

# BCL leader found dead in Satkhira

A CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Police recovered the body of a local leader of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) in Sadar upazila of Satkhira yesterday.

The body of Sheikh Hasibul Hassan Emon, 25, joint general secretary of Satkhira BCL and a final year honours student at Khulna Commerce College, was recovered by police from inside a shrimp farm at Amtola Beel under Dhulihor union in the upazila, said police.

Police speculated that the assailants might have killed the victim -- son of Skeikh Iqbal Hassan from Sultampur in Satkhira town -- by strangulation before dumping the corpse in the farm area.

Firoz Hossain Mollah, officer-in-charge of Satkhira Sadar Police Station, said the law enforcers, informed by locals, found the body around 11:00am.

Two individuals named Sheikh Murad Hossain and Sheikh Bakhtiar Rahman from Sultampur in the town were detained on suspicion of their involvement in the killing, he said, adding that they determined the identity of the victim with the help of a cell phone recovered from his possession.

Tanvir Hossain, president of Satkhira BCL, confirmed Emon's affiliation with the party.

Emon's relatives said he lived in Khulna city and he came home fifteen days ago.

Sheikh Hamidul Islam Rimon, his younger brother, said the last time he spoke with his brother was around 9:30pm on Monday and he was not aware when his brother went out of the house later the same night.

The family found out about the incident around 11:00am the next day when Emon's body was recovered from the shrimp farm, he added.

The victim's body has been handed over to the family members following an autopsy, police said.

# Locals enforce

FROM PAGE 16

12:00noon, locals said. As part of the shutdown programme, they also formed a human chain and staged a sit-in protest in the upazila town.

The "missing" local leaders are Monwarul Hassan Jim, 40, senior vice-president of Sadullapur upazila Jubo League and former chairman of Damodarpur union; Sadequul Islam Sadeq, 35, former president of Bangladesh Chhatra League, Damodarpur union; Maidul Islam Prince, 30, publication secretary of Awami League, Naldanga union; and Shafiqul Islam Shapla, 32, assistant secretary of Jubo Dal, Naldanga union.

Jim's father Golam Mostafa Dipti said his son went "missing" on January 9 around 10:00pm when he was on his way to Lal Bazar area on his motorbike to pick up Sadeq, another "missing" person. The two were supposed to go to Naldanga together.

The family members found Jim's cell phone turned off since then, he added. Jim's wife Lovely Begum filed a missing report with Sadullapur Police Station on January 11.

Prince's elder brother Tariqul Islam Nayan, chairman of Naldanga union parishad, said plainclothes individuals identifying themselves as law enforcers "picked up" his brother and "took away" his motorbike on January 10 from Naldanga Rail Gate area around 11:00am.

His cell phone remained switched off ever since, Nayan added.

Shapla's father Aminul Islam's version was similar to that of Nayan's as well. He said his son was picked up from Kachari Bazar area of Naldanga at the same time and on the same day.

Officer-in-Charge Farhad Imrul Qayes of Sadullapur Police Station said police were working to trace the four individuals.

# Injury-beset

FROM PAGE 16

a bounce on his neck on the final day of the first Test in Wellington on Monday. Bangladesh team physio Dean Conway, who on Tuesday said that the captain was extremely doubtful for the second Test, was busy providing injury updates of at least three players. According to Bangladesh's media manager Rabeed Imam, who spoke on behalf of the physio, Mushfiqur was under observation after that concussion. He also said that the captain's left thumb was still swelling.

Regarding Imrul Kayes he said the opener had an ultrasound scan on his left thigh yesterday and the report says that there was a tear on his left thigh muscle and his condition will be monitored for 48 hours. Key batsman Mominul Haque also had an X-ray on his chest, the left-hander got a few blows on the body during the first innings of the opening Test in Wellington and had to play with pain in the second innings. His report however was not available yesterday. The injuries put the team management in serious crisis, although they have got Nurul Hasan as a back-up wicketkeeper in the team.

# Germany's top court rejects bid to ban far-right NPD party

AFP, Karlsruhe

Germany's highest court yesterday threw out a bid to ban the far-right NPD party, arguing that the xenophobic fringe outfit is too insignificant to spell a real threat to the democratic order.

"The request has been rejected," said Federal Constitutional Court top judge Andreas Voßkuhle about the bid to ban the neo-Nazi party, which has around 6,000 members.

He added that "the NPD pursues anti-constitutional goals, but there is currently no concrete evidence... to suggest that it will succeed."

The case marks the second failed attempt to outlaw the National Democratic Party of Germany, with the latest launched by the Bundesrat upper house of parliament which represents Germany's 16 states.

Chancellor Angela Merkel's government supported the case, although the executive did not formally join the high-stakes legal manoeuvre.

The Bundesrat had launched the challenge in 2013, as the country was reeling in shock over the 2011 discovery of a murderous group calling itself the National Socialist Underground.

Racist killings by the group had prompted Germany to crack down

against right-wing extremism.

But since then, the NPD has lost its remaining seats in state parliaments, retaining just one representative, Udo Voigt, in the European Parliament.

It has also lost ground to the anti-euro fringe party AfD, which has morphed into an anti-immigration force railing against the mass arrivals of refugees in 2015.

Polls now credit the NPD with around 1.0 percent support, compared with 12 to 15 percent for the right-wing populist AfD (Alternative for Germany).

But the International Auschwitz Committee's vice president Christoph Heubner voiced dismay at the ruling, warning that it could spur extremists across Europe to champion more hate.

"How can it be that those who cheerfully celebrate the Holocaust and provoke new episodes of hatred in many municipalities may remain in the democratic spectrum?" he asked.

"This reality-blind and untimely decision sends a disastrous signal to Europe, where far-right and right-wing populists have found new partnerships and are now trying to transform the fear and insecurity of the population into hatred and aggression," he warned in a statement.

# Bangladesh firm

FROM PAGE 16

Assessment of all the 3,780 factories as recommended by global brands and retailers has been completed," she added.

Andrew Steer, president and CEO of World Research Institute, moderated the workshop attended by heads of state and government of different countries.

The PM said Bangladesh is the second largest apparel and textile exporting country in the world. The sector employs 4.5 million workers, of which 80 percent are women. The industry accounts for 83 percent of the country's total exports.

"We are supporting the industry to 'go green'. Today, Bangladesh has 38 LEED certified factories. Out of the world's top 10 green factories, seven are in Bangladesh," she pointed out.

The premier said since 2015, the Bangladesh government has been working with 2030 Water Resources Group (WRG) to achieve 100 percent wastewater treatment and increase water use efficiency as per international benchmarks in the country's apparel sector.

PM JOINS WEF MEETING

World leaders, including Sheikh Hasina, gathered in Davos as the 47th Annual Meeting of the WEF kicked off yesterday.

The four-day meeting began at Congress Centre in Davos under the theme "Responsive and Responsible Leadership".

President Xi Jinping of China opened the proceedings of the meeting. Hasina along with other heads of

government and state joined the opening plenary and other events of the meeting.

Heads of state and government of 45 countries joined the meeting which began with a welcome address by WEF founder Klaus Schwab and felicitation of celebrity singer Shakira, among others, for her work towards promoting education.

On the sidelines of the forum, Hasina had informal interaction with the Chinese and Swiss presidents yesterday.

The WEF is a Swiss non-profit foundation, based in Cologne, Geneva. Its mission is cited as "committed to improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic and other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas".

# BDCyclists

FROM PAGE 2

recorded the whole event and sent it to the authorities.

A few like-minded youths decided to go out of the city on bicycles every weekend to get rid of the city's hustle and bustle on May 17, 2011. That was the beginning of BDCyclists, which now has over 70,000 plus members and earned popularity among the youths in Bangladesh.

"We do believe it's time for another good act," reads the profile text of BDCyclists, expressing the youths' determination for good works.

# BNP leader Osman

FROM PAGE 16

Helal Uddin, investigation officer of the case, said, "The probe [against Farruk] began on January 4. I am now going through records and will start field level investigation next month."

Sources in the agency and the prosecution said formal investigation against Farruk, also one of the vice-chairpersons of BNP, began after "evidence over his alleged crimes was found" in preliminary investigation.

Chief Prosecutor Ghulam Arief Tipoo has meanwhile assigned seven prosecutors to assist the investigation officers into the probe of seven separate cases. One of the prosecutors, who was assigned to probe Farruk's alleged crimes, also confirmed the launch of investigation.

After former lawmakers Salauddin Quader Chowdhury and Abdul Alim, Farruk is the top BNP leader facing investigation for allegedly committing war crimes. Salauddin was convicted and executed in November 2015. Alim died of old-age complications while serving jail until death.

BNP has always been critical about the trial begun in March 2010 after the Awami League-led government came to power with a pledge to try the perpetrators of war crimes. On several occasions, BNP leaders alleged that the ruling party were using the trial as a tool to eliminate political opponents, something the AL always refuted.

Son of Muhammad Osman Ghani, a former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University, Farruk was an assistant professor of the then East Pakistan Agricultural University (now Bangladesh Agricultural University) in 1971. He was elected lawmaker from Kishoreganj-4 in 2001 and became the education minister of BNP-led four-party government.

On May 4 last year, the agency said it

started a preliminary probe into alleged crimes Farruk and 10 other teachers of the university committed in 1971.

"Documents show that Osman Farruk was involved with anti-liberation forces," agency's coordinator, Abdul Hannan Khan, told reporters that day.

Sanaul Huq, coordinator of the investigation agency, told The Daily Star that during investigations in a case against Jatiya Party lawmaker MA Hannan of Mymensingh, they had learned that the Pakistani occupation army set up a torture cell turning the university into a cantonment.

He added they had obtained a secret intelligence report prepared in 1972 stating about some teachers' anti-liberation activities.

On Farruk, the report wrote, "[he] Had regular meetings with army officers; invited them to his house for tea, dinners, etc; used to speak against the Mukti Bahini and Awami League leadership publicly and support strongly the army actions; used to work as an informer for Pakistan army."

An investigator, who was involved in the preliminary investigation, told The Daily Star yesterday that there was an anti-liberation group centring the university and Osman Farruk was a member of that group. The investigator declined to give details.

Replying to a question, IO Helal Uddin said if they found evidence of involvement of other teachers, they would also be booked.

The Daily Star tried to contact Farruk over phone but could not reach him. Earlier on May 4 last year when agency talked about preliminary investigation against him, he termed the allegations "totally false and baseless."

"Till now nobody asked me about this. Nobody talked to me," he added.

# ROHINGYA CRISIS No long-term solution sans stopping violence

Says Swedish envoy

UNB, Dhaka

Swedish Ambassador to Bangladesh Johan Frisell has said it is clear that no long-term solution to the Rohingya crisis can be found unless violence in Rakhine state of Myanmar comes to an end.

"The humanitarian situation is serious for the newly arrived refugees. With the impressive efforts by different agencies and organisations, we hope that the needs will be met," he said yesterday.

Three Nordic ambassadors to Bangladesh -- Johan Frisell, Denmark's Mikael Winther and Norway's Sidsel Bleken -- visited Cox's Bazar on January 15-17.

The purpose of the visit was to gain a better understanding of the humanitarian situation for official and undocumented Rohingya refugees, and to meet with UN agencies, NGOs and local authorities.

The recent influx of Rohingyas from northern Rakhine state of Myanmar was a special focus of the visit. The extensive three-day programme included visits to Leda makeshift camp and Nayapara Registered Camp as well as the camps in Kutupalong.

Frisell said this visit shed light on the complex challenges of the refugee situation in the Cox's Bazar. "I appreciate the efforts that the government of Bangladesh is undertaking to address the situation. Sweden is contributing through support to UNHCR and IOM. We have recently entered into a cooperation with the NGO 'Action contre la Faim' in support of their nutrition programme."

Norway's envoy Bleken said, "I'm impressed how the government of Bangladesh and humanitarian organisations have handled the current influx of more than 65,000 Rohingyas escaping atrocities and violence in Myanmar."

"My impression after our visit to Cox's Bazar is that the Rohingyas have a desire to return to the Rakhine state, rebuild their houses and get back to work as soon as possible," Bleken added.

Denmark's envoy Winther said, "I recognise the big burden that is put on Bangladesh with the large number of Rohingya refugees. It affects the local population and it affects Bangladesh's security."

"From a humanitarian point of view, it's important that all vulnerable Rohingyas have access to basic social services -- irrespective of their legal status."

# No impunity

FROM PAGE 1

draft has been prepared," he said.

He said the objective of separation of judiciary from the executive will be implemented if the judges are controlled by an independent conduct and discipline rules.

The chief justice said if implemented a full full-fledged conduct rules will take the judiciary to a higher level in future.

CJ Sinha said the media have been playing an important role in the judiciary's development and implementation of its reforming activities by publishing and broadcasting timely reports.

"Journalism is a great profession and the media has been making contribution as the fourth pillar of the state. A good relationship between the judiciary and journalists is essential..." he said.

The chief justice congratulated the press, journalists, the print and electronic media on behalf of the judiciary.

# Condemned

FROM PAGE 2

Tariqul Islam, jailer of Kashimpur jail-1, said two other convicts -- Arif Hossain and Masud Rana -- were taken to the jail on Monday evening and kept in separate condemned cells.

"They looked very depressed," he said.

Seven people, including the then NCC panel mayor Nazrul Islam and senior lawyer Chandan Sarker, were abducted from Dhaka-Narayanganj link road on April 27, 2014. Later, their bodies were found floating in the Shitalakkhya river.

Of the 26 sentenced to death in the case, 16 are former Rab members, including the then commanding officer of Rab-11 in Narayanganj Lt Col Tareque Sayeed Mohammad and the then company commanders of Rab-11 Maj Arif Hossain and Lt Commander Masud Rana.

Tareque is the son-in-law of Disaster Management and Relief Minister Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya. Tareque, Arif and Masud were withdrawn from Rab and forced into retirement.

# Nigeria accidental air strike

FROM PAGE 16

commander described the casualties from the air strike as "huge".

One local resident, Abba Abiso, told AFP: "At least 25 were killed and many more injured."

The medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said "at least 120 people were wounded and 52 killed following today's bombing", calling the attack "shocking and unacceptable."

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said six Nigerian Red Cross members were among those killed while 13 others were injured.

Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari said in a statement he "received with regret" news of the bombing and said he sympathised with the families of the dead and injured.

The bombing comes as Nigeria's military claims further gains against the Islamic State group affiliate, pushing them out of captured territory and their remote bases in Borno.

Last month, the army said the conflict was in its final stages after nearly eight years of violence that has killed at least 20,000 and left more than 2.6 million others homeless.

'FOG OF WAR'

Nigerian Army Major General Lucky Irabor, who heads operations against the militants, said the air force had been given coordinates of "Boko Haram terrorists" in the Kala-Balge area.

"Unfortunately the strike was conducted but it turned out that the locals somewhere in Rann were affected," he told reporters at a briefing in the Borno state capital, Maiduguri.

Irabor did not give casualty figures but said local staff from MSF and the ICRC were among those wounded.

"These are the result of fog of war," he added. "It is unfortunate. That is the reason why this war must come to an end."

Defence spokesman Rabe Abubakar in Abuja described the incident as "a mistake", adding: "We are actually in grief. It's unfortunate and it's really not intended."

Rann resident Abba Abiso suggested the error occurred as the military was targeting rebel fighters who had been flushed out of Boko Haram camps in the Sambisa Forest area of Borno.

"In recent weeks Boko Haram has moved base to Kala from Sambisa Forest and obviously a military jet mistook Rann for Kala and bombed, killing many civilians," he added.

MSF and the ICRC said its teams were trying to provide emergency first aid at its facility in the camp and were stabilising patients to evacuate the wounded from the scene.

# Rasraj freed

FROM PAGE 16

for posting on Facebook an anti-Islamic picture that hurt religious sentiments.

He was granted bail as his lawyer Nasir Mia submitted a forensic report in court, in which it is stated that there is no proof of him uploading any such image.

Having been freed, the 27-year old said, "I asked my cousin Hridoy to create a Facebook ID [of him] using my mobile phone. But then I didn't use the ID."

He kept the phone at home and went for fishing. "I had been fishing in Balinga Beel for a week. As soon as I came back some people started beating me. They didn't give me any scope to say anything."

"The mob dragged me to the bazaar. Many people gathered there at the time. They then handed me over to police."

Narrating his days filled with trauma, he said he was now happy that he would meet his parents.

In jail, he was kept in a condemned cell on the pretext of ensuring his security.

"I was not allowed to meet my parents [in jail]. Now I will go home and meet my parents," said Rasraj who still has difficulty in walking because of the pain in the legs inflicted by the mob beating.

Expressing concern over his safety, he demanded that the administration provide him with security.

He wants to go on fishing like he did before.

"But I am scared. What if our house and I come under attack again?"

Indrajit Das, maternal uncle of Rasraj, said the family would consult

But Jean-Clement Cabrol, MSF's director of operations, condemned the error.

"This large-scale attack on vulnerable people who have already fled from extreme violence is shocking and unacceptable. The safety of civilians must be respected," he said.

PREVIOUS BLUNDERS

Northeast Nigeria and particularly Borno state has faced severe food shortages as a result of the conflict and food distribution is vital, particularly in hard-to-reach rural areas.

In November last year, the United Nations warned that 75,000 children risked starving to death within months in the region if nothing was done.

Accidental bombings have occurred in the past: in March 2011 an air force jet killed five and wounded several others when it mistakenly hit Kayamla village in the Konduga area of Borno.

The fighter jet mistook the village for a Boko Haram camp during a night raid.

# Modi upbeat

FROM PAGE 2

However, while speaking of the compelling logic of connectivity for peace and prosperity, Modi also said, "It cannot override the sovereignty of other nations."

In this context, Modi said, "With Bangladesh, we have achieved greater convergence and political understanding through connectivity and infrastructure projects and significantly the settlement of land and maritime boundaries."

The Indian PM said, "My vision for our neighbourhood led me to invite leaders of all Saarc neighbours, including Pakistan, for my swearing-in in May, 2014."

Modi said India's political and economic rise represents a regional and global opportunity of great significance.

He said the multi-polarity of the world and an increasingly multi-polar Asia is a dominant fact today. "We need to guard against any inclination that promotes exclusion, especially in Asia."

The Indian PM said India's economic and political rise "is a factor for peace, stability and growth in region and in the world".

Modi said in the last two and a half years, his government has partnered almost all of India's neighbours to bring the region together. "Where necessary, we have shed the burdens of our past for the progressive future of our region. The result of our efforts is there to see."

village leaders and elders about whether he should stay in the village.

"If they give us assurance of his security, Rasraj will live in the village."

On October 30 last year, around 200 religious bigots attacked at least five temples and vandalised and looted about 100 Hindu houses at several localities of Nasirnagar.

Jahangir Alam, owner of Al-Amin Cyber Point and Studio, shared the anti-Islamic post on Facebook the previous day alleging that Rasraj had posted it. Alam made copies of it and distributed those to mobilise people against the youth from the minority community.

Now in police custody, Jahangir confessed to his involvement. He told the police during interrogations that he had done it on instructions of Haripur Union Parishad Chairman Dewan Atiqur Rahman Akhi.

Police on January 4 arrested Akhi, one of the alleged masterminds of the attack.

According to two police probes -- one by the police headquarters in Dhaka and the other by the Brahmanbaria district police, internal conflicts of the local Awami League led to the Nasirnagar attacks on the Hindus, while an investigation by the Brahmanbaria district administration found no such link.

The administration found no negligence either on the part of the local police and the administration.

The police probe reports, however, mention negligence of duty by the UNO and the OC in preventing the attacks.

# Floating city planned

FROM PAGE 16

Polynesian Government, it is hopeful construction can start by 2019.

The institute's executive director, Randolph Hencken, told Pacific Beat finding a host nation was a significant milestone.

He said the next steps involved economic and environmental impact studies as well as legal investigations to figure out the special governing framework the institute believes is crucial to the ongoing success of its floating communities.

The Seasteading Institute was founded by Wayne Gramlich and Patri Friedman in 2008 to establish autonomous, mobile communities on seaborne platforms operating in international waters.

The French Polynesian prototype will not be in international waters but the institute still hopes its vision can be incorporated.

Hencken said the detail of political autonomy needed to be negoti-

ated and considered under the sovereignty of French Polynesia and France, of which French Polynesia is a territory.

"What we're interested in is societal choice and having a location where we can try things that haven't been tried before," Hencken said.

The Seasteading Institute believes their vision for "sustainable, floating islands and innovative islands" will prove to be part of the solution to rising sea levels.

"So much of the world -- places like Kiribati and many of the islands of French Polynesia -- are threatened by rising sea levels," Hencken said.

"We are planning to spin off a new industry of floating islands that will allow people to stay tethered to their sovereignty as opposed to having to flee to other countries."

"That's certainly why the Tahitians are interested in us. They want the environmental resiliency as well as the economic opportunities," he added.