



The Padma devours a three-storey building in Shariatpur's Naria upazila on Monday. Erosion of the river bank has taken a serious turn in the area recently as houses, shops and roads have been engulfed.

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PHOTO: ANSUR RAHMAN

Khaleda was 'forced' to appear at special court

Alleges her counsel; govt trying to kill her in jail, says Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite being sick, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia was forced to appear before a makeshift court inside the city's old central jail on September 5, her lawyer Zainul Abedin alleged yesterday.

"Khaleda Zia is not fit for appearing before the court and she needs treatment immediately," he told The Daily Star after meeting the BNP chief in the jail in the afternoon.

After appearing before the special court on Wednesday, Khaleda expressed her lack of confidence in the court which is holding trial of the Zia Charitable Trust graft case.

None of Khaleda's lawyers was present during the court proceedings.

A four member delegation of Khaleda's lawyers, led by BNP standing

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SHAHJAHAN BACHCHU KILLING
'Gunfight' with police leaves 2 suspects dead

They were JMB men, claim cops

STAR REPORT

Two suspects in the murder of progressive writer-publisher Shahjahan Bachchu were killed in a "gunfight" with police in Sreenagar upazila of Munshiganj early yesterday.

Police say both were members of banned militant outfit Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and took part in the killing of Bachchu on June 11.

Of the two, Kaka alias Boma Shamim, 40, masterminded the killing. He used to make bombs for the outfit and was wanted in five separate robbery cases.

And Eklasur Rahman, 32, had rented a house in Munshiganj and collected arms from different areas to attack the writer, they added.

After a tip-off that militants went to Sreenagar area for robbery, police set up two checkpoints on KC Road early yesterday.

Around 1:45am, four people on two motorbikes were seen coming towards one of the checkpoints, said Jayedul Alam, superintendent of police in Munshiganj.

Police signaled the bikes to stop but the men hurled hand bombs and fired gunshots, forcing officials to open fire, triggering the "gunfight", he said.

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Furious Padma threatens Naria

Changing its course, the river devours vast areas in Shariatpur; 4,000 families become homeless in few months; bank protection project to start in Nov



PINAKI ROY

This Padma is not the river they know. At Naria of Shariatpur, 20km from the Padma Bridge construction site, it has changed abruptly for sure. Once relatively calm and quiet in the area, it turned into an all-devouring river in just a few years.

People there are on edge as the Padma changed its course and has been gobbling up village after village, making many well-off people penniless overnight.

Over the last few months alone, more than 4,000 families of five unions of Naria

upazila have lost their homes, said Sanzida Yesmin, the upazila nirbahi officer.

The hungry tide now threatens to swallow the 200-year-old Mulfatganj Bazar in Naria municipality area.

"More than 10 villages of five unions, including Moktaer char, ward-2 and ward-4 of Naria municipality, Kedarpur and Charisar, are under threat," said Sanzida.

The river started eroding its right bank five to six years ago and people have become worried as the erosion has reached the municipality area.

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