

SHOLAKIA ATTACK

Five suspects released

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh
A Kishoreganj court yesterday released five people, who were arrested as suspects over the Eid day attack in Kishoreganj's Sholakia. They were arrested from different areas of the district town for interrogation soon after the incident, police sources said. The court of Chief Judicial Magistrate Abdus Salam Khan passed the order based on a police report submitted on Monday. The five were produced before the court. Mir Mosharraf Hossain, officer-in-charge of Kishoreganj Sadar Police Station, said the allegation of the arrestee's involvement in the militant attack could not be proven. The five are Mamunur Rashid alias Mamun, 28, of Mosharraf Taika area in Karimganj upazila; Sohel Miah, 20, of Sultanpur area in Baitpur upazila; Ariful Islam Hashib, 32, of Paschim Tarapasha and Mohammad

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Commonwealth Secretary General Baroness Patricia Janet Scotland meets Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the UN headquarters in New York on Monday.

PHOTO: PTD

BSF shoots Bangladeshi dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat
A Bangladeshi man was shot dead by Indian Border Security Force (BSF) about 100 metres inside the Indian territory at Bangerbari border of Dahagram in Patgram early yesterday. BSF took the body of the man, a BGB official said. The official added that a letter was sent to BSF protesting the killing of the Bangladeshi national. The man Hazrat Ali, 35, was the son of Amir Ali of Bangerbari village of Patgram. Quoting a BSF message, BGB official sources said patrolling BSF men opened fire on Bangladeshi cattle traders bringing in seven to eight cattle from India through the border around 4:30am. The other traders managed to return to Bangladesh with their cattle, BGB said. The victim's father Amir Ali however said his son was going to his aunt's house in Maynaguri of Jalpaiguri district in India when the BSF men shot him.

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Don't we have

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Speaking at a rally there, protesters demanded the government arrest the killer's after matching the DNA samples of suspects with those collected from the victim's body. They also threatened to launch a tougher movement if their demand was not met soon. Tonu, a history student at Comilla Victoria Government College, was found dead near her house inside Comilla Cantonment area on the night of March 20. Around 40 members of Ochin Pakhi Baul Society took part in the demonstration yesterday. Later, they along with leaders and activists of Gonojagoron Mancha and local people brought out a protest procession which paraded through several city streets. While addressing the rally, Tonu's mother Anwara Begum couldn't hold back tears. "Wasn't Tonu a Bangladeshi citizen? Don't we have the right to demand justice?" she questioned. She said her family did not receive help from the Criminal Investigation Department of police in speeding up the investigation. "Six months have passed since my daughter's death, but no progress has been made yet. They [CID] keep on saying that they are looking into the matter.... The investigation officer is being changed, but the case remains unresolved," lamented Anwara. She demanded justice for the murder. Tonu's brother Anwar said they were frustrated over the trial for the murder. He called upon the prime minister to bring the perpetrators to justice. Khairul Anam Raihan, convener of Comilla Gonojagoron Mancha, said although six months have passed since the murder of Tonu, no visible progress has been made in the investigation.

Women stabbed

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The alleged killer, Surender Singh, has been arrested. Karuna, a teacher, was stabbed some 30 times on a busy road in Burari in north Delhi. Her family had complained to the police about five months ago that she was being harassed and stalked by Singh, a 34-year-old neighbor in the middle of a divorce. It is not clear why no action was taken. The police claim that the two families had "reached a compromise". CCTV visuals show the attacker stabbing the woman repeatedly as she thrashed about helplessly. Some glanced and kept walking, others watched in horror but failed to react. Two people were seen moving towards the woman but backing off. The woman soon stopped moving but the attacker didn't. He went at the prone body a few more times with his knife. Then he was seen picking up a stone and bashing it against her head. He finally gave the body a hard kick before walking to his bike, unchallenged and apparently unconcerned about being caught. A witness, Manish Kumar, took Karuna to hospital in an auto-rickshaw. "I ran and went to help the girl. I called on 100 twice, the police did not come, then I called the ambulance, no one came," he added. Karuna's family protested outside the hospital. "The man had been harassing my sister for a long time. He stays in Rohini. We had filed a complaint, after which he had calmed down... until now," said her brother.

US should give duty-free access

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supplement Bangladesh's strives towards becoming a middle-income country by 2021 and a developed country by 2041. "Importantly, such a worthwhile partnership would also strengthen our two countries' friendship," she added. Hasina said Bangladesh's main export to the USA is apparel and this industry employs four million workers, including 90 percent women from poor families. Their earnings are helping their empowerment. She said the RMG workers' contributions now provide better nutritional food, allow children to go to schools, and give them a respectful voice at home. "Significantly, this trend is supporting our fight against extremism and terrorism by transforming our society into a progressive one. For these efforts to succeed, it is vital for the US to give Bangladesh apparel duty and quota free access to its market." Bangladesh, said the PM, is ready for US investment in power, energy, especially renewable and green energy, shipbuilding and recycling, automobile and light engineering, chemical fertilisers, agro-processing, pharmaceuticals, ceramic and plastic goods, ICT, marine resources extraction, tourism, medical equipment, telecommunications and knowledge-based high tech industries. The premier said the American

companies are still the largest investors. Last year, they invested half-a-billion US dollars or 25 percent of the total FDI in Bangladesh. In trade, the US is still the largest single country destination of Bangladeshi products. "Our two countries' bilateral trade reached \$7 billion last year. It could be more if the high tariffs and compliance issues on Bangladeshi apparel to US market were removed," she observed. Hasina regretted that the US in 2013 suspended its GSP privileges to Bangladesh. It was even sadder that the US last year restored its GSP privileges to all South Asian countries, except Bangladesh. She said Bangladesh is a progressive, secular democracy with a homogeneous population of which 60 percent is below the age of 40 and are available at competitive wages. Bangladesh has gas, coal, water, fertile soil, and a fast growing middle class population with increasing purchasing powers. The country has the most liberal investment policy in South Asia. It includes protection of foreign investment by law; generous tax holiday, concessionary duty on import of machinery, remittances of royalty, 100 percent foreign equity, unrestricted exit policy, full repatriation of dividend and capital on exit, to name a few, Hasina pointed out. Moreover, around 100 exclusive economic zones are being set up, with

a dozen ready to have foreign private labour-intensive industries, she added. PM's ICT Adviser Sajeeb Wazed Joy, Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md Shahriar Alam and Bangladesh Ambassador to the US Mohammad Ziauddin were present, among others. Assistant Secretary of US Department of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Nisha Desai Biswal and business leaders from American Tower Corporation, Walmart, MetLife, Boeing, Chevron Corporation, GE and Coca Cola attended the meeting. PM FOR SOUTH-SOUTH NETWORK Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday proposed to establish a "South-South Network of Public Organisations" to develop a broader understanding and exchange of public sector innovations among the global South. It would also facilitate generating ideas, sharing experiences and learning from each other, she said. The PM was addressing the seminar titled "South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Scaling up Innovation in Public Service Delivery" at the UN headquarters. Bangladesh and the UN office for South-South cooperation organised the programme. Hasina urged friendly countries from the South to positively consider the proposal and countries from the North to support the initiative within

the Agenda 2030 framework. The PM said Bangladesh already signed MoUs with the Maldives and Bhutan to collaborate on promoting and scaling up public service innovation. The South-South and Triangular Cooperation has demonstrated their effectiveness to inspire international solidarity in achieving the MDGs, she added. "There remains a huge potential of this cooperation in realising SDGs as well. This, however, calls for sincere commitments, deeper engagements and action-oriented approaches among the parties involved." She mentioned about extensive utilisation of ICTs in Bangladesh for decentralising service delivery to graduate it to a middle-income country by 2021. The premier noted that social media platforms were being used to redress citizens' grievances in a significant way. "This has not only made public service delivery efficient and cost-effective, but also guaranteed greater transparency, accountability and quality of the service. This has also contributed to strengthening of trust and confidence between the government and the citizens," she mentioned. Earlier, World Bank President Jim Yong Kim met the PM at Hotel Waldorf Astoria where she has been staying during her visit to New York.

Tension flares on Indo-Pak border

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The Indian army said it has recovered arms, ammunition and food and medicine packets with Pakistani markings during the combing operations at the military base in Uri. It also alleged Pakistani troops were "distracting" Indian soldiers yesterday with cover fire to help the militants along the LoC, the de-facto border, sneak into the country. According to an official in Srinagar, the firing from across the border lasted half an hour from 1:10pm. There was no damage from the firing that the army described as a violation of a 2003 ceasefire agreement. In New Delhi, Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh reviewed the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir with top officials, including national security adviser Ajit Doval and foreign secretary S Jaishankar. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lead a meeting of the cabinet committee on security today to discuss the Uri attack. Sources said the three service chiefs are likely to participate. "CEASEFIRE VIOLATION" Indian army spokesman Colonel Rajesh Kalia said there had been a "ceasefire violation" near Uri but gave no details. "Small-arms exchange of fire is on in the area," a senior police officer told AFP on condition of anonymity.

But, in Muzaffarabad in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir, a Pakistani colonel said there was no firing along the Line of Control. Pakistan's Foreign Office spokesman Nafees Zakaria reiterated that no shot had been fired by Pakistan, after Indian television channels said troops of both countries had exchanged fire. "There seems to be some activity across the border but there has been no activity from our side, not one shot fired from here," he told Reuters. Yesterday's exchange was the first since Sunday's attack, which the Indian army has blamed on Pakistan-based militant group Jaish-e-Mohammad. The same group was implicated in an audacious assault on an Indian air force base in Pathankot in the northern state of Punjab in January. It left seven soldiers dead and dashed hopes of a revival of peace talks, which have been on ice ever since. On Sunday, Home Minister Rajnath Singh accused Pakistan of "continued and direct support to terrorism and terrorist groups" and called for it to be internationally isolated. INDIA'S NEW MISSILE TEST Amid such a situation, India yesterday test-fired a new, long-range surface-to-air missile jointly developed with Israel from a defence base off the

coast of eastern state of Odisha, reports our New Delhi Correspondent. The missile was test-launched from a mobile launcher at the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur, an official said. The trial was successful and some more rounds of test are expected to be conducted shortly, the official said. "Apart from the missile, the system includes a Multi Functional Surveillance and Threat Alert Radar [MF STAR] for detection, tracking and guidance of the missile," the official said, adding the missile along with MF-STAR would provide the users the capability to neutralise any aerial threats. NAWAZ SHARIF MEETS KERRY Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif sought help from the US on Monday to resolve tensions between India and Pakistan, as he raised the issue of alleged human rights violations and killings in Kashmir. Sharif met US Secretary of State John Kerry in New York during which he raised the Kashmir issue. "The prime minister said that more than 107 people have been assassinated in Kashmir, thousands injured and worst human rights violations are being committed at the state level," according to a readout of the meeting issued by Pakistan. Sharif, who is in New York to

attend the 71th Session of United Nations General Assembly, earlier called on the permanent members of the UN Security Council demanding that India should be forced to stop its alleged brutalities in Kashmir. He has said he will highlight the Kashmir issue in his address at the UN General Assembly today. According to a statement in the US State department website, Kerry reiterated the need for Pakistan to prevent all terrorists from using Pakistani territory as safe havens, while commending recent efforts by Pakistani security forces to counter extremist violence. Both Sharif and Kerry expressed strong concern with recent violence in Kashmir -- particularly the army base attack, it read. MODI FACES PRESSURE After the Uri attack, Indian PM Narendra Modi faces pressure to launch a military response against suspected terrorist training camps inside Pakistan. Sunday's pre-dawn raid in Uri was the worst attack against the Indian army in the restive region in years, prompting Home Minister Rajnath Singh to label Pakistan a terrorist state. After a more measured response of late to Pakistan provocations, analysts said Modi must retaliate in order to avoid a domestic backlash.

"He will respond militarily," said Deepak Sinha, a retired 30-year veteran of the army who helped train India's Special Forces. "There is no other option." Modi has criticised the last Congress government for being weak on Pakistan. Noting Modi's rhetoric on Pakistan, Sinha said: "He has to respond. If he doesn't, he is completely discredited." 'CORNERING PAKISTAN' Meanwhile, Indian media reports that New Delhi has decided to up the ante against Pakistan on the global stage -- much like it did after the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack. The government has decided to field External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, who is likely to raise the terror attacks in Uri and Pathankot in her speech at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). Sources said she is likely to deliver her address on September 26. The speech will not be the only diplomatic move to corner Pakistan. Sources said the Indian mission to the UN will also set up bilateral meetings with a host of foreign ministers and other leaders representing various countries at the UN -- in a bid to highlight Pakistan's role in terrorist activities in Kashmir and other parts of India. [Based on AFP, Bloomberg, Reuters and Indian news sites]

Lightning kills 18 in a single day

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The trio died on the spot, he added. In Sunamganj, six people were killed in separate incidents of lightning strikes. Shamim Miah, 45, and Tohur Miah, 35, died after being struck by lightning in Dirai upazila. They were going to Dirai Bazar by a boat, police said. Five others on the boat were also injured. An 11-year-old boy was killed at Tuk Dirai village in the upazila. Three others died in Shalla upazila while fishing in a dior. Police identified them as Hridoy Miah, 18, Iman Miah, 20, and Khairul Haque, 20, of Shreehail village. Dirai Police Station's Officer-in-

Charge Abdul Jalil said the injured were taken to Dirai Upazila Health Complex and Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital. In Kishoreganj, five people were killed and two others injured in separate incidents of lightning strikes yesterday and on Monday. A mother and her son died after being hit by lightning in Karimganj upazila's Gujadia union around 10:00am yesterday, police said. They are Lolita Begum, 40, and her son Rimon Miah, 15. Two fishermen -- Nurul Islam, 20, and Rustom Ali, 30, -- were killed while fishing in a water body at Sajonpur in Nikli upazila. Two others were also injured.

On Monday, farmer Nizam Uddin, 60, was killed in lightning at Katkhali village in Sadar upazila. In Dinajpur, two farmers were killed by lightning. Police identified the deceased as Piaro Musahar, 60, and Moti Chandra Roy, 35. Piaro along with six other farmers was struck by lightning while they were working in a paddy field at Sardarpara village in Parbatipur upazila around 1:30pm. Piaro died on the spot while the six others were injured, police said. Locals took the injured to Badarganj Upazila Health Complex in Rangpur. Moti Chandra of Khansama upazila died on the spot after being struck by

lightning around 8:30am. He too was working in a field, police said. In Chapainawabganj, Wahidul Islam, 45, and Abdur Rakib, 23, of Johorpur village in Sadar upazila were killed by lightning. Kamaluddin Huda, chairman of Narayanpur union parishad, said Wahidul and Rakib died on the spot while they were fishing in the Padma river at Sonardi Char area around 3:00pm. In Manikganj, Moijuddin, 55, of Railya village in Satura upazila was killed while he was milking his cow in his house yard around 6:00am. According to the National Geographic, each lightning strike can

contain up to one billion volts of electricity. It is extremely hot as a flash can heat the air around it to temperatures five times hotter than the sun's surface. M Khalid Mahmud, director at the Department of Disaster Management, suggested that no one should stay under the open sky while it is raining. Although he could not give the total number of deaths in lightning this year, he said the hazard has become acute in recent times and that the government was working on creating awareness among the people about it. Our correspondents from Sylhet, Mymensingh, Tangail, Chapainawabganj and Dinajpur contributed to the report.