

Blogger killed, again

FROM PAGE 1
on free thinkers.

An organiser of local Gonojagoron Mancha, which champions the call for maximum punishment for war criminals, he was on his way to work when the attack happened around 8:45am. He died on the spot, police said.

An official of Pubali Bank's Jauwabazar branch in Sunamganj, Ananta is the third Bangladeshi blogger killed in less than three months in a similar fashion. He used to blog for Mukto-Mona, or free mind, the site Avijit Roy had launched. In many of his blogs and Facebook posts, he wrote against religious fundamentalism.

Barely a month after Avijit's murder on the Dhaka University campus, blogger Oyasiquir Rahman was stabbed to death on March 30 in the capital's Tejgaon in broad daylight.

Religious fanatics have been blamed for both the murders.

MILITANTS AGAIN?

Within hours of Ananta's murder, Ansar Bangla 8 on its Twitter account posted photos of his body and said: "Alhamdulillah, All the Brothers of Operation team are safe.

"For Journalists: Use#AQIS [Al-Qaeda in Indian the Sub-Continent] while reporting about the killing..Don't use Ansar Bangla 8 again."

The same page later claimed: "Al-Qaeda in Indian Sub-Continent (#AQIS) claimed responsibility of [sic] killing #AnantaBijoy in #Sylhet."

Following the murders of Avijit and Oyasiquir, Ananta had reached out to the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU), a global umbrella organisation embracing humanist, atheist, rationalist, secularist, sceptic, freethinking and similar organisations worldwide.

According to a statement of the IHEU, he wrote to the organisation: "It seems to me I am one of the targets. I am not sure how long I will hide myself. But I am sure if they find me, they will do what they did to Mr Avijit Roy. My life is seriously unsecured [sic]. I am not sure how can I protect myself & my family."

Earlier, he got an invitation from Swedish PEN to speak about the threat to atheists in Bangladesh, but he was refused visa last week by the Swedish embassy in Dhaka, on grounds that he might seek to remain in Sweden, said IHEU, an international NGO with representation on various United Nations committees and other international bodies.

"Each of these murders is a crushing loss to the humanist and secularist communities of South Asia and the world," said the IHEU statement released after Ananta's murder.

Just last week, the IHEU was helping Ananta in seeking to gain asylum in Europe, an effort which ultimately failed, said the British Humanist Association.

Recently, Ananta, who also penned

several books, applied for a fellowship in journalism in Norway and made Avijit's father Prof Ajoy Roy one of his referees.

"I called him on Monday to tell him that the reference has been sent to the fellowship authorities," Prof Ajoy told The Daily Star yesterday.

Ananta and Prof Ajoy had known each other for the last several years and alerted each other of possible danger.

CHASED DOWN AND KILLED

Yesterday, Ananta got out of his Subid Bazar home around 8:15am. Finding no rickshaw, he walked to Subid Bazar main road, around 250 yards from his house, said witnesses.

All of a sudden, four assailants, all masked and wearing black sunglasses, came from behind and one of them hacked him in the head with a cleaver.

Hit, Ananta started running back towards his house. But the attackers, who had trousers and half-sleeve shirts on them, chased him down and encircled him near a pond known as Dastidardighi.

This time, they hacked him indiscriminately, leaving gaping holes in his head and other parts of the body.

The attackers fled through Bankalapar Road, while Ananta lay on the scene in a pool of blood for about half an hour until locals called his family, said Abdus Sobhan, a tea seller who witnessed the murder from a close distance.

His family took him to Osmani Medical College Hospital in Sylhet where doctors said he was dead already.

Sobhan said he was making tea for two customers at his stall, around 10 yards from the killing spot, when he saw four men slash Ananta, whom he knew.

The assailants had their faces covered with black cloths, he added.

Sheikh Md Yasin, a sub-inspector of Airport Police Station, who prepared the inquest report, said they found at least 14 severe stab wounds in Ananta's head, neck and back. Several stab marks were also found in other parts of his body.

Parts of his brain came out and one of his index fingers was cut off, he added.

ON THE HIT LIST

Members of Police, Rapid Action Battalion and Criminal Investigation Department have visited the spot and collected evidence.

Pankaj Kumar Dey, assistant superintendent of police of Rab-9, said the murder seemed to be pre-planned and bore the hallmarks of the murders of Avijit and Rajib Haider (a blogger, who was killed in February 2013).

Ananta was among the 84 people on the hit list of militant outfit Ansarullah Bangla Team, Bangla daily Jugantor reported on March 7. Hefajate Islam had given the same 84 names to the home ministry, claiming they were anti-Islam.

Debasish Debu, a friend of the

victim and chief of Gonojagoron Mancha's Sylhet unit, said Ananta had long been receiving threats from different fanatic groups for his writings, more so since Avijit's murder.

The body of Ananta, the youngest of four siblings, was taken to his Subid Bazar home around 4:00pm where his ailing parents saw him for the last time.

Prof Muhammad Zafar Iqbal of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, his wife Prof Yasmeen Haque and Awami League lawmaker Amatul Kibria Keya Chowdhury visited the house.

"I believe the government can catch them [the culprits] if it tries, and tries sincerely.... I urge the government to do something before another young boy or a young girl gets killed so that we don't have to see this in our country anymore," he said after the visit.

PROTESTS

Protesting the murder, activists of Gonojagoron Mancha and Chhatra Union Sylhet units brought out a procession in Sylhet city.

They also held a rally in the hospital area where the protesters alleged Ananta was killed in a planned way for his write-ups on the Mukto-Mona blog and Facebook.

Ananta would not have been killed had the trials of previous murders been held, they said.

Progressive Student Alliance and Gonojagoron Mancha's Sylhet units called a half-day hartal in Sylhet city today.

The activists of Gonojagoron Mancha in Dhaka also brought out a procession and held a rally at Shahbagh in the afternoon.

[Our Moulvibazar correspondent Mintu Deshuwara also contributed to the report.]

ISIS to elect stand-in leader for injured Baghdadi: report

PTI, Washington

With Islamic State chief Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi incapacitated due to suspected spinal damage, the terror group's shura council is to elect a stand-in leader this week to handle day-to-day affairs, according to a media report.

Baghdadi has been moved from Iraq to the Syrian city of Raqqa, the terror army's de facto capital, amid tight security two months after sustaining serious shrapnel wounds, leaving his spine damaged and his left leg immobile, The Daily Beast reported citing accounts of jihadist defectors.

not tell him anything to be hopeful about.

"They [detectives] said they were investigating and would not disclose information for the sake of investigation," he said. He, however, said he believed that the Bangladesh police were capable of arresting any killer anytime.

Meanwhile, Oyasiquir's father Tipu Sultan said he was completely unaware of any progress into his son's murder case. He also said no cops had contacted him since his son was killed on March 30.

Tipu said he had left the area [Tejgaon], where he and his son had spent 19 years together, soon after the death of his son.

"Nothing will console me now. I don't know what fault I have done that Allah punished me this way," he said.

Condemning the killings, rights body Ain o Salish Kendra in a statement yesterday said the government

should take "effective and cautious steps" to ensure security of all bloggers and progressive-minded individuals.

"The repeat of such incidents [killing] proves that no steps have been taken by the government to provide security to the individuals whose lives are under threat," reads the statement.

Anti-war crimes platform Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee in another statement said Ananta was killed in a way similar to the ones in which bigots killed free thinkers Ahmed Rajib Haider, Avijit Roy and Oyasiquir Rahman.

"If proper investigation, justice and exemplary punishment had been ensured in case of the earlier killings, we would not have to see the recurrence of such killings," reads the statement.

Left-leaning Ganatantrik Bam Morcha also condemned the killings of the free thinkers.

Amnesty

FROM PAGE 16

In a statement yesterday, the EU delegation to Bangladesh said Ananta is already the third blogger murdered this year in Bangladesh.

Reiterating its strong attachment to freedom of expression as an essential element of a democratic society, it called for a prompt investigation to bring perpetrators to justice.

EU Ambassador in Bangladesh Pierre Mayaudon also expressed his condolences to Ananta's family.

Condemning the murder, British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Robert W Gibson tweeted: "Shocked by and condemn the brutal murder of Ananta Bijoy Das. There must be space for free speech in Bangladesh."

Meanwhile, the AI said the Bangladeshi authorities must deliver justice over the shocking murder of the secularist Bangladeshi blogger Ananta Bijoy Das -- the third such killing this year -- if they wish to avert a looming crisis for freedom of expression in the country.

"Some of these killings have been claimed by extremists -- but they have been facilitated by the official failure to prosecute anyone responsible," said Abbas Faiz, AI's Bangladesh Researcher. "The murder of Bijoy Das again shows that Bangladesh is not doing enough to protect critics of religious intolerance, or to prosecute their attackers."

"The prevalent impunity for all these cases continues to send a message that such attacks are tolerated by the authorities. Ending impunity and ensuring protection for those at risk must be a priority for the Bangladeshi authorities," he added.

38kg gold seized at Ctg airport

2 arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Customs officials seized 325 gold bars, weighing around 38kg, at Shah Amanat International Airport in the port city yesterday and detained two people in connection with the gold smuggling.

The arrestees -- Mohammad Hossain, 35, of Comilla, and Rubel Khaki, 34, of Shariatpur, -- came to Chittagong from Dubai on a Biman Bangladesh flight that landed at the airport around 6:45am.

Of the gold bars, 37 were recovered from Hossain, while the rest were found in an abandoned condition at three toilets of the airport. Rubel was detained while coming out of one of the toilets on suspicion of his involvement in the gold smuggling, said customs officials.

Acting on a tip-off, commissioner of Chittagong Customs House and the on-duty customs officials at the airport first searched the Biman flight, but found nothing there, said Parvez Al Jaman, assistant commissioner of Airport Customs.

Later, they found 288 gold bars in several cans of chips kept at the toilets of the airport lounge, the official said.

They then body-searched Hossain and recovered 37 gold bars from his possession.

Obama okays oil drilling in Arctic

AFP, Washington

US President Barack Obama's administration on Monday approved petroleum giant Shell's request to drill for oil and gas in the Arctic under certain conditions, despite opposition from environmental groups.

The decision by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management granted Shell the right to explore the Chukchi Sea as long as the Anglo-Chukchi firm gets the correct permits from the agencies that regulate the environment and marine mammal health.

Picasso work

FROM PAGE 16

Eleven minutes of prolonged bidding from telephone buyers preceded the final sale - for much more than its pre-sale estimate of \$140m.

The final price of \$179.3m (£115m) includes commission of just over 12%.

The sale also featured Alberto Giacometti's life-size sculpture Pointing Man, which set its own record.

It is now the most expensive sculpture sold at auction, after going for \$141.3m (£90.6m). Both buyers chose to remain anonymous.

The previous world record for a painting sold at auction was \$142.4m, for British painter Francis Bacon's Three Studies of Lucian Freud in 2013.

The Picasso oil painting is a vibrant, cubist depiction of nude courtesans, and is part of a 15-work series the Spanish artist created in 1954-55 designated with the letters A to O.

"This is an absolutely blockbuster picture - it's one of the most exciting pictures that we've seen on the market for

10 years," said Philip Hoffman, founder and CEO of the Fine Art Fund Group.

"Yes there are one or two [Picassos] that could even smash that record but it has a huge wall presence, it's a big show-off picture.

"For anybody that wants to have a major Picasso, this is it - and \$179m in 10 years' time will probably look inexpensive," said Hoffman.

Experts believe the investment value of art is behind the high prices.

"I don't really see an end to it, unless interest rates drop sharply, which I don't see happening in the near future," said Manhattan dealer Richard Feigen.

"There's a huge amount of demand," added Hoffman, founder and CEO of the Fine Art Fund Group.

"The world's billionaires are in New York, the world's museum buyers are there.

"I don't think we've ever seen a sale as important as this in Christie's and Sotheby's in my 25 years of working in the art world."

Nepal quake

FROM PAGE 16

Sensing tremor, Nahar started screaming and then fell unconscious. Family members rushed her to Tentulia Upazila Health Complex where doctors declared her dead.

Rakhi Akhter, a medical officer of the health complex, said she died of cardiac arrest, reports our Thakurgaon correspondent.

An employee of Tentulia Sub-Registrar's office also fell unconscious for sometime out of fear of dying in earthquake disaster. She took treatment at a local hospital.

According to the US Geological Survey, the earthquake that occurred in Nepal-China border also shook Bangladesh and India around midday.

At least 30 people, mostly workers, of a Bidi factory in Pabna fell sick during the tremor, reports our Pabna correspondent.

Dr Khalid Bin Kashim, a doctor at the emergency unit of Pabna Medical College Hospital, said some 30 to 40 people took treatment after feeling sick because of the repeated jolts.

Fazlur Rahman, an officer of Agrani Bank's Nalitabari upazila branch, was

grievously hurt when he was hurriedly coming down stairs of his house during the quake, reports our Sherpur correspondent.

The tremor also caused cracks in the house and tilted the two-storey building of Sherpur Govt Victoria Academy. The building was declared abandoned.

Syed Humayun Akhter, a professor of geology department at Dhaka University, said, "It would be really shocking for Bangladesh if the tectonic rupture in Nepal extends further towards east and releases energy that remained stored in Sikim, Bhutan, Meghalaya and Dauki faults."

The 7.3-magnitude aftershock that jolted Nepal yesterday occurred in the same rupture of April 25 quake, further east from Lamjung rupture stretching 130 km east and west and released 7.8-magnitude energy, he said.

Frequent tremors in Nepal could mean Bangladesh should start preparation for major earthquake disaster management, said Prof Akhter.

The high-magnitude aftershock struck eastern Nepal, near the Mount Everest, two weeks after more than 8,000 died in a devastating quake.

More than 100 rescued

FROM PAGE 16

a "gunfight" with police in Cox's Bazar's Sadar upazila early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Belal Hossain, 45, of Khuruskul union in the upazila, said Kazi Matiul Islam, officer-in-charge of Sadar Police Station.

With yesterday's incident, five "traffickers" have been killed in "gunfights" with members of law enforcement agencies in the district since Friday.

OC Maitul said Belal was accused in six cases filed on charges of human trafficking.

He claimed two policemen were also injured in the "gunfight" that took place around 4:30am at Bhumirayaghona village in the upazila.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided the village where a gang of human traffickers, including Belal, was staying, he said.

"Sensing the presence of the law enforcers, they opened fire on the police, prompting the law enforcers to retaliate," the OC claimed.

At one stage, the criminals fled the

scene, but police found the bullet-hit body of Belal on the spot. Later, the body was sent to Cox's Bazar Sadar General Hospital.

A homemade gun and two bullets were recovered from the spot, said police.

THREE 'HUMAN TRAFFICKERS' HELD IN CHITTAGONG

Members of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) arrested three suspected human traffickers and seized 32 passports with fake Libyan and Egyptian visas from their possessions in Chittagong's Halishahar area on Monday.

The arrestees were identified as Ali Akbar, 39, his brother Bahar Uddin, 28, and Shah Bayezid Ullah, said Suman Sardar, sub-inspector of Halishahar Police Station. All of them hailed from Feni.

Halishahar Police Station OC Shahjahan Kabir said on information, a CID team raided an apartment in Barapool intersection around 6:30am on Monday and arrested the trio with the passports. They were handed over to Halishahar police.

Cops carried

FROM PAGE 16

assaulting two to three girls. Why didn't the people arrest and punish them?" questioned IGP AKM Shahidul Hoque.

He was talking to journalists at his office at the police headquarters. Blasting people's "inactiveness", the police chief said people have the legal right to arrest anyone involved in criminal activity. In such cases, police need not arrest the criminals, he added.

Criticising Bangladesh Chhatra Union leader Liton Das, an eyewitness

to the sexual assault incident, Hoque said he was telling different versions of the incident at different media outlets.

Even if one considers Liton's statements to be correct, then the police carried out their duties "properly". Cops rescued two girls by charging batons on troublemakers at the scene and later helped them rent a CNG-run auto-rickshaw, said the IGP.

He said all the television channels aired some video footages of the incident supplied to them by police, but nobody came forward to help the law enforcers identify any of the offenders.

India to provide free diagnostic tests for all

TNN, New Delhi

The Centre is set to announce a scheme for providing free diagnostic tests, including several blood tests, x-rays and advanced CT scans, for those visiting public health facilities. Private service providers will be roped in wherever required.

While the idea of providing free diagnostics has been hailed by all those aware of it, health economists and public health experts expressed concern over outsourcing the tests to the private sector, arguing that it is an "expensive and inefficient" way to provide the services.

Costs of drugs and diagnostics constitute about 70% of health expen-

Failure to arrest culprits

FROM PAGE 16

On Monday, Ananta Bijoy Das, who was hacked to death in Sylhet yesterday, wrote in his Facebook page: "When Avijit was killed, police watched from nearby. The killers escaped safely. Later, police claimed they had no negligence in duty. I want to know what their duty is!"

Prof Ajoy Roy, father of slain blogger-writer Avijit Roy, called into question the efficiency of the police since the killings of the three bloggers took place within a short period of time.

"They have been killing free thinkers one after another while police and detectives are doing nothing," said the father whose son was hacked to death on February 26.

Prof Ajoy said he had gone to the office of the Detective Branch (DB) of police on Minto Road couple of days ago to know about the progress of Avijit murder case but detectives did

Nat'l ID

FROM PAGE 16

citizens aged below 18 in advance so that our data collectors need not visit a home repeatedly," Election Commissioner Shah Nawaz told The Daily Star.

Whenever these below 18 would turn 18, they will automatically be enrolled in the voter list, he added.

Currently, there are over 9.62 crore voters in Bangladesh.

WOMEN MEMBERS IN UPAZILA

The EC will hold elections to over 475 upazila parishads for reserved women members on June 15, an election commissioner told this newspaper.

According to the Local Government (Upazila Parishad) Act 1998, the number of reserved women members in a particular upazila would

be one-third of the total number of union parishads and municipalities under the administrative area of the upazila.

The members and councillors elected in women's reserved seats in those union parishads and municipalities will contest the elections for women's reserved seats in upazila parishads. The elected representatives such as general members, councillors, chairmen and mayors of union parishads and municipalities will cast votes for electing the women members of the upazila parishads.

Over 475 upazilas went to polls in different phases from February to December last year. Formation of the upazila parishads will remain incomplete until the elections to women's reserved seats are held.

Another slave

FROM PAGE 16

investigation. The ranks range from non-commissioned officers to colonel.

Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha yesterday reiterated his instructions, first issued on May 6, for civilian authorities, police and the military to do a complete scan of the south within the 10-day deadline.

spokesman Maj Gen Sansern Kaewkamnerd said.

The PM also said that any official, police and military personnel found to have a hand in the trafficking would automatically be transferred away.

Meanwhile, the Anti-Money Laundering Office yesterday ordered the seizure of assets belonging to members of a trafficking gang led by one Phadungsak Bunphini.

PROCUREMENT DIVISION
PROCUREMENT & LOGISTIC SUPPORT DIRECTORATE
 Tender No.: DACPP/AUCTION/11/GSE/2014-15 Date: 10-05-2015
AUCTION TENDER FOR SALE OF US GS EQUIPMENT
 Sealed tenders are hereby invited for sale of following Ground Support Equipment on "As is, Where it is" basis:

Descriptions of Ground Support Equipment	Value of tender schedule
AC VAN-01 EA, Fork Lift-01 EA, Belt Loader-01 EA, LD-3 Container-05 EA, LD-3 Container Scrap-01 Lot Dolly/Trolley-21 EA and Battery-65 EA. Total 07 Lots (As per schedule).	Tk. 2,000/- (Taka two thousand) only (non-refundable).

Tender schedule may be purchased from Asstt. Manager Accounts, Cash & Banking, Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd., Balaka Bhaban (Ground Floor), HSA, Dhaka-1229 on all working days within office hours up to 08-06-2015. An application on companies letterhead pad mentioning Tender No. will be required for purchasing of tender schedule.
 Intending bidders may visit the GSE items mentioned in the schedule on 09-06-2015 at 11:30 hrs showing original (Yellow) Cash Receipt for purchasing of tender schedule to Manager Commercial Stores, Biman Admin. Building, HSA, Dhaka.
 Tender in sealed covers to be dropped in the tender box kept in the Office of the Manager Commercial Stores, Procurement & Logistic Support Directorate, Biman Admin. Building (1st Floor), Room # 205, HSA, Dhaka as well as Office of the Divisional Commissioner, Ground Floor, 1st 12 Storied Govt. Office Building, Segunbagicha, Dhaka-1000 latest by 11:30 hrs (BST) on 11-06-2015. Offers via Postal Mail/Courier Service will also be accepted but no offers shall be accepted after closing time & date. Tender will be opened on the same day at 14:30 hrs (BST) in the Tender Room of Procurement & Logistic Support Directorate in presence of the bidder(s)/representative(s), if any. Biman Bangladesh Airlines Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

A. B. M. Alamgir
 Manager Commercial Stores
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