

KIBRIA MURDER CASE
Accused Ariful denied bail extension, sent to jail
 OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A Sylhet court yesterday denied a petition filed by sacked Sylhet City Corporation mayor Ariful Haque Chowdhury seeking bail extension in the Shah AMS Kibria murder case. Speedy Trial Tribunal Judge Makbul Ahsan rejected the petition and sent him to jail, said Kishore Kumar Kar, public prosecutor of the tribunal. Ariful secured 15 days' bail in the murder case from the High Court on March 22 and in an explosives case from Habiganj Court on March 27.

On January 27, 2005, the then opposition lawmaker and Awami League leader Kibria and four others were killed in a grenade attack on a rally in Habiganj.

The day after the attack, Abdul Mazid Khan, then organising secretary of Habiganj district AL, filed two cases—one for murder and the other under the Explosive Substances Act -- with Habiganj Sadar Police Station.

Rab arrests human trafficker in capital
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion yesterday arrested an alleged member of a human trafficking gang and seized 2,275 forged visas, 212 passports and computer equipments during a raid at an apartment in the capital's Fakirapul area, said a Rab press release.

The arrestee Aktar Hossain, 27, admitted that the gang used to collect passports of fortune seekers from recruiting agencies, it added. Two of his associates Nizam Uddin and Ibrahim managed to flee.



A crumpled rickshaw after being rammed by a bus from behind, in front of the capital's Jatiya Press Club yesterday. Reckless driving by bus drivers is a major cause of accidents, but there has been barely any step to control it.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

13th OIC summit begins in Turkey
 PM not attending, sending foreign minister instead
 DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

With the 13th annual summit of Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC) beginning in Istanbul, Turkey, on Sunday, leaders and representatives from the world's Islamic countries reached there to attend it.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who was earlier scheduled to attend the summit, is not going there, but she sent her Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali yesterday to lead the Bangladesh delegation.

Leaders at the summit styled "Unity and Solidarity for Justice and Peace" are set to put focus on the Palestinian cause, conflicts and instability in member states and also combating terrorism.

Measures will be undertaken to develop joint Islamic action and advance the OIC's role in the regional and international arenas at the conference which will be followed by a meeting of foreign ministers today and tomorrow, said diplomatic sources.

About the prime minister's visit, officials at the Prime Minister's Office and the foreign ministry told The Daily Star that though there was preparation for her visit, she abandoned it for security reasons since there were several attacks carried out by Islamic State in Turkey in recent times.

The summit came a day after the US warned of a "credible threat" of attacks in Istanbul, they mentioned.

Another source, seeking anonymity, said there was negative opinion within the government about visiting Turkey by the prime minister as Istanbul was vocal against the trial of the war criminals and wrote to the government leaderships not to try those who committed war crimes during the 1971 Liberation War.

13 rescued from forced labour
 OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Thirteen people, including a child, who were allegedly confined, tortured and forced to work in an illegal brick field in Barisal for the last couple of days were rescued by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday noon.

The site's manager, Milon, and a local broker, Kabir, have been arrested while a case filed against the duo; the brick field owner, Tajem Ali Howlader of Banaripara upazila's Kajla village; and his son Forkan, said police.

The charges were filed at Banaripara Police Station by Halim Kha, a relative of victim Khalil Kha, whose hand was said to have been broken during the torture.

Another victim Afjal Hossain said they were all residents of Hajrakathi village, situated in Satkhira's Tala upazila. They came to work at Tajem Brick Field in Banaripara's Baishari village six months ago on being promised monthly wages ranging from Tk 10,000 to Tk 12,000, food and accommodation, he said. However, they were never paid while money to buy food was not regularly provided, he said. The owner and his men recently started keeping them confined in a tin-shed room and under watch while forcing them to work and torturing those who refused, he added.

Some of the victims who had cellphones contacted their relatives, who then communicated with journalists, leading to Rab-8, sources in which stated that the owner, his son and other employees fled the scene during the raid.

Muggers shoot, rob three in Savar
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four muggers shot three staff of an RMG factory and took away a bag full of money in Baliapur of Savar, on the outskirts of the capital, yesterday afternoon.

Savar police said three employees of Heaven Apparels Ltd were returning to the factory by a car after withdrawing Tk 25 lakh from a bank's branch in Mirpur of the capital. When they reached Baliapur area, four muggers shot them through the vehicle's windows from two motorbikes, and snatched away a bag containing Tk 12 lakh.

With bullet injury in his right leg, Shawkat Ali, 37, the factory's director, was admitted to Enam Medical College Hospital. None was arrested.

Verdict any day on 5 Kishoreganj war crimes accused
 Four tried in absentia
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 will deliver the verdict any day in a case against five Kishoreganj men, accused of committing crimes against humanity during the Liberation War in 1971.

The three-member tribunal led by Justice Anwarul Haque with members Justice Md Shahinur Islam and Justice Md Shohrwardi yesterday kept the case waiting for judgement after the prosecution and defence counsels completed their arguments.

The accused are Gazi Abdul Mannan, 88, alleged commander of a Razakar camp, Nasiruddin Ahmed, 62, his brother Shamsuddin Ahmed, 60, Hafiz Uddin, 66, and Azharul Islam, 60, all alleged Razakar mem-

bers from Karimganj upazila of Kishoreganj.

They are facing seven charges, including those of mass killing, murder, confinement, torture, arson and looting. Of the five, only Shamsuddin is now in jail, while the rest are on the run. The fugitives were tried in absentia.

Wrapping up their submission, Prosecutor Rezia Sultana Chaman said the prosecution had been able to prove all seven charges "beyond any reasonable doubt" and sought the capital punishment for the accused.

Defence counsels Masud Rana and Abdus Shukur Khan prayed for the acquittal of their clients, saying the prosecution had failed to prove any of the charges.

The prosecution charged the five on May 10 last year and the tribunal indicted them on October 12 the same year.

The charges are killing of eight people and injuring of another of four villages on November 12; killing of Miah Hossain of Aila village on November 13; abduction and killing of Abdur Gafur of Kalatali on September 26; abduction, torture and killing of Fazlur Rahman of Atkapara on August 23; killing of Pares Chandra Sarkar of Ramnagar on September 7; torture and killing of Abu Bakar Siddique and Rapali Miah on August 25, and arson and vandalism in Atkapara on September 15.

The prosecution produced 25 witnesses, including the investigation officer, but the defence declined to produce anyone.



These men were rescued from confinement in an illegal brick field in Barisal by Rapid Action Battalion yesterday noon. Residents of Satkhira, they say the brick field owner had not paid them for six months, was irregular in meeting a contract condition of paying for food, and had confined, tortured and forced them to work for the last couple of days.

PHOTO: STAR

14 'Shibir men' sent to jail for 'planning terror attack'
 OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A Barisal court yesterday noon denied bail and sent to jail 14 persons detained earlier by Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) men and handed over to police, who filed a case under the terrorism prevention act claiming they were Shibir members planning to commit sabotage.

The 14 were detained by BCL's Gournadi upazila unit President Jubayer Islam Santu Bhuiya and his associates from Kasemabad Siddikia Kamil Madrasa, situated in Science Building in Kashemabad area, on Sunday night, claimed Gournadi Police Station Officer-in-Charge Alauddin Milon.

Jubayer also handed over some "jihadi literature" he claimed to have recovered from the possession of the 14 leaders and activists of Islami Chhatra Shibir, student front of Jamaat-e-Islami, he added.

The arrestees include Shibir's Gournadi upazila unit president, Jahangirnagar University and Rangpur divisional unit president, Patuakhali district unit president, he said.

Sub-inspector Abdus Sattar filed the case, which stated that the 14 were planning to carry out sabotage protesting the trials and punishments being handed down on war criminals, who are also Jamaat leaders.

Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Shihabul Islam sent them to the Barisal central jail.

Woman

FROM PAGE 4
 Our Sylhet correspondent reports: Ilias Miah, a local trader, was arrested on Sunday in Bishwashpara of Habiganj allegedly for raping an eight-year-old girl on Wednesday evening. Family members of the girl said Ilias lured the girl with chocolates and raped her after taking into a house in the city's Madina Market area. The arrest was made following a case filed by the girl's mother, said Kotwali police.

Hearing

FROM PAGE 4
 shots in the air from his sport utility vehicle (SUV) for "being frustrated over post-midnight traffic" on April 15 last year, leaving a rickshaw-puller and an auto-rickshaw driver dead on New Eskaton Road. Rony later admitted to opening fire on people, claimed police.

5:00pm deadline stays for outdoor

FROM PAGE 3
 said security would be tightened from Ramna Park to Suhrawardy Udyan to DU. The area would be under CCTV surveillance, while police would monitor the celebration from three control rooms. There would be nine watchtowers, he said. The gates of the Udyan and entry to the DU campus would be restricted and closed after a certain time as people would have to use separate gates for entry and exit, he said.

Vehicles without DU stickers would not be allowed to enter the campus from 6:00pm on April 13 to 9:00pm the next day, he added. Roads in the area will be off limits for traffic as people have to use diverted routes from 5:00am to 5:00pm on April 14, he further added.

"We have taken the security measures so that people can celebrate the day amid festivity and they do not have to put themselves at risk," he said. The decision came against the backdrop of several women being sexually harassed

by a gang of molesters near TSC of the DU campus during Pahela Baishakh celebrations last year.

Police had been accused of letting some of the molesters go when people caught and handed them over to the on-duty police.

Asked, the commissioner said they would ensure maximum measures this year to avert any repeat of such incident.

"Investigation [into the sexual assault incident] is going on. We have detected several persons through scrutinising [CC] television footage but could not reveal their identities," he said.

Replying to a query, the DMP commissioner said there is no certain threat from any quarters centring the celebration this year.

Answering on Olama League demand for banning Pahela Baishakh celebration, the DMP chief said "a vested quarter has been trying to tarnish Bengali culture for long."

"We will remain alert so that it [the demand] cannot confuse people and make the security measure hazardous," he said.

HC stays suspension of Gazipur

FROM PAGE 4
 The government will, however, move an appeal before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court against the HC order, said Deputy Attorney General Mokhlesur Rahman. The LGRD ministry on August 19 last year

suspended Mannan, after a Gazipur court accepted a charge sheet against him in a case filed with Joydevpur Police Station for an arson attack on a bus in the city on February 4 the same year.

He was arrested in the capital on February 11 last year.

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