

# Robber killed in 'shootout'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

An alleged ringleader of a forest robber gang was killed in a "shootout" between law enforcers and his aides in Panirkhola area near the Sundarbans early yesterday.

The deceased, Billal Farazi, 35, son of Khokan Farazi of North Saralia village in Morrelganj upazila, was the chief of notorious Billal Bahini, police said.

Police recovered a double barrel gun, a single barrel gun and 500 bullets from the spot.

Billal was an accused in a case filed in connection with abduction and murder, the OC added.

Billal and Forhad, son of Mokbul Munshi of Baruikhali village under the same upazila, were rushed to Swarankhola Upazila Health Complex where doctors declared Billal dead.

The body was sent to Bagerhat Sadar Hospital morgue for an autopsy. Forhad sustained bullet wounds in his right leg.

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# India to measure air quality in world's most polluted capital

AFP, New Delhi

India's government launched a new air quality index yesterday, under intense pressure to act after the World Health Organization declared New Delhi the world's most polluted capital.

Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said the government would publish air quality data for 10 cities, amid growing public concern over the impact of air pollution on the health of India's 1.2 billion people.

The government's website with the index went live yesterday morning but could not be accessed.

"The Air Quality Index may prove to be a major impetus to improving air quality in urban areas, as it will improve public awareness in cities to take steps for air pollution mitigation," Javadekar said as he launched the index at a conference on the environment.

But he gave little indication of what the government would do to improve air quality, except to say it would introduce new rules on disposing of construction waste.

# Two Dhaka city projects dropped

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during the pre-election period is a violation of electoral code of conduct.

The two projects are "Construction and improvement of roads, drains and footpaths in Gulshan, Banani and Baridhara diplomatic areas" worth Tk 200 crore and "Interim Water Supply" worth Tk 252 crore.

Citing related provisions of electoral code of conduct, the EC yesterday requested the Local Government Division to suspend all new development projects in Dhaka.

Elections to the bifurcated Dhaka city corporations and Chittagong will be held on April 28.

The mayoral and councilor aspirants will be allowed to launch campaign

# Verdicts come

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He was executed the same day. The SC on September 17 last year commuted death penalty of Jamaat leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee and sentenced him to imprisonment till death.

The SC verdicts on Kamaruzzaman and Quader Mollah satisfied family members of the war crimes victims, justice seekers and war crimes trial campaigners, state counsels and investigators, but the judgement on Sayedee has frustrated them.

However, the convicts' families, defence counsels and the party they belong to were dissatisfied with the trial and verdicts.

Kamaruzzaman, assistant secretary general of Jamaat and a key organiser of the infamous Al-Badr force that was responsible for abducting, torturing and killing freedom fighters, intellectuals and pro-liberation people in 1971, is now in Dhaka Central Jail.

He was arrested in connection with a criminal case on July 13, 2010 and shown arrested in the war crimes case on August 2.

The prosecution pressed formal charges against him incorporating nine charges of crimes against humanity on January 15, 2012 and the International Crimes Tribunal-1 took the charges into cognisance on January 31.

Kamaruzzaman's case was transferred to the International Crimes Tribunal-2 on April 16, 2012 for expeditious trial.

On June 4, 2012, the tribunal indicted Kamaruzzaman on seven charges of crimes against humanity including murder and torture of unarmed civilians and complicity in other crimes during the nine-month-long war.

On May 9, 2013, the ICT-2 sentenced Kamaruzzaman to death for his crimes against humanity.

He submitted his appeal to the SC challenging the tribunal's judgement on June 6, 2013.

On November 3 last year, the SC upheld the tribunal verdict dismissing his appeal.

On February 19, the prison authorities read out the death warrant to him after the ICT-2 had issued it the same day.

Kamaruzzaman filed the review petition on March 5, praying to the SC to scrap his conviction and acquit him of the charges.

Eminent jurist Shahdeen Malik yesterday told The Daily Star that it was satisfactory that trial of three war criminals had finally concluded and 14 had seen judgements at both the ICTs.

"This was certainly a very important achievement, he added.

"However, the trial and appeal process have taken a very long time, which is symbolic of delay in our judicial system," Shahdeen Malik observed.

# Verdicts come

He also said it would have been much better if the war crimes trial along with other judicial process would have been much more efficient and justice was delivered faster.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam told The Daily Star that different countries had put pressure on the government for not holding the trial of war criminals and also tried to stop the proceedings.

Many people, both at home and abroad, had criticised the trial proceedings and expressed their confusion, although international standards were maintained, he said, adding, the Skype scandal was hatched to stop the trial.

He added disposal of three war crimes cases had successfully taken place due to sincerity of the government and its lawyers, judges and witnesses.

Expected judgement in the case against Sayedee could not be achieved due to neglect of investigators, he added.

Law Minister Anisul Huq expressed satisfaction with the SC verdict on Kamaruzzaman, saying justice had been delivered through it.

Following the ICT-2 verdict of death sentence on Sayedee in 2013, activists of Jamaat and its student body Islami Chhatra Shibir resorted to violence across the country, leaving 65 people dead and several hundred injured in just a week.

Amid controversy over the leak of his Skype conversation with an expatriate Bangladeshi legal expert, the then chairman of ICT-1 Justice Md Nizamul Huq resigned on December 11, 2012.

Following Justice Nizamul's resignation, Kamaruzzaman on January 2, 2013 sought retrial of the war crimes case against him.

Bangla daily Amar Desh also published "transcript of the Skype conversation" of Justice Huq with Ahmed Ziauddin, a law expert on international crimes.

According to the attorney general, those incidents were aimed at hampering the trial.

Appeals filed by eight convicted war criminals against their death sentences handed down by the two ICTs are now pending with the Appellate Division.

The appellants are Jamaat Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed, BNP leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, Jamaat chief Motiur Rahman Nizami and its leaders Mir Quasem Ali, ATM Azharul Islam and Abdus Subhan, expelled Awami League leader of Brahmanbaria Mobarak Hossain and former state minister of HM Ershad's government Syed Mohammad Qaisar.

The attorney general expressed the hope that the SC would dispose of the eight appeals within one year.

# STRANDED NATIONALS IN YEMEN Dhaka, Delhi hold talks on evacuation

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and India on Sunday night held a coordination meeting in Djibouti regarding evacuation of their citizens stranded in war-torn Yemen.

"Gen VK Singh, Minister of State [External Affairs] held coordination meeting with Bangladesh officials in Djibouti last [Sunday] night," the Indian High Commission in Dhaka posted on its official Twitter page yesterday.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam, who is now on an official visit to Oman, in a Facebook post yesterday said some 14 Bangladeshi reported near Al Mukalla of Yemen.

"We have advised them to use the Oman border near Salalah," he said. He added that the government of Oman had agreed to help bring Bangladeshis back from Yemen through their border following his meeting with the Oman counterpart on Sunday.

"We are also expecting over 100 Bangladeshi using Al Hudayda (Yemen city) with the help from Indian Navy," he wrote in Facebook.

Shahriar also mentioned that the Bangladesh government was seeking permission for Biman to fly either Djibouti or Sana'a.

Earlier, an Indian ship had rescued three Bangladeshis from Al Hudaydah, a city of Yemen near its capital Sana'a.

The rescued Bangladeshis are now in Djibouti and will be brought back home by air soon.

A two-member Bangladesh team from its mission in Kuwait is now in Djibouti and so far communicated with Bangladesh nationals in two cities -- Aden and Sana'a in Yemen.

Some 1500-3000 Bangladesh nationals are living in Yemen, according to Foreign Secretary M Shahidul Haque.

# Mintoo out, son in

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president AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury.

HC REJECTS MINTOO'S WRIT The HC bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice Kazi Md Ejarul Haque Akondo yesterday summarily rejected Mintoo's writ petition challenging the divisional commissioner's order.

On Saturday, Dhaka Divisional Commissioner Zillar Rahman had dismissed Mintoo's appeal against the Returning Officer's decision cancelling his nomination due to procedural flaws. Mintoo filed the writ petition with the HC on Sunday.

The HC order left the BNP in a difficult situation since Khaleda pinned high hopes on Mintoo, according to party insiders.

# Back home, at last

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Helal's wife Aleya Begum expressed happiness that her husband finally returned home safe and sound.

"I could hardly sleep in the last few days. We are delighted that he returned among our children," she said.

She doesn't want her husband go to Libya again. "His life wouldn't be safe there."

Militants on March 6 had abducted Helal and Anowar along with seven other foreigners -- four Filipinos, an Austrian, a Czech and a Ghanaian -- from the Al-Ghani oilfield in the south of Sirte.

They freed the Bangladeshis and the Ghanaian on March 24, said ASM Ashraf Islam, counsellor (labour wing) at the Bangladesh embassy in Tripoli.

From Sirte, the three tried to reach Tripoli. But they were held by the army in Misrata. The army kept the three in its custody for interrogation.

On Thursday, the VAOS brought them to its Tripoli office. The following day, they were taken to the firm's head office in Malta, said Ashraf.

# FEUD OVER 3-STORY BUILDING Man murders brother, sister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A man murdered his elder brother and younger sister by stabbing and injured four other family members in the city's Kadirganj area early yesterday following a feud over a three-storey building.

Tariqul Islam, a 46-year-old auto-rickshaw driver, confessed to the crime, according to police. Around 3:00am, he first stabbed his brother Sadikul Islam, 58, who was asleep, in the chest.

His sister Akhtar Jahan Kalpona, 38, was stabbed in the head and chest, said Sub-Inspector Moshirur Rahman of Boalia Police Station.

Sadikul's wife Jahanara Begum, 45, brother Monirul Islam, 50, Monirul's son Niamatullah Tushar, 23, and daughter Umme Kulsum, 24, were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital with stab injuries.

Tariqul too was hurt and admitted to RMCH as other family members got hold of him after the attacks, beat him

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# Kashmir's Hindu refugees look to Modi for salvation

AFP, Jammu

Seven decades after fleeing the carnage of partition, Mangu Ram is still regarded as a second class citizen in Indian Kashmir, unable to own property or vote in state elections.

But, now aged 82, Ram is daring to hope he will finally be able to shed his refugee status after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist party won a share of power in India's

only Muslim-majority state.

"If something can be done, then maybe I will finally have some enjoyment in this life," says the traditional healer, speaking in a slum home on the outskirts of Jammu, Kashmir's winter capital.

"If only the gods could show us some mercy."

A Hindu, Ram was born in pre-independence India in an area of Punjab province which became part of Pakistan.

# Complaints filed

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On behalf of the platform, Abdul Wahab Kashemi submitted the complaints to the Election Commission office in Chittagong.

Contacted, Assistant Returning Officer Shafiqur Rahman confirmed that they had received the complaints.

In one complaint, Kashemi alleged that Nasir on Sunday had conducted election campaign by holding separate meetings at JM Sen Hall and in Uttar Kattali where he assured city dwellers of development of the city.

In another complaint filed against Hasan Mahmud, Kashemi stated that the AL leader tarnished the image of Manjur by giving indecent and offensive speeches against him.

Leaders of Unnayan Andolon also expressed deep concern over the bla-

tant violation of electoral code of conduct by the ruling party candidate and its leaders.

Prof Abul Kalam Azad and SUM Nurul Islam, convener and member secretary of the platform, yesterday in a statement alleged that several ruling party ministers, leaders and the AL backed mayor candidate were violating electoral code of conduct by staging showdown during submission of nomination paper, arranging feast in posh hotel in presence of several ministers, and conducting election campaign for the candidate in the name of meeting or seminar under different banners.

The leaders urged the Election Commission to take action against Nasir and Mahmud for the sake of fair election.

# Jamaat calls 48-hr hartal

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carrying dead bodies would be outside the purview of the hartal.

The party, which opposed Bangladesh's birth in 1971, also termed the allegation against its leader "false," saying the government "did all preparations to award Kamaruzzaman the death penalty as partisan people gave testimonies before the court against him".

SHIBIR MAN KILLED An alleged Shibir man was killed and another shot in a clash with police in Noakhali Sadar upazila, hours after the SC upheld Kamaruzzaman's death sentence yesterday, reports our correspondent.

The deceased was identified as Noakhali Government College first year student Omar Farooq, 22, son of Nurul Alam of the upazila.

The clash broke out after police intercepted a Jamaat procession near Majidee court area brought out around 11:30am protesting the SC verdict, said witnesses.

"The procession was brought out by some 10 to 15 Shibir men and they were trying to engage in vandalism," Anowar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Sudharam Model Police Station, said.

"They opened fire on the law enforcers. Police were compelled to

fire back," he said, adding, after the clash they arrested three of the Shibir men among whom the two were shot.

Doctors at Noakhali's Abdul Malek Ukil Medical College Hospital declared Farooq dead on arrival. Rakib, the other arrestee, was being treated at the hospital under police custody.

Rakib, however, claimed that the allegation against him was false and he found himself into the clash when he was going to a bank to pay his electricity bill.

A case would be filed. NARAYANGANJ In Narayanganj, police detained an alleged Shibir man on charges of torching a bus hurling petrol bombs at it in Don Chamber area around 4:00pm.

None of the bus passengers was injured in the arson attack, reports our correspondent.

Police detained Yusuf Hossain, hailed from Madanganj upazila, when he along with other Shibir men was fleeing after hurling several petrol bombs at an Ananda Paribahan bus, Officer-in-Charge Monzur Quader of Narayanganj Model Police Station said.

After the bus was set on fire, fire fighters rushed to the spot and doused the flame, said witnesses.

# Big challenge for big bunny

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officially the world's biggest rabbit. But his title is now being contended by his son Jeff, who already measures 3ft 8in - with six months left of growing to do.

The rabbits' owner, Annette Edwards, 63, from Bromsgrove, says she looks forward to the day when Jeff dwarfs his father.

It costs her £5,000 a year to feed her giant bunnies as they munch their way through 2,000 carrots and 700 apples.

The pair both also eat a huge dog bowl full of specialist rabbit food every day, and a bale of hay a week.

Ms Edwards said: 'Although the pair of them are huge, they're the best animal friends I could ask for.

and get on well with children and these two are no exception.

'They're even friendly to other animals! Jeff's best friend is my other pet, a boxer dog called Kay.'

Continental Giants are the largest breed of rabbit and can grow to around 4ft when fully grown but Darius - who is officially four foot four inches long - and Jeff come from a bumper crop.

Jeff was born after Ms Edwards introduced Darius to one of her other rabbits Sally - another Continental Giant who measures 3ft 5 inches.

The family all live in her back garden but they are so big that they each require a dog crate that would normally house a pet as large as German shepherd.

Annette added: 'Darius was always big but Jeff is huge considering he's still a baby. I'm expecting him to grow

much bigger than his dad.

'As soon as I think he's made it, he'll be measured by his vet and then Guinness will certify that he is the biggest rabbit in the world.

'Even though they're so big, they are very low upkeep. They really do look after themselves most of the time.

'They run free in the garden during the day and at night go to sleep in their cosy crates. They never make a mess and actually would be great house rabbits.

'Although when they start to moult at the end of the summer, they need a good daily brush.

'And being the world's biggest rabbit, and his son, they've got a giant appetite to match.

'But it's actually good for them to be eating hay all day long - to keep their teeth and digestive system healthy.'

## VACANCY NOTICE



United Nations Development Programme

**United Nations Development Programme in Bangladesh** announces a vacancy for the position of Social Protection Specialist (SB-4 level) with Social Protection Policy Support Programme (SPPS) Project under Service Contract modality.

*The duration of the Service Contract (SC) is one year initially, subject to renewal on an annual basis upon satisfactory performance and availability of funds.*

For details of the Job Description and instructions to apply, please visit our website: <http://www.bd.undp.org/content/bangladesh/en/home/operations/jobs/>.

Applications should be received no later than **Tuesday, 14 April 2015**.

**Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. Female candidates are particularly encouraged to apply.**