could not contact the driver or the guard but Hafizar said he learnt about the accident from eyewitnesses and locals who had talked to the guard.

As the firefighters reached the spot from Joypurhat town within half an hour of the accident, they found the train leaving for Dinajpur, he added.

The victims died either just falling down or being crushed under the wheels of the train, which started to move ahead being pushed by the

delinked tankers, he added.

Joypurhat Superintendent of Police Abu Kalam Siddique said the train, reunited with the separated tankers, left quickly to avert backlash from angry mobs.

Police and witnesses told our Dinajpur correspondent that one of the victims died on the spot, and he was yet to be identified. Eight of the injured either lost legs or hands.

Three people died after they were taken to Joypurhat Modern Hospital. They were identified as Azhar Ali, a night guard of Joypurhat Collectorate School; Sadique Islam of Purnapail village under Joypurhat Sadar upazila and Jewel Hossain of Khanjanpur under Joypurhat Municipality.

Another victim, Hridoy, died at a hospital in Bogra.

Two probe committees were formed after the incident -- one led by Shah Alam Talukder, chief operating officer of West Zone of Bangladesh Railway, and another headed by Khorsheed Alam, ADC (general) of Joypurhat.