

'Gunfights'

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their teams noticed "suspicious activities" of a group of people while patrolling Mohishbhanga village around 1:00am. As the law enforcers challenged them, Kabil and his cohorts opened fire. In retaliation, the Rab team fired back, triggering a "gunfight".

Afterwards, the Rab men found the bullet-riddled body of Kabil at the scene. The other criminals managed to flee, the official claimed, adding that the body was sent to a local health complex for autopsy.

The law enforcers also claimed to have recovered a foreign pistol, bullets and yaba tablets from the spot.

Kabil, of the upazila's Zonail village, was an accused in a dozen of cases, Maj Shibli said, adding that the "gunfight also left two Rab members injured".

The man killed in a "shootout" with Rab in Belpukur of Rajshahi was identified as Abdur Rashid, 48. He was accused in at least 17 cases related to drugs peddling, according to a Rab press release.

The "shootout" took place around 10:00pm when a group of suspected drug peddlers opened fire at a Rab patrol team inside a mango orchard of Taras Uttarpara, reports our Rajshahi correspondent, quoting the release.

The Rab officials fired back, leading to a "gunfight" which continued for around five minutes.

At one point, the criminals fled. However, the law enforcers found a wounded man there. He was declared dead after he was taken to Rajshahi Medical College hospital, the Rab claimed in the press release. Later, locals identified him as Abdur Rashid.

The Rab team seized a foreign pistol, two bullets, a magazine, and 58 bottles of phenisidyl from the scene. Two Rab men also received minor injuries during the "shootout", Rab claimed.

Bagerhat WDB

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As a result, cropland, houses, fish enclosures and ponds in the area are flooded on a regular basis.

Locals alleged that the WDB authorities had given priority to less vulnerable points of the embankment and neglected the more vulnerable ones near the Baleshwar river. Southkhali Union Parishad Chairman Mozammel Hossain said,

"In order to make the 63-kilometre-long embankment sustainable in the Sidr and Aila affected areas, a Chinese company named CHWE started work on January 26, 2016 at a cost of around Tk 300 crore.

"However, they did not work much in the 20km risky areas of Bogi, Gabtala, North Southkhali, South Southkhali and Rayenda sections of Sarankhola upazila," he added.

The UP chairman expressed his frustration at the project saying they did not see much hope from it.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Lincoln Biswas said, "The authorities have been asked to take immediate action to protect the embankment."

Engineer Shyamal Dutta of CEIP said they were working in other points as the embankment was strong in Bogi and Gabtala Bazar areas at the beginning of the project.

As the embankment experienced a collapse, they have been trying to protect the areas by building ring dams and using soil sacks on an urgent basis, he added.

Pigeon Escobar!

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from Iran to Costa Rica to now even Bangladesh.

Police officials everywhere have now begun dealing with this menace of a winged drug supplier, one who works without encrypted software or any verbal communication that can be surveilled.

Faridpur Jail officers were shocked to discover a pigeon with 100 grams of marijuana wrapped around its body in the jail compound.

The discovery was made at 2:45 pm on July 23.

Abdur Rahim, superintendent of Faridpur Jail said, "Rashedul Islam, a warden, found the pigeon inside the jail with marijuana wrapped around its body. But we could not find the owner of the marijuana and we later released the pigeon."

He added that the jail, established in 1825, currently housed 1,150 inmates and "almost 50 percent of them were drug addicts".

"The drug addicts are desperate for drugs and often cause nuisance inside the jail," he said.

Explaining the desperation, Amanullah, a jailor, said "On August 1, a convict, managed to carry cannabis in his anus while he was coming back from court."

"Drugs are frequently tossed into the jail compound from outside despite the presence of around 10 wardens both inside and outside the jail," Abdur said. He suspected that the pigeon was also tossed in from outside.

"If we have a boundary wall in our jail, it will not be possible to do this." For now, the pigeon has flown away but whether it has changed its ways or not could not be known.

Probe should end now

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that the team led by Mueller, a Republican appointed by Republicans, is biased against him.

The first trial arising from the probe into Russia's role in the election, began on Tuesday in Alexandria, Virginia. Trump's former campaign chairman, Paul Manafort, faces 18 counts of bank and tax fraud charges.

A Justice Department spokeswoman said the department had no immediate comment on Trump's tweet about ending Mueller's probe.

The Republican president has steadily attacked his attorney general for recusing himself from the Russia probe in March 2017. Sessions cited his role as a senior adviser to Trump's presidential campaign and appointed Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein to oversee the investigation.

Rosenstein in turn appointed Mueller and is the person with the authority to fire him.

An element of Mueller's investigation includes whether Trump or anyone in the campaign tried to obstruct

justice. The New York Times reported last week the Mueller team was examining negative tweets and statements by Trump about Sessions and former FBI Director James Comey.

The man heading Trump's re-election campaign, Brad Parscale, has in recent months called on Trump to fire Sessions and end the Mueller probe.

US intelligence agencies concluded last year that Moscow meddled in the 2016 presidential campaign to try to tip the vote in Trump's favor. Moscow has denied such interference, and Trump has denied any collusion by his campaign, or any obstruction of justice.

Trump also said the charges against Manafort have nothing to do with Russia collusion.

Manafort worked for pro-Russian politicians in Ukraine. While prosecutors have said they will not present evidence in this trial about possible collusion between Russia and the Trump campaign, they may dig deeper into Manafort's connections with Russian and Ukrainian oligarchs, legal experts have said.

UAE govt offers

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people can also get a six-month temporary visa to stay in the country and look for work.

"We are issuing new passports for those who want to look for work and outpasses for those who want to leave," Arman added.

"No one will stay at home while there's a good chance to solve their problems," predicted Maj Gen Mohammed Ahmed Al Marri, the director of Dubai's office for residency and foreigner affairs, AP added.

Of the UAE's estimated population of more than 9 million people, only about 12 percent are Emiratis.

As it stands, foreigners who overstay their visas are fined between 25 to 100 dirham (about \$7 to \$27) a day, depending on the type of visa, and aren't allowed to leave the country until the fines are paid. As the fines mount over months and years, their prospects of payment become slimmer and slimmer, leaving them in limbo.

In Dubai, officials have said more than 25,000 people overstayed their residency visas in 2017 alone.

"These are not criminals," Al Marri said. "We are here to support and help these people to start over again and start working."

Centres were set up around the country to process applicants, with consular officials from many countries also on hand to help deal with passport and other issues.

Hundreds showed up at two massive air-conditioned tents set up on the outskirts of Dubai for the first day of the programme. It's the fifth general amnesty since 1996, and more than 60,000 people took advantage of the last one, in 2013.

Under the programme, all fines for overstaying visas will be forgiven and people will be allowed to return to the UAE with new visas without preconditions -- a nod to the country's need for foreign workers.

Foreigners from war-torn countries such as Syria and Yemen qualify for a one-year residence visa without restrictions.

"It's a gift from the government of the UAE as a humanitarian gesture," Al Marri said.

Editor Moazzem

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and well-wishers.

His first namaz-e-janaza will be held at his home in the capital's Boro Moghbazar at 10:00am today, the second one at The Financial Express office at 11:00am and the third one on the premises of Jatiya Press Club at noon.

Later, he will be buried at Azimpur graveyard.

Moazzem was the publisher of the English daily on behalf of its owning company, International Publications Limited (IPL). He was also the managing director of IPL.

He had completed his graduation and post-graduation in Economics in 1967 and 1968 respectively from Dhaka University. He started his career in journalism with the now defunct Bangladesh Observer as a reporter.

He also worked for The New Nation, United News of Bangladesh (UNB), The Dhaka Courier, and The Daily Star.

After completing post-graduation, he served Habib Bank Limited in Karachi, Pakistan as an officer in the training and research department and also in the finance ministry in Islamabad as a research official.

He was a member of the management board of the Press Institute of Bangladesh from 1995 to 2001, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha from 1997 to 2000.

He was the founding president of Economic Reporters Forum in 1992.

He served as a board member of Janata Bank for two consecutive terms. He was also a director of Securities Trading Company Limited, a subsidiary company of Investment Corporation of Bangladesh.

He also served as an independent director of Bay Leasing & Investment Ltd and Southeast Bank Limited.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed deep shock at the death of Moazzem, reports UNB.

In a condolence message, the PM recalled his contributions to journalism, especially business journalism in the country.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith also expressed grief at the death of the editor.

"It's a matter of great sadness that he has left us," he said.

The minister said he knew the journalist for the last 30 years.

No worries over Assam

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Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Harsh Vardhan Shringla.

Talking to editors and senior journalists at the chancery of the Indian High Commission in Dhaka yesterday, he said the draft of the NRC was released on Monday and the process was mandated by the apex court.

"It's only a draft.... It would not move to deport anybody, and would allow adequate time to every individual of Assam State for a lengthy appeal process for those left out of the registry."

Shringla said India is a democratic country and a genuine Indian irrespective of his cast, religion or ethnic roots would never be sent out of the country.

"No person is allowed to be harassed and no one is allowed to create fear or panic. There is no question of anyone being put in detention camps. Moreover, no one will be treated as a foreigner if his or her name does not appear in the NRC draft," the diplomat said.

He said the Indian government would ensure that every individual

gets justice and treated in a humane manner. If anyone has one document out of 16 like the passport, National ID, ration card and birth certificate, he or she will be enlisted in the NRC, the Indian envoy said.

If any Bangladeshi citizen was found after completion of the NRC verification process, India would take it up officially with the Bangladesh government, he said. "No one will be deported to Bangladesh without consultation with the Bangladesh authorities and following the due process."

So there was no reason for Bangladeshis to be worried about over the ongoing NRC process in Assam, Shringla mentioned.

He said no one should be confused or misled by the news published in Indian media because India is the world's largest democracy and it has very vibrant media. Anyone can express what he or she believes and media also can publish them, he explained.

First secretaries (political) at the Indian High Commission Rajesh Uike and Nabanita Chakrabarti also spoke on the occasion.

BARAPUKURIA COALMINE

ACC quizzes former MD

UNB, Dhaka

The Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday interrogated SM Nurul Aurangzeb, former managing director of Barapukuria Coal Mining Company Ltd (BCMCL), over the "disappearance of coal" from Barapukuria coalmine.

ACC Public Relations Officer Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya told UNB that the investigation officer of ACC Deputy Director Md Shamsul Alam quizzed Aurangzeb from 9:30am till 4:00pm at the ACC Headquarters in the capital.

Aurangzeb, now working as the managing director of Madhaypara Granite Mining Company, told journalists after the interrogation that no corruption happened during his tenure.

The ACC also questioned him about the production process at Barapukuria coal-based power plant, he added.

Earlier on July 27, Barapukuria coalmine's Manager (administration) Mohammad Anisur Rahman filed a case against 19 officials over the coal scam.

On July 30, the ACC sent a letter to the Immigration Police, asking it not to allow the accused to leave the country.

Bangalees face

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back to Assam, reported the daily yesterday.

Later, local administration stopped the checking with assurance that necessary action would be taken and the union's demand for formation of entry and exit points would be fulfilled.

Exclusion of many prominent people raised questions over the process maintained to prepare the NRC, final draft of which was released on Monday stripping around 40 lakh people of citizenship.

Of those left out included close relatives of former President of India Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed.

"Imagine I am the nephew of former President of India and my name is missing. We are worried," said Ziauddin, son of Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed's brother Ekramuddin, reported the New Indian Express.

Prof Omar Saaduddin Ahmed, the great-grandson of Indian freedom fighter Bahadur Gaonburah, could not make it to the list as well. Gaonburah had participated in the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny in Jorhat and was imprisoned at the Cellular Jail in the Andamans.

Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) of Assam Police Shah Alam Bhuyan has also been left out. Alam, who was attached to CM Sonowal until recently, was shocked after he found that his name was not on the list.

Alam, who has been in the police service for 30 years, carried the tag of doubtful or 'D' voter until being cleared of it recently. Yet, his name did not figure in the NRC.

His younger brother Chandu Bhuyan is an Army officer. The third brother Shilu is a commando in Assam Police and the youngest, Mukut, is a BSF jawan. Alam's son Babul Bhuyan is also a BSF jawan.

Meanwhile, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee yesterday continued her harsh criticism of the citizens' list.

"Bangladesh is not a terrorist state. It is a friendly country which is being insulted on the issue of illegal migration and infiltration. I am afraid this might affect the relations between the two friendly countries," she told the media in the central hall of parliament, reported our correspondent in New Delhi.

She made the comments right after meeting an array of top opposition leaders and BJP patriarch Lal Krishna Advani in their chambers yesterday.

Bangladesh and West Bengal not only share the border but also share the language and culture, she mentioned and reiterated that the current issue might lead to bloodbath or civil war. A police case was filed against her in Assam for the comments.

She said it was "wrong" to call all Bangladeshis "ghuspetis" (intruders), a term BJP President Amit Shah repeatedly used in his remarks to the media on Tuesday.

Mamata said illegal migration was not an isolated or one-time issue or even one that only involves Bangladesh. "After the Partition, so many people came from Pakistan," she pointed out.

She said, "whoever is a BJP voter will be in the list of citizens... those who are not, will be deleted from the list... will you drive out everyone in the name of Bangladeshis?" the Trinamool Congress chief asked.

Indian politics has heated up since the release of NRC with opposition bitterly criticising the ruling BJP for using it as political tool to increase vote bank ahead of the next year's election.

Opposing them, the BJP claimed the move was to detect illegal infiltrators as per the instruction of the Supreme Court. Heated debates also took place in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha over the issue.

Slay this monster

FROM PAGE 1

But the public transports are the worst criminals. Manned by unlicensed drivers – there are only 19 lakh licensed drivers against 29 lakh vehicles as Bangladesh Road Transport Authority figures show – the buses change lanes at any time, stop at any place even in the middle of the road, and run at such speeds and manner that it is only surprising so few of us are dead.

And those who are supposed to bring order to the roads – the traffic police, the road transport authorities and the road planners – take no responsibility. Violations of traffic rules have now become the order of the day.

If we look at any intersection of the city the clear lack of traffic management is so evident that it makes us wonder why we should have any traffic police at all. Buses stop at crucial bends to offload and pick passengers. Look at Mohakhali flyover (actually it is an overpass). Right at the bottom of it, buses have created a stoppage at their own desire and choke the entire traffic. The passengers who get down or board the buses there are oblivious to the risk they take. Police have not stopped this unlawful activity probably our traffic department has no idea that such road behaviors lead to complete breakdown in traffic management.

Dhaka city, sprawling and growing fast in population, has another strange public transport called 'Leguna'. These are minivans and driven by kids as young as 12 to 13 years. They carry no licences and these young kids at the pump of their adrenalin zoom through the clogged city roads whenever they find a little space. Thousands of such vans make the roads unsafe and yet no action is taken against them.

Talking about licence it makes little difference. Exchange of some money at the right places can secure licence to anybody.

Looking at the minibuses that ply the city, it is a wonder how the drivers could not cause accidents every day. The steering wheels have so much of play that they should be uncontrollable. Their brake and clutch paddles are wonders in their own right, the skinny drivers must possess legs as strong as Rock's.

The drivers start their day with the break of dawn and drive through this clogged city until midnight in this heat and dust. Their grit to make some money is to be found nowhere else.

The traffic signal system in Dhaka is probably unique in the world (except maybe in some tucked-away African backwaters). Nobody can explain why the traffic lights exist at intersections when it is the valiant traffic policemen who risk their lives by jumping on the streets to stop the vehicles (we under-

stand purchase of traffic signals and the relevant system transfers the public money to some pockets and that may be the only necessity to have those lights in place).

The highways are the worst places in terms of safety. The buses zip through the narrow and clogged highways as if they are on a racing track. The pock-marked roads make their going even more challenging. And look at the roadside markets blocking half the roads and the slow vehicles like rickshaws, vans and auto rickshaws all merrily occupying the roads.

The strangest things on the highways are probably the concrete blocks installed freely to separate the roads at places. These have no visible color coding and they appear so suddenly that any unaware driver is supposed to smash into them. The broken concrete slabs testify such crashes are a regular bit. And who can explain all those speed breakers on the highway, mostly unmarked too?

So much of illegal exchange of money is involved in the transport sector today -- right from the licensing process to extortion on the road by police and political thugs -- that no law works, no system lasts and no life remains secure.

Every time, and this time included, something happens, such as the hand of a boy is torn off by two buses, or the leg of a woman is crushed, or when a famous filmmaker dies in road crash, authorities suddenly start checking vehicle documents and filing cases. Such cosmetic actions die down in a few days with the end result a big zero. In absence of governance, everything becomes so meaningless.

So when the whole system is in such an abysmally low state and when deaths only stretch the string of body counts and when those who are supposed to mend the system sit and grin and when repeated uncountable appeals from different civil platforms and media to change the system go unheeded and when some innocent college students standing by the road to get on a bus are squished to death, it is not surprising that at one point of time some eruption would happen against this monster called our traffic management.

This time, it happened with the school children.

Shahjahan

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Kurmitola, killing two college students and injuring at least nine others.

When reporters asked him about the deaths caused by two racing buses he grinned and said, "A road crash has claimed 33 lives in India's Maharashtra; but do they talk about it the way we do?"

Revote in two Sylhet

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do it in the cancelled ones only. Now our election management committee will make decisions. I have nothing to say."

Although Ariful has not been pronounced mayor yet, he is working on cleaning the city.

The corporation started taking down his campaign posters following his request yesterday afternoon.

"It was my responsibility to remove the posters as my supporters put these. I hope all the candidates will remove their posters to make the city neat and clean," he said.

WHY DID KAMRAN FAIL? Nominating the wrong person, intra-party rifts and Ariful's popularity, have led to the failure of AL, according to several AL and BNP leaders, civil society representatives and voters.

Abdul Karim Kim, coordinator of a citizen's platform in Sylhet, said, "AL selected the wrong man here. After his 17 years in the Nagar Bhaban, people rejected him in 2013 for his not-so-development-friendly stances. The AL should have chosen a new face."

Many grassroots leaders of the AL and several central leaders had earlier said Kamran should not be nominated. The party decision frustrated them, creating a rift within the AL, said party insiders.

Besides, there were serious feuds between the nominee and the campaign committee.

Party insiders said many AL leaders, including AL central Organising Secretary Misbah Uddin Siraj, acting

Woman found

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"Her neck was tied by a scarf while one of her hands was tied with a rope," said the AC.

Victim's husband told the investigators that he found the door of the house open when he arrived from the court.

AC Debdut said police were investigating the murder and trying to find the motive behind it. Officials of the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) visited the spot to collect evidence.

Police were preparing the inquest report at the time this report was filed last night.

president of district AL Lutfur Rahman, and city AL General Secretary Asad Uddin Ahmed, did not work enough for Kamran.

Asad, also member secretary of the AL campaign committee, admitted a greed that there was miscommunication between the candidate and the committee.

But Siraj disagreed, saying, "The party selected the right person, but people rejected him. This is the beauty of democracy."

Moreover, filing cases against the BNP members before the election, fear of election rigging by the ruling party, prohibiting voters to carry mobile phone inside polling centres without prior notice and many other issues also swayed the undecided voters in favour of Ariful, said many voters.

Vietnam's Golden

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The pedestrian walkway, designed by TA Landscape Architecture in Ho Chi Minh City, sits at over 1,000 metres (3,280 feet) above sea level and extends over the treetops from the edge of a leafy cliff face, offering tourists uninterrupted views of the majestic landscape beneath.

The bridge was designed to evoke the image of the "giant hands of Gods, pulling a strip of gold out of the land," said Vu Viet Anh, Design Principal at TA Landscape Architecture.

"It creates a walkway in the sky, among the foggy and fairy-like lands of Ba Na mountain," said Anh, who added that he had been surprised at the level of attention his firm's design had attracted both locally and internationally.

The Ba Na Hills, a popular getaway for the French during the colonial occupation of Vietnam, received over 2.7 million visitors last year, according to the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism.

But it is the Golden Bridge and its supports - two huge stone-coloured human hands styled in such a way that it looks as if the jungle is struggling to reclaim them - which have garnered the most attention from visitors.

"The two, smooth, giant hands look real," said Truong Hoang Linh Thuy, another tourist.

"It makes me feel like humans can do anything".