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A SHOT AT GLORY

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Machete attack kills 1 in Kushtia

Homeopath the latest victim of similar killing, university teacher wounded; victims known as promoters of Baul songs

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Machete-wielding assailants have struck again, this time killing a homeopath and critically injuring a university teacher in Kushtia yesterday.

It comes six days after an elderly Buddhist monk was hacked to death inside a temple in the hilly district of Bandarban.

It is not clear who carried out the attack and why, but police said it bore the hallmark of the ongoing attacks on freethinkers, secular and online activists, academics, bloggers, writers, publishers, minorities and people of different ideologies by suspected militants.

The dead is Sanaur Rahman, 60. He died minutes after the attack.



Sanaur Rahman



Saifuzzaman

The injured is Saifuzzaman, 42, an assistant professor of Bangla at Islamic University in Kushtia. He is in critical condition with injuries in his shoulder, neck, chest and hands. He was brought to Dhaka by an air ambulance and was admitted to the Apollo Hospitals. Doctors will operate on him today or tomorrow.

The two were good friends, partly because of their common interest in Baul philosophy.

Three youths aged between 25 and 30 intercepted the two at a secluded place at Bottoil near Sadar upazila around 10:45am when they were going to Sanaur's village home on a motor-bike.

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US 'TROUBLED' BY RECENT ATTACKS -- PAGE 11



Boatloads of rice being brought to Ashuganj Haat on the Meghna in Kishoreganj. The wholesale market, one of the biggest in the country, is dominated by middlemen who are allegedly ripping off farmers taking an undue advantage of slow public procurement of rice. The photo was taken last week.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Cyclone Roanu getting closer

PROJECTED PATH OF CYCLONE ROANU



STAR REPORT

Cyclone storm Roanu may make landfall in the south-eastern coast of Bangladesh this afternoon or evening, said a special cyclone bulletin of the Met office yesterday.

"It will cross the coastal areas tomorrow [today] afternoon with moderate strength. Its impact may not be as strong as Sidr [a cyclone] but there will be rain," said the duty forecasting officer of Dhaka Met office yesterday evening.

Around 2:00am today, Roanu was about 295 kilometres southwest of Mongla Port yesterday evening and was heading towards Chittagong-Noakhali coast.

Shamsuddin Ahmed, director of Bangladesh Meteorological Department, said there had been incessant rainfall due to the cyclone. Offshore

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Kushtia Shibir man killed in blast

He was carrying bomb, say police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

An alleged Islami Chhatra Shibir activist was killed when a bomb he was carrying exploded in Kushtia yesterday, police said.

The dead is Naimul Islam Naim, 14, of Koburhat Sardarpara area in Kushtia Sadar upazila.

Another "Shibir" activist, Hafizul Islam, also 14 and of the same area, was injured in the blast.

The incident happened around 11:15am when the two teenagers were going towards Koburhat Bazar on foot, according to witnesses and police.

"Suddenly, there was a loud bang and we saw the two boys on the scene," said Masud Hossain, a street vendor.

Locals rushed to the blast scene but Naimul was already dead.

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Boro farmers at the mercy of middlemen

Buyers offer prices lower than govt-fixed rates for paddy, rice; procurement by govt yet to start

REAZ AHMAD

When the government had declared at the very beginning of the harvesting season that it would buy a higher volume of paddy directly from farmers, Boro growers across the country pinned high hopes on the domestic food procurement scheme.

But two weeks have gone by since the paddy and rice procurement drive was officially launched on May 5 and thousands of the Boro growers still remain at the mercy of private buyers and middlemen.

The farmers are being offered much less by the buyers and the middlemen than what the government had promised under the public procurement scheme.

The reason farmers are losing out is because in reality the government rice-buying drive has not started yet. Thanks to procedural delays, the food directorate is yet to open its silos for farmers to sell paddy and rice.

As per a late April decision, the government is supposed to complete procuring 13 lakh tonnes of paddy and rice from Boro growers between May and August.

Contacted, Ilahi Dad Khan, director (procurement) at the Directorate General of

Food, acknowledged the situation and attributed it to the district food officials not getting Boro farmers' lists from the agriculture officers concerned at the grassroots.

Golam Mawla, food controller of Lalmonirhat, said they were not being able to start buying rice due to the delay in getting the list.

It is almost the same all over the country as reflected in the official procurement figure which has not yet reached the 500-tonne mark in past two weeks.

As a result, farmers' expectation to get price benefits out of the public grain procurement has not met.

Farmer Mohammad Hasan Ali, who reaped 37 maunds of paddy (1 maund = 37.37kgs) out of his 84 decimals of Boro land in Tangail, couldn't be happy when he was offered Tk 600 for a maund of paddy.

Though this fetched him almost no profit, Ali still cultivates paddy as he said, "Paddy cultivation does not require anyone to invest all the money at once. Besides, I also need rice to feed my family."

Afsar Ali is a farmer of Aditmari in Lalmonirhat.

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Now Hefajat enters scene

Demands trial of N'ganj teacher humiliated by MP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hefajat-e Islam, a radical Islamist group, yesterday gave a 72-hour ultimatum to the government to try Shyamal Kanti Bhakta for "demeaning religion", though a government probe body found no evidence that the Narayanganj headmaster had hurt anyone's religious sentiment.

Several hundred activists of the outfit demonstrated in the district headquarters after Juma prayers, apparently in a show of support for local Jatiya Party lawmaker Salim Osman who humiliated the Hindu teacher in public

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Shyamal Kanti Bhakta sitting on his bed at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Suspect shot near White House

Taken in custody

CNN, Washington

Secret Service officers yesterday shot a male suspect near a security checkpoint close to the White House after he apparently brandished a weapon, a law enforcement source said.

The suspect was shot in the abdomen and taken into custody, according to two sources familiar with the incident.

President Barack Obama was not at the White House, and Vice President Joe Biden was secured in the White House complex during the incident.

The city's EMS said a patient identified as the suspect has been transported to a local hospital with critical injuries. Another law enforcement official said investigators have located the suspect's vehicle near the shooting area.

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The asphalt on the FDC level crossing in the capital has worn out creating deep potholes. The potholes make the level crossing risky for vehicles with small wheels as they could get stuck on the line. Inset, a train passing the level crossing.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

TONU RAPE, MURDER No arrest in 2 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The investigators of Sohagi Jahan TONU murder case have yet to identify the killers, let alone arresting anyone two months into the incident.

What they could do in these two months was confirming from DNA test findings that the student of Victoria College in Comilla was raped before murder.

The killers and the rapists are still out of the hook. The only demand of the victim's family is immediate arrest of the culprits and fair trial.

Yaar Hossain, TONU's father, told The Daily Star, "We are disappointed as the killers are yet to be identified in two months."

"We demand immediate arrest of our daughter's killers and highest punishment through proper trial," he added.

A confrontation between the investigators of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and the doctors at Comilla Medical College, who have conducted the second

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