

'Robber' killed in 'gunfight' with police in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A robber suspect caught at a house in the capital's Dakkhin Khan on Thursday was killed in a "gunfight" with police in Diabari area early yesterday.

The deceased is Jahurul Islam, 30. Tapan Chandra Saha, officer-in-charge of Dakkhin Khan Police Station, said seven to eight members of a gang committed robbery at the house.

Locals caught Jahurul and four of his cohorts -- Habib, Kabir, Nuruzzaman alias Nabil and Humayun. Later, they handed them over to police, he added.

Police claimed to have recovered two pistols, four bullets, three machetes and robbed valuables from them. "On early yesterday, a team of police with Jahurul went to Diabari to arrest the other gang members.

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Celebrated actress Farida Akter Bobita receives the Meril-Prothom Alo Lifetime Achievement Award-2018 from the previous year's winner actor Syed Hasan Imam during the award ceremony at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital yesterday. Prothom Alo Editor Matur Rahman and Head of Operations of Square Toiletries Jesmin Zaman were present on the occasion.

PHOTO: STAR

5,000 doctors, 4,000 nurses to be recruited before polls

Says Nasim in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The health ministry will recruit 5,000 doctors and 4,000 nurses before the parliamentary polls this year, said Health Minister Mohammed Nasim in Rangpur yesterday.

Addressing a meeting with doctors, officials and students in Rangpur Medical College Hospital, the minister reiterated that the doctors, who will not remain in the areas where they have been posted, will be terminated. He then declared the RMCH a smoke-free zone.

He further said the upcoming national election will be held under the government of Sheikh Hasina as per the constitution.

Rangpur medical college will be upgraded to a university if Awami League is re-elected to power, Nasim added.

Dr Nur Islam, RMCH principal, chaired the meeting.

BARISAL SHER-E-BANGLA MEDICAL COLLEGE HOSPITAL

Light at the end of tunnel

Construction work for extension building resumes after six years

M JAHIRUL ISLAM JEWEL, Jhalakathi

The new extension of the Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital in Barisal will finally see the light of day as the construction work of the much-awaited building has started once again, after six long years.

Once completed, the 500-bed extension building will ease many of the predicaments the hospital is facing at present, said Dr Abdul Kader, director of the hospital. "But most importantly, we will be able to accommodate more patients."

Among many of the problems that have plagued the hospital, shortage of beds remains as the main obstacle to provide proper health care services to the patients, said Shikha Saha, head of the hospital's gynaecology department.

The 500-bed hospital started its journey in 1968.

Around 1,700 to 2,000 patients

are admitted to the hospital on any given day, according to its administrative department. Another 4,000 to 5,000 patients are also treated at the emergency and outdoor departments on a daily basis.

But due to an acute shortage of beds, patients lying on the floors in front of the wards or desperately searching for space on the corridors have become a regular scenario at the hospital.

Years went by; nothing seemed to have changed while the patients' continued to suffer.

Finally, in 2007, the health ministry approved the construction of a seven-storied extension building to ease the crisis.

In addition, the blue print of the new extension building also mentioned that it would consist of two intensive care units (ICU), four new coronary care units (CCU), 10 oper-

ation theatres and two post-operative rooms.

In October 2007, the Public Works Department (PWD) in Barisal floated an open tender in this regard. Azad Construction and Markentile Corporation were jointly awarded the project with a budget of Tk 25 crore.

According to PWD documents, the project was scheduled to be finished and handed over to the hospital authorities by June 2010.

But, the contractors appealed to the hospital authorities for an extension and they extended it for one and a half year, said the PWD authorities.

As a consequence of the delay, the hospital is facing difficulties in dealing with the increasing rush of patients, said administrative officials at the hospital.

So, in a bid to finish the project

quickly, the PWD then revised the building design and decided to construct a five-storied building instead of a seven-storied one. It also cut the project cost by Tk 5 crore.

Even after that, in 2011, the contractors appealed to the PWD to revise the project, citing that their construction cost has increased.

However, PWD rejected the application. Also, the tender agreement with the contractors was cancelled in 2012. The contractors then filed a petition with the High Court against the cancellation. The HC rejected it in 2015.

This correspondent tried to contact the authorities of Azad Construction and Markentile Corporation numerous times, but they could not be reached for comments.

Since the cancellation of the agreement, the construction work of

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He doesn't let disability get in the way



Ali Ahmed on his three-wheeler at Savar University College. PHOTO: STAR

AKLAKUR RAHMAN AKASH

Bound to a wheelchair since childhood, Ali Ahmed never stopped to wonder what his life would be like if his mobility was not limited.

But that did not dispirit the 22-year-old. Instead, he pursued an uninhibited life, just like he envisioned.

"Everyone has a dream -- to accomplish something; and I'm no different," said Ali, who first fell ill at the age of 3.

By age 8, his poor parents started noticing that his limbs had started to curl up, but their dire conditions distracted them from seeking medical aid.

It was far too late when his parents took him to the hospital, where he was diagnosed with polio. By that time, his legs had lost functioning.

But that did not stop him, even at a young age. His father, Abu Hassan, a day labourer, used to carry him to his primary school, 2 kilometres away in Badorgonj of Rangpur.

Upon graduating to high school, an NGO handed out a wheelchair to him that eased his commute to classes every day. He swiftly moved on to college next, after passing his SSC exam in 2013.

"After my HSC exam, I received training on basic computer studies at the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP)," said the youth.

Ali is currently a second-year student of Bachelor's of Business Administration (BBA) at Savar University College.

"I dream of a world where people will only be assessed for their intellect

and hard work, and that is what I am striving for."

The university authorities soon took notice that heaced his coursework; commuting every day by a wheelchair and living at a nearby dormitory for rickshaw pullers and labourers.

Appreciating his perseverance, the authorities gave him a battery-run three-wheeler to ease his movement, and a place to stay in a small room under the staircase of a building.

"Now I do not have to bear rent for the dormitory where I used to live before. I eat one meal a day at a nearby restaurant, and otherwise, I keep dry foods like biscuits and 'muri' in my room to eat when I'm hungry at other times."

He said he applied for a Department of Social Services allowance at his hometown in Rangpur, but he was denied one.

"Now all my teachers and classmates help me continue my education. Soon, I will be self-sufficient and support my family financially."

Elias Khan, principal of Savar University College, said, "Ali is a bright student with a lot of potential. We try to the best of our ability to support him financially, but it is not enough."

The university has recently requested the Savar office of the department of social services to grant an allowance for Ali, he added. "We are waiting for a response."



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with a section of the Bangladesh youth delegation at his office in New Delhi, India on Tuesday. The 100-member delegation left Dhaka on March 24 on an eight-day visit to different Indian cities such as New Delhi, Agra and Mumbai. The delegation includes 52 women and 48 men drawn from different regions of the country, diverse backgrounds and educational institutions. The young Bangladeshis also met Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj at her office.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Appeal for help

FROM PAGE 4
Sciences University Branch, Khulshi, Chittagong; bKash: 016756574039.

Aid also can be sent to Jannatul Moua [his younger sister], A/C No: 0000002138284, Sonali Bank, Court Hill Branch, Chittagong.

More genocide

FROM PAGE 3
gruesome genocide that was committed against the nation during the Liberation War.

Shahriar Kabir, president of Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee; Shamsuzzaman Khan, director general of Bangla Academy; and artist Hashem Khan, the vice-president of the museum's trustee board; also spoke.

Bangladesh's feats

FROM PAGE 4
Bangladesh Ambassador in Japan Rabab Fatima presented a keynote paper at the seminar in which she said Bangladesh has started its journey as a developing country.

Giving a whole picture of Bangladesh's economy, she said that the country is advanced in many development indices.

She said that days are not so far when Bangladesh will have emerged as a developed country and urged the Japanese and non-resident Bangladeshis to invest more in Bangladesh.

The seminar began after screening a video documentary on the development process of Bangladesh. Video message from Jica President Shinichi Kitaoka was also screened there.

Besides, Keiichiro Nakazawa, director general of Jica, congratulated Bangladesh for the graduation and

praised the process of women empowerment, infrastructure development and congenial environment of business prevailing in Bangladesh.

Ando Toshiaki, the director of Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, told the seminar that stable economy prevails in Bangladesh nowadays. Also, for Public-private partnership Bangladesh is an ideal destination, Ando added.

Senior Director of Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) Takashi Suzuki in his speech said that the number of Japanese Business in Bangladesh is increasing day by day and they had to spend a busy time in Dhaka office.

Later, the floor was open for discussion where business and media persons from Japan and Bangladesh participated.

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