

Muggers kill youth in Gazipur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Muggers shot dead a youth as he obstructed them while the criminals were fleeing after robbing two sales representatives of bKash, a mobile phone cash transfer service, of Tk 3 lakh.

The incident took place at Konabari bus stand in Gazipur yesterday morning. The muggers also shot the two bKash staff.

Deceased Ruman Miah, 27, was son of Safor Uddin in Goalkandi village of Mymensingh Sadar upazila. He was a transport worker.

Syed Azharul Islam, sub-inspector of Konabari police outpost, said some four to five muggers attacked and opened fire on the two bKash sales representatives, Ashikur Rahman and Jahangir Alam. They were going to a Brac Bank branch at Konabari bus stand to deposit Tk 3 lakh around 10:00am. The gang then took away the money from their possession.

While the muggers were fleeing the scene, the transport worker, Ruman, obstructed them and caught one of the snatchers. The criminals shot him and fled. Ruman died on the spot, the police official added.

On information, police went to the spot and sent the body to Gazipur Sadar Hospital for an autopsy. They also recovered a pistol and two bullets from the scene.

The two bKash employees were first taken to Gazipur Sadar Hospital and then shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Clashes

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secretary, surrendered before the court and sought bail.

Later, some activists of BNP tried to bring out processions near Circuit House Road and Shayesthanagar areas around 1:15pm, protesting the court order, reports our Sylhet correspondent.

As police barred the processions, the BNP men started throwing brickbats at them, triggering the clashes that left around 34 people and six policemen, including the officer-in-charge of Habiganj Sadar Police Station, injured, said Shahidul Islam, Habiganj additional superintendent of police.

During the clashes, the BNP activists also vandalised a private car, a microbus and eight battery-run easy bikes.

The situation was brought under control around 2:30pm after police fired 150 rubber bullets and 14 tear shells, Shahidul said.

Eight BNP activists were detained from the spot. The injured were being treated at Habiganj Sadar Hospital, added the police officer.

SAMS Kibria was assassinated in a grenade attack while addressing a rally in Habiganj on January 27, 2005. The blast also killed Kibria's nephew Shah Manzur Huda, local AL leader Abdur Rahim and two others.

On December 21 this year, a Habiganj court issued arrest warrants for 11 people, including Gaus, former prime minister Khaleda Zia's political secretary Harris Chowdhury and Sylhet City Corporation Mayor Ariful Haque Chowdhury, in the case.

All of them were shown absconding in the 3rd supplementary charge sheet submitted to the court by the Criminal Investigation Department on November 13.

Call off hartal

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alliance to call it off for the sake of political stability and development.

The BNP-led 20-party alliance called the countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal in protest at the government's refusal to allow the party to hold a rally in Gazipur on Saturday and the arrest of a number of its political leaders.

"The day-to-day movement of common people, the production and the supply chain will be seriously disrupted," said the apex trade body.

The economy has overcome the impacts of the political disturbances in the run up to the January 5 parliamentary election this year, and a progress is being reflected now in all economic indicators, it said.

"At this juncture, the strike will hamper the economic progress."

The business community will take to the streets, if any chaos is created in the name of political programmes, says the FBCCI statement.

Political problems cannot be solved by creating chaos, it says, adding that destructive programmes like strikes would only ruin the economy.

The Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka said it had always been against all sorts of strikes.

Farooq Ahmed, secretary general of the MCCI, urged the political parties to find out alternatives to strikes, since such programmes harm the economy and businesses to a large extent.



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Gono Bhaban yesterday. Wang Yi is on a three-day tour of Bangladesh.

Beijing positive on Ctg-Kunming road

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connectivity," said Foreign Secretary M Shahidul Haque.

He was talking to journalists after a bilateral meeting between the Bangladesh and Chinese foreign ministers in Dhaka yesterday.

At the meeting, China once again showed an interest in constructing a deep sea port in Sonadia Island. The Bangladesh side in response said it would decide on the matter after reviewing proposals from other countries, said the foreign secretary.

Dhaka proposed a tri-nation meeting, involving Myanmar, on the road link.

Earlier on several occasions, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina urged Beijing to build the rail-road links between the two cities, while China repeatedly expressed its interest in financing and building the deep sea port.

The Chittagong-Kunming connectivity was one of the electoral

pledges of Awami League in 2008 general elections. Myanmar in 2011 opposed the rail link through its territory forcing China to shelve the rail project.

Yesterday, at a marathon-meeting with his Bangladesh counterpart Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi discussed a series of bilateral issues and economic co-operations.

Apart from the rail-road connectivity and deep sea port, investment in infrastructure and agriculture, military and industrial cooperation, exclusive economic zone in Bangladesh and BICM economic corridor came up in their talks.

Meeting sources said China asked Bangladesh to expedite building of special economic zone.

The foreign secretary, however, told the press that China expressed "satisfaction" with the overall progress of the economic zone's work. The visiting delegation hoped

that a "solid" output would come next year when both sides would celebrate 40 years of diplomatic relations.

He also said both sides agreed to strengthen friendly relations and economic cooperation between the countries.

China proposed starting negotiations for the free-trade agreement (FTA) to narrow down the trade imbalance with Bangladesh. The two-way trade crossed \$10 billion mark and it is now heavily in favour of China, he added.

The visiting team appreciated Dhaka's leadership role in discussions on Bangladesh-China India-Myanmar (BCIM) economic corridor, which would play complementary role in China's dream projects -- economic belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

Both sides also discussed holding foreign office consultations and Dhaka has proposed to hold the first

meeting next year in Dhaka.

The visiting foreign minister expressed "satisfaction" with the socio-economic advancement of Bangladesh and termed it a "role model" for many developing countries.

Beijing also wants to be a partner in efforts to build a "Digital Bangladesh", the foreign secretary said.

Wang Yi arrived in Dhaka on Saturday in his maiden visit for three days, following Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Beijing visit in June and ahead of 40-year diplomatic ties celebration next year.

Dhaka yesterday invited the president of China to visit during the celebration and the Chinese side said they would convey the invitation to the president, sources added.

The two foreign ministers are likely to brief the media today about the outcome of the meeting.

Test for 20-party, worry for public

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Instead, she banked on party leaders and activists in Gazipur, hoping they would defy section-144 there on the BNP-led combine's hartal during on Saturday, said party insiders.

But her party men failed to deliver. Not many BNP men were seen on the streets in Gazipur during Saturday's hartal.

Leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League already took to the streets to denounce the shutdown that the BNP-led alliance had called to protest the ban on Khaleda's rally.

On Thursday, they had taken control of Khaleda's rally venue, which prompted the administration to impose section-144 and ban all political activities there from Friday afternoon.

BNP leaders and activists in Gazipur couldn't counter the BCL men.

The archival's organisational weakness has made the AL confident, as it is set to complete one year in office since returning to power through the one-

sided January 5 national polls.

The recent statements of many senior AL ministers and leaders have made it clear that the government would take a hard line on the BNP in the coming days.

The BNP has applied to the authorities concerned to hold rallies on January 3 and 5 at either Nayapalton or Motijheel Shapla Chattar or Suhrawardy Udyan in the capital.

Interestingly, the AL also plans to hold a rally on January 5 at Suhrawardy Udyan, while BCL prepares to bring out a procession in the capital to mark its founding anniversary on January 3.

A number of senior AL leaders and government policymakers said they wouldn't give the BNP men any scope for taking to the streets.

BNP policymakers also believe that the government will not allow them to hold rallies as per the party's plan. In that case, the BNP may call hartal for three days from January 5, and also announce programmes like road

blockade, said party insiders.

"We have no other alternative but to intensify our movement," Moudud Ahmed, member of the BNP national standing committee, told The Daily Star yesterday.

The BNP-led 20-party alliance plans to launch a strong agitation from January to force the government to call an early election under a non-partisan administration.

The silence of Jamaat-e-Islami, a key component of the alliance, has also disappointed and worried Khaleda, said party insiders.

Jamaat-Shibir men had carried out violent demonstrations in 2013 to thwart the January 5 elections.

Talking to The Daily Star, Jamaat insiders said they had to pay dearly for the anti-government protest. They lost scores of activists while many party leaders and worker were put behind bars.

This time, they want to be sure that the BNP is serious about carrying on an anti-government movement.

42 Hindus killed in a single day

War crimes witness from Bagerhat tells tribunal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A prosecution witness yesterday told the International Crimes Tribunal-1 that Razakars had shot dead 42 Hindus at Shakhrikathi Bazar in Bagerhat on November 5 during the Liberation War.

Abdul Aziz, 81, ninth prosecution witness in the case against Sheikh Sirajul Islam, Khan Akram Hossain and Abdul Latif Talukder, said he had seen the war crimes accused along with other Razakars before the killings.

Aziz said he along with Hashem Jomadar and Kalu Munshi had gone to Shakhrikathi Bazar around 4:00pm that day and seen a group of around 40-50 Razakars.

"Those Razakars tied around 40-45

Chinese FM meets PM, Khaleda

PM seeks more investment from China

STAR REPORT

Seeking more investments from Chinese entrepreneurs in various sectors of Bangladesh, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said China needs to do more for the country's development.

"China should do more for the development of Bangladesh," the prime minister said when Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi made a courtesy call on her at the Gono Bhaban.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, PM's Press Secretary AKM Shameem Chowdhury said Wang Yi assured Hasina of all kinds of assistance in achieving the country's goal to become a middle-income country by 2021 and a developed nation by 2041.

The Chinese minister believes Bangladesh can play a more important role in maintaining peace as well as development in South and South East Asian regions.

He also expressed an interest in importing jute and jute products from Bangladesh, reports UNB.

At the meeting, Hasina said Bangladesh wants to celebrate 40 years of diplomatic ties between the two countries next year with the presence of either the Chinese president or premier.

She also told the Chinese minister that Bangladesh hopes the construction of multi-modal tunnel under the Karnaphuli River in Chittagong would be inaugurated by the Chinese president.

Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali, Minister for Road Transport and Bridges Obaidul Quader and PMO Senior Secretary Abul Kalam Azad, among others, were present on the occasion.

MEETING WITH BNP CHIEF

At his meeting with Khaleda Zia last night, the Chinese foreign minister hoped that the "ongoing political standoff" in Bangladesh would be resolved through dialogues between

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A bus of the public administration ministry burns at Paltan in the capital yesterday evening after it was set on fire allegedly by pickets during a nationwide hartal sponsored by the BNP-led 20-party alliance yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

New Noah's Ark

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Viktor Sadivnichy, the university's rector, likened the gigantic project to a modern-day 'Noah's Ark'.

He explained: "It will involve the creation of a depository - a databank for the storing of every living thing on Earth, including not only living, but disappearing and distinct organisms.

"It will also contain information systems. If it's realised, this will be a leap in Russian history as the first nation to create an actual Noah's Ark of sorts."

The announcement marks the latest, and most ambitious, of the world's DNA banks which have increased in numbers in the past decade following breakthroughs in technology and growing concern about species extinction.

Britain also maintains the Frozen Ark Project, which is run by a consortium of biological societies, zoos, museums and research facilities.

It holds a remarkable 28,604 frozen DNA samples, of which more than 7,000 are from species on the 'red list' of endangered animals.

This includes the Spiny Lobster, the Channel Islands Fox, the Bonefish, the Indiana Bat and Cat's Paw Coral.

But Russia's historic Noah's Ark project is not the first of its kind for the country - a storage facility in the remote Siberian wilderness aims to use the natural cold of Siberia's thick permafrost to preserve seed and plant samples for up to 100 years.