

Rape suspect killed in ‘gunfight’

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

An alleged rapist has been killed in a “gunfight” with police at Kolaroa upazila in Satkhira early yesterday.

The dead, Sohag Hossain, 24, from Boalia village in Keragachhi under the upazila, was accused of raping a class three student.

Officer-In-Charge (OC) of Kolaroa Police Station Biplob Kumar Nath yesterday said Sohag Hossain raped a nine year old student of a primary school in Keragachhi union on Saturday at 11:00am. The victim’s maternal grandmother filed a case against Sohag with the station that evening.

In the case statement, the victim’s grandmother said they came to know that Sohag was staying in Hizoldi village under bordering union Chandanpur of the upazila.

On the basis of the information, a police team, led by Sub-Inspector (SI) Solaiman, went to the area to arrest Sohag. When police were passing by Hizoldi field, some miscreants shot at police and also hurled brickbats at them.

Police fired back in retaliation. After the exchange of gun shots for about 20 minutes, the criminals fled. One person was found bullet hit and lying on the spot with a one shooter gun and bullets. Police rushed him to Kolaroa Health Complex, where the on-duty emergency doctor declared him dead.

Locals identified the dead youth as Sohag Hossain.

Kolaroa upazila Awami League (AL) Joint Secretary and Keragachhi Union Parishad Chairman SM Afzal Hossain said that Sohag, who was a supporter of AL, was involved with drug smuggling.

The OC said, an inquest was done on the body of the dead and it was later sent to Satkhira Sadar Hospital for an autopsy. SI Solaiman, as a plaintiff, has filed a case under the Arms Act and on charges of attack on police. Sohag has been accused in the Arms case, while he and 4-5 other unknown persons have been accused in the case for attack on police.

OC Biplob Kumar Nath said Assistant Sub-Inspectors Habibur Rahman and Sagar sustained minor injuries from gunshots and brickbat throwing by the miscreants. They have been given first aid.

On the other hand, a relative of Sohag, preferring anonymity, said, police arrested Sohag from his in-laws’ house at Boalia area on Saturday evening after the case filed against him. Yesterday morning, the relative heard that he had been killed in a gunfight with police.

Man killed in gun attack in Khagrachhari

Another found dead three days after going missing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Khagrachhari*

Two men were killed and another youth injured in separate incidents in Khagrachhari district yesterday.

According to a statement from the regional political party United People’s Democratic Front (UPDF), the criminals of Jana Sanghati Samity (M N Larma) opened fire at a tea shop at Morathila area in Panchchari upazila of the district at 11:00AM.

The statement said some UPDF members were present at the shop when the attack took place. Sunil Bikash Tripura alias Katang, 42, UPDF organiser of Guimara and Matiranga, was shot dead on the spot while another UPDF worker, Antar Tripura, 25, was injured.

However, the allegations have been denied by the Jana Sanghati Samiti (MN Larma).

After the Boisabi festival in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) the political situation suddenly changed in the CHT, especially in Khagrachari and Rangamati district. There have been reports of eight murders since the festival.

Four UPDF members, one Jana Sanghati Samiti (MN Larma) member, one social worker and two former UPDF activists and supporters were killed.

Families, workers and supporters of both parties are blaming each other for these incidents.

Officer-In-Charge of Panchchari Police Station Mizanur Rahman said, “I heard of the attack that took place yesterday. We have information on one youth being injured; however, the matter of the death is not yet confirmed.”

On the other hand, the body of one Anwar Hossain, 45, was recovered from the bushes near the rice field at Dukter tila in Guimara upazila. He had disappeared three days ago.

Officer-In-Charge of Guimara Police Station Gias Uddin confirmed the incident and said the body was admitted to Khagrachhari District Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

1 killed in gunfight

FROM PAGE 1

when he went to the factory to submit a bill around 1:30pm yesterday. Faruk and his men also beat up Sunny, one of Kamruzzaman’s men.

After returning, Kamruzzaman gathered more men and went to Patnipara area to deal with Faruk and his men. The clash ensued and at one stage Faruk’s men opened fire, leaving several injured, Makfur claimed.

Kamruzzaman was declared dead when taken to Apollo Hospitals. The other injured were later moved to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Police, however, said both sides fired their weapons.

Talking to The Daily Star, Kamruzzaman’s brother Jahangir alleged that a group led by Faruk attacked members of the Beraid AL unit.

“My brother was shot dead,” said Jahangir, adding that four members of his family were also shot, including another brother Kamal Hossain, also an AL leader.

He alleged that MP Rahmatullah wanted to give Faruk a post in the city AL unit and make his son the councilor of the area. “The MP is doing this so that I cannot do business in the area,” he added.

Rahmatullah said his nephew Faruk was not involved in yesterday’s clash and that Faruk was at a bank during that time.

Denying his men’s involvement, the MP said, “The clash was between two

Hit by a truck

FROM PAGE 16

were not sure what would happen to her. After 24 hours, they could tell about her condition.

Rafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Sherpur Police Station, said the truck and its driver were detained.

On April 4, Titumir College student Rajib Hossain, 21, lost his right arm as it got severed after it getting stuck between two buses in the city’s Banglamotor area. He died of his injuries at Dhaka Medical College Hospital on April 17.

Tarique

FROM PAGE 16

surrendering his green passport,” he said.

The state minister made the remarks while addressing a reception hosted by the UK Awami League in honour of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in London.

Tarique has been living in London for the last nine years. Convicted in two cases, he does not have any valid Bangladeshi travel document. He had handed over his passport to the UK Home Office almost four years ago.

The UK Home Office sent his passport to the Bangladesh High Commission. He has to apply for a new passport to return home, says a diplomatic source.

Parliamentary body

FROM PAGE 1

meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

He added, “Though the prime minister [Sheikh Hasina] had announced that the quota system in the government jobs will be scrapped totally, we think that the system should remain and a reasonable reform should be brought instead.

“We have responsibility towards history, towards Bangladesh and towards the backward community. We should bring a reform to the quota system considering these issues.”

Ashiqur also added that the issue of equity has been mentioned in the constitution. “We should handle the quota reform issue in a way that no one can hatch a conspiracy centring it.”

Meeting sources said Mozammel Haque Khan, senior secretary of public administration ministry, told the meeting that they were waiting for prime minister’s instruction over the quota reform.

“We will act according to the prime minister’s instruction after she returns home,” he said.

On April 11, Hasina said the quota system in public service recruitment would be abolished, and asked students to return to classes ending demonstrations over the demand for quota reforms.

“The quota system stands scrapped to stop repeated sufferings [of people] and avoid hassles of tackling movement time and again. This is clear,” she said in parliament in response to a supplementary question.

The PM came up with the sudden announcement amid countrywide demonstrations of public and private universities’ students for reform of the quota system. The protesters blocked key points in the capital and also roads and highways elsewhere in four days since April 8.

She also said, “If we go for reforms [of the quota system], another group will come up after a few days and say ‘we want further reforms’. This issue will keep coming, if the quota system remains. But if it ceases to exist, there will be no problem. So, there’s no need for having the quota system.”

The PM, however, said a different arrangement would be made so that

groups in Beraid area, one of which was against Jahangir.”

No one had been arrested in this connection.

AL leaders and police said local AL leaders had held a meeting at Beraid Muslim High School playground late last year and nominated lawmaker’s son Hedayetullah as councillor candidate in the polls to Dhaka North City Corporation.

The conflict between the lawmaker and Jahangir came to the fore after Jahangir collected nomination form to run against Hedayetullah.

Jahangir and Ataur Rahman, chairman of Bhatara Union Parishad, later challenged the legality of the schedule of the DNCC polls with the High Court.

Faruk could not be contacted for comments.

Suicide blast

FROM PAGE 16

outside the centre when he saw a “fireball” in front of him. He was taken to hospital with leg and abdominal wounds.

Sheets of paper and passport-sized photos lay scattered amid shattered glass and pools of blood on the street near badly damaged cars -- grim evidence of the force of the blast.

“This senseless violence shows the cowardice and inhumanity of the enemies of democracy and peace in Afghanistan,” US ambassador John Bass wrote on Twitter. Nato and the United Nations also condemned the bombing.

The last major attack in Kabul was on March 21 when an IS suicide bomber blew himself up in a crowd celebrating the Persian New Year holiday and killed at least 33 people.

Ariana TV showed angry crowds shouting “Death to the government!” and “Death to the Taliban!”

A wounded man in a hospital bed wept as he told the network: “I don’t know where my daughters are. God damn the attackers!”

A witness to the attack named Akbar told Tolo TV: “Now we know the government cannot provide us security: we have to get armed and protect ourselves.”

Elsewhere, a roadside explosion in the northern province of Baghlan yesterday killed six people, including three women and two children.

President Ashraf Ghani condemned both attacks as “heinous”.

Afghanistan began registering voters on April 14 for the long-delayed legislative elections. Over the next two months, authorities hope to register up to 14 million adults at more than 7,000 polling centres for the parliamentary and district council elections.

Officials have been pushing people to register amid fears a low turnout will undermine the credibility of the polls.

Miner killed in Maddhyapara

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

A miner was killed in an accident at Maddhyapara Granite Mining Company Ltd (MGMCL) mine in Parbatipur upazila of Dinajpur on Saturday night.

The victim was identified as Mamun Kabir, 22, son of Abdur Rashid, village Makajpara under Parbatipur upazila of Dinajpur.

Earlier on April 12, another miner Mostafa Kamal lost his life at the same mine in a different accident underground.

After the two accidents within a span of 10 days, MGMCL - a company of Petrobangla - formed five-member probe committee led by a general manager Abu Taleb Farzi to investigate the incidents.

According to mine sources, Mamun Kabir was on an electricity-powered trolley used for moving from one place to another place inside the mine around 7:30pm Saturday evening. He fell from the moving trolley and was critically injured.

Workers rushed him to Rangpur Medical College Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries around 10:30pm Saturday night.

Germania Trest Consortium (GTC), a contracted company of MGMCL appointed the miners and they are responsible for the workers as per contracts.

The repeated accidents have become a matter for worry for the officials of MGMCL, sources said.

Border without

FROM PAGE 16

The unique zigzagging border divides the two countries. But unlike other such villages which are rife with stories of communal violence, no such thing exists here. People of the two villages share the same pond for their bath and the same tube well for their drinking water. A small muddy road snakes through the middle of the village. Half of it belongs to Bangladesh and the other to India. Villagers from both the countries use the communal road.

Noor Mohammad, an inhabitant of Harhodka, said they did not face any problem and had been living there peacefully for generations. “If anyone faces any problem, we extend our support no matter the nationality.”

A media delegation of Bangladesh visited the border area at the invitation of Border Security Force of India and talked with the villagers.

Rajab Ali, another inhabitant, said Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and Border Security Force (BSF) helped the villagers a lot and they never faced any obstacles in travelling between the two countries.

“If anyone falls sick, we can enter both India and Bangladesh with the help of security personnel. It is rare in any bordering area.”

K L Slathia, commanding officer of Panitar camp of BSF, said, “People of the two countries have been living here for a long time without any untoward incident. There are no militant and criminal activities in the border and there is a very good coordination between BGB and BSF.”

Abdur Razzak, camp commander of BGB, said they tried to resolve all sorts of problems after discussing with the BSF and people of the villages.

Satkhira Sadar upazila is only 19 kilometres away from Harhadda while Panitar village is only eight kilometres away from Bashirhat sub division.

Child rape case heightens India's Hindu-Muslim divide

AFP, *Jammu*

The internet is being cut for hours on

end in Jammu as authorities try to halt protests that have grown in the Kashmir winter capital since the rape-murder of an eight year old girl opened a new front in India’s Hindu-Muslim divide.

With near daily protests held across the country over the brutal killing, Jammu police say the digital clampdown is to halt the spread of “rumours” that inflame tensions.

Much damage has already been done in the city. Eight Hindu men are on trial for the rape and murder of the Muslim girl, or for trying to destroy evidence.

On the streets, Muslims are demanding justice while Hindu radicals say the inquiry is biased. Threats have been made and state politicians forced to resign.

“Hang the real guilty,” read banners carried by about 100 mainly Hindu protesters on a Jammu road on Friday. The group were demanding a new investigation into the events in Kathua district about 60 kilometres (35 miles) from Jammu.

Journalists' concern

FROM PAGE 1

with journalists any day after May 20 to hear their concerns. We will consider their worries, if they can convince us [about their concerns]. The committee will also try to convince them that there is nothing to be worried about in the Act,” Imran Ahmed, chief of the committee, told reporters after a meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

Imran, also a ruling Awami League MP from Sylhet-4 [Jaintapur], said they did not want the proposed law to create any problems for anyone.

A release of the Parliament Secretariat on the meeting says the committee has decided to bring necessary amendments to the proposed law and update it following discussion with the stakeholders.

Asked about the possible date of discussion with the three journalists’ bodies, Imran said the committee members would go to the USA next month to witness the launch of Bangabandhu Satellite likely on May 4.

Besides, Law Minister Anisul Huq and Post, Telecom and ICT Minister Mustafa Jabbar were scheduled to go abroad in mid-May, he added.

“That is why we are planning to sit with them any day after May 20,” he said.

Asked if the committee yesterday discussed the law in details, Imran said they had just gone through the bill in general.

“The committee members need to study the bill. That is why elaborate study on the proposed law has yet to start,” he said, adding, the committee wants to hear from the journalists verbally and in written before bringing any changes to the bill.

The law and the post, telecom and ICT ministers yesterday attended the meeting on request.

Earlier on April 19, Anisul Huq at a meeting assured the Editors’ Council of removing loopholes and vagueness in the digital security act through arranging talks between the editors and the parliamentary standing committee concerned.

The minister had also said the concerns raised by the Editors’ Council over some sections of the law were largely logical.

The Editors’ Council had expressed grave concerns over sections 21, 25, 28, 31, 32 and 43 of the proposed law. They said those sections would greatly hamper freedom of speech and independent journalism.

At that meeting Editors’ Council General Secretary and The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam had said there were some sections in the proposed law, in particular sections 21, 25, 28, 31, 32 and 43, which would go against the freedom of speech and independent journalism.

He said since cybercrimes were being committed using social media and uncontrolled online media to a large extent, they strongly believed a cybersecurity law was very much necessary.

“Therefore, we want such a law that will truly resist cybercrimes. We want a fair law, which will serve its purpose. But it will not reduce freedom of the press.”

The much-debated Digital Security Bill, 2018 was placed in parliament on April 9 amid growing concerns from journalists and rights activists that freedom of the press and expression would be put to the sword.

They also observed that there would be every chance of the proposed law being misused against people’s right to express, especially due to inclusion of controversial section 57 of the ICT Act and some strict provisions in the digital security act.

The government on several occasions said section 57 of the ICT Act would be removed. The section deals with defamation, hurting religious sentiments, causing deterioration of law and order, and instigation against any persons or organisations by publishing or transmitting any materials in websites or in electronic form. It stipulates maximum 14 years in prison for the offences.

The Digital Security Bill, 2018 splits these offences into four separate sections (21, 25, 28 and 29) with punishment ranging from three to 10 years in prison.

UNSC team

FROM PAGE 1

amps on the same day, a diplomatic source told UNB yesterday.

The UN Security Council is composed of 15 members with five permanent members, China, France, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and 10 non-permanent members.

The delegation members are expected to meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and top government officials on April 30, an official told UNB. The visit of the UNSC was originally scheduled for April 27-28.

Earlier, Bangladesh urged the UN Security Council to visit Myanmar and Bangladesh to witness the humanitarian situation of the Rohingyas amid continuous influx of the refugees.

Over 700,000 Rohingyas fled to Bangladesh, and the influx, though reduced in recent weeks, continues despite Myanmar’s assurances of stopping violence in Rakhine.

On April 6, Hasina invited UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to visit Bangladesh to see for himself the plight of Rohingyas who have taken shelter in Bangladesh amid persecution in Myanmar.

During the telephone conversation,

WHAT SECTIONS 21,25,

28, 31, 32 and 43 SAY

Section 21 of the proposed law says anyone spreading negative propaganda against the Liberation War or the Father of the Nation, using digital devices or instigating to do so, will risk being sentenced up to 14 years in jail or a fine of up to Tk 1 crore or both.

He or she will face up to life sentence or Tk 3 crore in fine or both for committing the offence for the second time, it says.

Section 25 says a person may face up to three years in jail or Tk 3 lakh in fine or both if they are found to have deliberately published or broadcast in a website or electronic form something which is attacking or intimidating or which can make someone dishonest or disgruntled; knowingly publish or broadcast false and distorted (full or partial) information to annoy or humiliate someone knowingly publish or broadcast false and distorted (full or partial) information to tarnish the image of the state or to spread rumours.

Second-time offenders will face up to five years in jail or Tk 10 lakh fine or both.

Section 28 says a person may face up to seven years in jail or Tk 10 lakh in fine or both if he or she is found to have deliberately published or broadcast something in website or in electronic form or gets it done to hurt one’s religious sentiment and values.

A person will face up to 10 years in jail or Tk 20 lakh or both for committing the offence for the second time.

Section 31 says a person may face up to seven years in jail or Tk 5 lakh in fine or both if they are found to have deliberately published or broadcast something in website or in electronic form which can spread hatred and create enmity among different groups and communities and can cause deterioration of law and order.

Second-time offenders can be punished with up to 10 years in jail or Tk 10 lakh in fine or both.

According to section 32 of the proposed law, a person may face up to 14 years in jail or Tk 25 lakh in fine or both on charges of computer spying or digital spying if he or she illegally enters the offices of the government, semi-government, autonomous or statutory bodies and collects or preserves or sends any top secret or secret documents through a computer, digital device, computer network, digital network or any electronic form and helps others to do that.

He or she will face up to life sentence or Tk 1 crore in fine or both for committing the crimes for the second time.

A person may face up to 14 years in jail or Tk 1 crore or both for hacking, section 34 of the bill says.

As per section 43 of the draft law, a police official can search or arrest anyone without a warrant issued by a court.

If a police officer believes that an offence under the proposed law has been committed in a certain place or is being committed, or there is a possibility of crimes, or there is a possibility of destroying evidence, he or she can search the place or any person present there.

PM replies

FROM PAGE 16

Sejuti, daughter of Syed Rafiqul Islam, an assistant teacher at AGGS Smrity School, wrote how Hasina reminded her of her grandmother and went on to invite the premier over to her house.

Hasina wrote back with affectionate words on April 12.

“Take my affection. I hope, you, your father, mother and friends are well. I read your letter several times. I pray for the departed soul of your grandmother so that Almighty Allah would send her to heaven.”

Hasina requested the girl to study attentively and to go to school regularly. “Please remain loyal to your parents at all times. Serve the nation when you grow up. I send a photograph of mine. Many many doa and love to you,” she wrote in her letter to Sejuti.

The letters have gone viral on different social media, including the Facebook.

she also sought UN cooperation in implementing the agreement signed between Bangladesh and Myanmar over the Rohingya repatriation.

On April 19, US Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom Sam Brownback said the Myanmar military and other authorities must be held accountable for the “horrific and organised violence” against the Rohingyas.

The US diplomat said their country would continue to focus on the issue with great importance. “We’re also in discussions about what additional actions should take place ... the investigation is moving forward, and I think you’ll find additional action in the days to come.”

Earlier, the UN Security Council gave the green light to visit Myanmar and Bangladesh this month.

Peru’s UN Ambassador Gustavo Meza-Cuadra is the council president for April.

He said according to an AP report, council members hope to visit Myanmar’s western Rakhine State, where about 700,000 Rohingyas lived before fleeing to Bangladesh to escape a brutal military counterinsurgency campaign - and thousands still remain