

'Mugger', 2 cops hurt in 'gunfight'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two policemen and an alleged mugger were injured in a “gunfight” between law enforcers and a group of muggers at Chattogram city’s Marine Drive road yesterday.

Police claimed to have arrested two muggers and seized firearms and ammunition from their possession, police said.

After the alleged gunfight, police arrested two suspected muggers and seized firearms and ammunition from their possessions, police said.

The injured are Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Ronesh and ASI Ruhul of Kotwali Police Station and mugger Zumman, 22, a CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver by profession.

The two cops were given primary treatment at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) while Zumman was admitted there.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Kotwali Police Station Mohammed Mohsin said that after a tip-off, a police team installed a temporary check post and was checking vehicles to arrest the muggers.

When police halted a CNG-run auto-rickshaw, the muggers began shooting pellets at the law enforcers, forcing them to retaliate, the OC said, adding that the two ASIs sustained pellet wounds while Zumman sustained bullet injuries.

Police recovered a pellet gun, two empty bullet shells and several knives, the OC added.

SI Nipu Biswas, second officer of Kotwali Police Station, said the knives were stuck on the inside of the CNG-run auto-rickshaw by magnets.

“They are professional muggers and used to snatch belongings from the people who would commute at night,” he added.

A case was filed in this connection.

NY subway

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IS group, killed eight people on a bike path.

Ullah, a driver, was convicted on all six counts and faces a maximum sentence of life behind bars when he will be sentenced on April 5, 2019.

His convictions include supporting a foreign terrorist organization, using a weapon of mass destruction and bombing a public place.

He was caught on CCTV walking through the subway terminal and detonating the bomb strapped to his body. After his arrest, he allegedly told authorities: “I did it for the Islamic State.”

“Today, Ullah stands convicted, he faces a potential life sentence, and his purpose failed. New York City remains a shining symbol of freedom and hope,” said Geoffrey Berman, the top US federal prosecutor in Manhattan.

Ullah built the bomb in his apartment, packing the device with metal screws and Christmas tree lights, having planned the attack for several weeks.

On the morning of the bombing, Ullah posted a statement on Facebook referring to the US president saying: “Trump you failed to protect your nation.”

A chilling handwritten note saying “O America die in your rage” was found, along with metal pipes, wires and screws in his home, prosecutors said.

Ullah began to radicalise in 2014, three years after moving to the United States, by watching IS propaganda online before starting to research how to make bombs a year ago, officials said.

Prosecutors say he opposed US government policies in the Middle East and wanted to terrorize as many people as possible, deliberately choosing a week day when the area would be most crowded.

Although he is a lawful permanent resident of the United States, his wife and son live in Bangladesh, which is waging its own war against extremism.

BNP submits

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Tipu said they submitted a partial list and the complete one would be submitted later.

On November 1, during a dialogue between the leaders of Jatiya Oikyafront and Awami League-led 14-party alliance, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina asked the BNP leaders to submit a list of its arrested leaders and activists.

In a letter attached to the list, the BNP requested the government to stop the arrest and harassment of its leaders and activists in “false and fictitious” cases and withdrawal of those.

EC set to unveil

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led United National Alliance yesterday requested the commission to announce the schedule right away.

The EC seems to be in an unusual hurry to announce the schedule. It is all set to unveil it just eight days after the 90-day countdown for holding the polls began on October 31.

None of the four previous ECs had come up with polls schedule in such haste since the June 1996 polls. After the beginning of the countdown, each of the past ECs had taken one month on average to announce the schedule.

CEC TO ADDRESS NATION

In an address to the nation, Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda is all set to announce the schedule at 7:00pm, an EC press release said yesterday.

The speech would be broadcast on the state-run Bangladesh Television (BTV) and Bangladesh Betar as well as on other private television channels and radio stations.

“We have completed all preparations for announcing the schedule,” EC Secretary Helaluddin Ahmed told reporters at his office yesterday evening. “Law enforcers will face every situation centring the announcement.”

He made the comments hours after BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Alamgir Islam, at a press briefing on Bailey Road, threatened to hold a march toward the EC if it unveiled the schedule. Fakhrul said Oikyafront would go on with its movement until its demands were met.

However, the AL supported the EC move to announce the schedule.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s Political Adviser HT Imam said only the EC had the right to make decisions on the schedule and the government would always support it.

“The government fully supports the Election Commission’s decision of announcing the election schedule on November 8 [today],” he said yesterday afternoon following a dialogue with the election commissioners.

“Whenever they fix the date for holding the election, we will accept

it,” added Imam, also co-chair of Awami League Election Steering Committee, who led a 17-member AL delegation at the talks.

He also said the government and his party also agreed with the commission about its decision to use electronic voting machines in the polls on a limited scale.

Asked about deploying army with magistracy power, he said army was used as a striking force during the 2008 and 2014 general polls.

The veteran AL leader then criticised the Oikyafront for what he said was misbehaving with the commission during their dialogue.

He hoped that all political parties, including the BNP, would join the upcoming polls.

Following another dialogue between a delegation from the United National Alliance and the election commissioners yesterday morning, Jatiya Party Secretary General Ruhul Amin Howladar said there was no scope for delaying the announcement of schedule.

“There won’t be any dialogue after today [Wednesday]. We told the EC not to delay any further and unveil the election schedule tomorrow,” he told reporters.

He said their team placed several demands, including prevention of the use of muscle power and black money, deployment of army as striking force, seizure of illegal arms and review of the plan to use EVMS during polling, for a free and fair election.

The UNA team was led by party Chairman HM Ershad.

Earlier on November 5, Jatiya Oikyafront held talks with the EC and demanded that the schedule not be announced before the end of the ongoing talks between Hasina and different political parties.

Meanwhile, Left Democratic Alliance (LDA) yesterday in a letter also requested the CEC not to announce the election schedule before talks ended.

On the other hand, the EC yesterday asked the authorities concerned to send nomination forms and other materials to field level today.

Superbugs to kill

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euros) a year in each country included in its analysis.

Michele Cecchini, lead on public health at the OECD, told AFP that countries were already spending an average of 10 percent of their healthcare budgets on treating antimicrobial-resistant (AMR) bugs.

“AMR costs more than the flu, more than HIV, more than tuberculosis. And it will cost even more if countries don’t put into place actions to tackle this problem,” he said.

‘ENORMOUS DEATH TOLL’

As humans consume ever more antibiotics -- either through prescriptions or agriculture and livestock products given medicines to stave off infection--strains of bacteria are developing that resist the effects of drugs designed to kill them.

In low and middle-income countries, resistance is already high: in Indonesia Brazil and Russia up to 60 percent of bacterial infections are already resistant to at least one antibiotic.

And the growth of AMR infections is predicted to be between four and seven times faster by 2030 than currently.

“Such high resistance rates in health care systems, which are already weakened by constrained budgets, will create the conditions for an enormous death toll that will be mainly borne by new-borns, very young children and the elderly,” the report said.

“Even small cuts in the kitchen, minor surgery or diseases like pneumonia could become life-threatening.”

Perhaps more worrying is the prediction made by the OECD that resistance to so-called 2nd- and 3rd-line antibiotics -- break-glass-in-case-of-emergency infection treatments -- will balloon by 70 percent by 2030.

“These are antibiotics that as far as possible we don’t want to use because we want these as back up,” Cecchini said.

“Essentially, we are using more when we should use less and we are running out of our best options in case of emergency.”

HOW TO AVOID DISASTER

The group, which advises the World Health Organization on public health initiatives, said the only way to avert disaster was to implement immediate, sector-wide changes in behaviour.

The report called on healthcare professionals to ensure better universal hygiene standards in hospitals and clinics by insisting all staff wash their hands and conform to stricter safety regimes.

It also suggested resistance could be fought with better and quicker testing to determine if an infection is viral -- meaning antibiotics are useless -- or

bacterial.

New swab tests can give a result in a matter of minutes, and Cecchini also put forward the idea of “delayed prescriptions” to dent antibiotic overuse by making patients wait three days before picking up their antibiotics -- roughly the time it takes for a viral infection to run its course.

In trials of the technique, two thirds of patients given delayed prescriptions for antibiotics never collected their medicine.

The OECD said such changes would cost as little as \$2 (1.7 euros) per person per year and would save millions of lives and billions of dollars by mid-century.

“They would decrease burden of AMR in these countries by 75 percent,” said Cecchini. “It would pay for itself in a few months and would produce substantial savings.”

'Robber' killed

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near a mosque in the village around 1:30am. The law enforcers had taken Salauddin along with them.

Sensing the presence of law enforcers, his gang members opened fire, prompting the police officials to fire back. Salauddin was left with bullet injuries after the “gunfight”.

He was taken to Sadar Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

Four policemen were also injured, Momen said.

Police claimed to have recovered a shotgun, six crude bombs, and several sharp weapons from the spot.

Salauddin was accused in six robbery cases, police said.

Meanwhile in Cox’s Bazar, police yesterday recovered the bullet-hit body of a “fugitive”, who was accused in cases related to narcotics, from Teknaf upazila.

The dead was identified as Ali Hossain alias Sona Miah, 39, from Paschim Satghoria Para in the upazila.

Inspector (investigation) of Teknaf Model Police Station ABMS Doha said, that upon hearing gunshots in Dhalmukh on Hoakkong-Baharchhora road, locals informed police of a “gunfight”. A team of law enforcers rushed to the spot, recovered Ali’s body and sent it to Teknaf upazila Health Complex. Dr Mostafizur Rahman, of the emergency department, said there were two bullet wounds on Ali’s chest and back.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of the police station Pradip Kumar Das said Ali was a listed yaba trader. He was accused in three cases under anti-narcotics act and on the run.

The body was sent to Cox’s Bazar Sadar Hospital morgue for an autopsy.

The OC added that Teknaf police have recovered seven bullet-hit bodies of alleged yaba traders since October 20.

Malaysia won't

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“We need to know how many workers you need so that we can ensure when you don’t have enough Malaysians, then we allow foreign workers to come in for a period of time.”

His comments came in response to a Japanese businessman, who lamented on the need for a clear-cut policy on foreign workers as companies faced bureaucracy problem to renew visas for them.

The issue is significant for Bangladesh too as an estimated one million Bangladeshis live in Malaysia. Of them, around 500,000 remain undocumented mainly because of fraudulence by the brokers, agents and employers.

According to experts, some Bangladeshis are also the victims of trafficking in the Southeast Asian country that is heavily dependent on foreign workers in the agriculture, construction, and manufacturing sectors. But there are allegations of corruption in the process of recruiting foreign workers.

The Malaysian government suspended recruitment of Bangladeshis since September 1 following allegations that Bangladeshis were charged high recruitment fees -- Tk 3.5 lakh to Tk 4 lakh each.

The previous Najib Razak-led Malaysian government had selected 10 Bangladeshi recruiting agencies that monopolised the recruitment under G-to-G Plus deal signed early 2016.

Nepal has also stopped sending workers to Malaysia following allegations of overcharging its workers through Malaysian companies in Nepal.

The Malaysian government has formed a committee to develop a unified mechanism for recruitment of foreign workers, but it is yet to declare the system.

Malaysian human resources minister in late June had declared that it would investigate the corruption in recruiting foreign workers.

Runaway

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showed a trail of twisted wreckage after Monday’s incident, with some wagons covered by their loads.

Australia is one of the world’s major sources of iron ore.

BHP said yesterday more than 130 people were working to recover the train and fix the track -- a key access route for the enormous mining facility -- with partial rail operations expected to start up again in about a week.

The mine sites were still running and reserves would be used to maintain port operations, “however they are not expected to cover the entire period of interruption”, a BHP spokeswoman said in a statement.

“We will be liaising with our customers in relation to our contractual commitments over this period,” she added.

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau said it was investigating the incident. There was no indication of what had caused the train to move without its driver.

“We cannot speculate on the outcome of the investigation however we are working with the appropriate authorities and our focus remains on the safe recovery of our operations,” the BHP spokeswoman said.

Khaleda trial

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Khaleda and 10 others of abusing power to award a gas exploration and extraction deal to Canadian company Niko during her tenure as the prime minister.

Four power

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cubic feet of gas a day to the national gas network, a senior official of Petrobangla’s LNG Cell said.

“It will take about a week to fix the problem,” the official said yesterday.

Monjurul Hoque, general manager of operations of Karnaphuli Gas Distribution Company Ltd (KGDC), had earlier said, “The valve is 120 feet underwater. Also, the water there [in Moheshkhali] is murky. It is taking longer for divers to reach the supply line.”

Kamruzzaman, director of operations and mines at Petrobangla, said they would be able to solve the problem by November 15.

Gas crisis is not new in the country as the supply has been lower than the demand for years.

The supply was boosted since August 18 when the KGDC started supplying 300mmcf of gas to the national grid from the Moheshkhali floating LNG terminal.

The gas supplied by the terminal meets at least one-tenth of the country’s demand.

Voters deliver

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White House, branding it a “disgusting Witch Hunt.”

Democrats won the House on Tuesday but Republicans increased their majority in the Senate in an election which revealed a country still sharply divided along party lines.

According to projections by The New York Times, Democrats will have 229 seats in the 435-member House while Republicans will hold 53 seats in the 100-member Senate, up from 51. So far, based on published results, Democrats have 222 seats in House and 45 seats in Senate. And Republicans have 199 seats in House and 51 seats in senate.

Despite the setback, Trump, in a news conference at the White House, yesterday hailed the election day as a “big day” for Republicans.

He offered an olive branch to Democrats, praising their leader and likely next House speaker Nancy Pelosi, but angrily lashed out at journalists for questioning his congressional campaign tactics.

Trump campaigned aggressively in the closing days on a hardline anti-immigration message.

Trump reeled off a shopping list of disadvantages the Republicans had faced going into Tuesday’s vote, including “wealthy donors and special interests,” for the Democrats, and “very hostile media coverage, to put it mildly.”

The Republican president said he would “like to see bipartisanship” and offered Pelosi “a lot of credit for what she has done and accomplished.” He cited health care and infrastructure as areas where the two parties could work together.

Republicans defeated Democratic senators in several states won by Trump in 2016 -- Florida, Indiana, Missouri and North Dakota.

Republican senate candidates were also leading in Arizona and Montana. Democrats appear to have won a Republican senate seat in Nevada.

Democrats also picked up seven governorships but fell short in a high-profile race for the governor’s mansion in Florida, expected to play a key role in the 2020 presidential election.

With the House victory, Democrats will take over committees, giving them the power to hold hearings, call witnesses and issue subpoenas to administration officials.

“We will conduct the investigations that Republicans wouldn’t conduct,” Democratic Representative Eric Swalwell of California said on NBC’s “Today” show.

“We’ll fill in the gaps on the Russia investigations,” he said of the Mueller probe. “American people will see (Trump’s) tax returns.”

“There will be intensified fighting,” said Larry Sabato, director of the Center for Politics at the University of

Virginia.

“There is now a veto in the system to limit Trump and the Senate -- though Trump will use executive orders to bypass Congress,” Sabato said.

Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell said he expected the president would be able to work with a divided Congress.

Nancy Pelosi, who is likely to return as speaker of the House despite opposition from some centrist Democrats, promised that the party will serve as a counterweight -- but also work with Trump.

“Today is more than about Democrats and Republicans. It’s about restoring the constitution’s checks and balances to the Trump administration,” Pelosi said.

But she added: “A Democratic Congress will work for solutions that bring us together, because we have all had enough of division.”

Like in the 2016 presidential election, rural areas went heavily for Republicans while urban areas broke towards the Democrats.

More women than men voted for Democrats, according to exit polls, particularly white suburban women, and the new House will feature a record number of women lawmakers.

Tuesday’s contest saw several historic firsts in the Democratic camp: in Kansas, Sharice Davids and Deb Haaland became the first Native American women elected to Congress.

And in the Midwest, onetime Somali refugee Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib, the daughter of Palestinian immigrants, shared the historic distinction of becoming the first two Muslim women elected to Congress.

But the rosiest expectations of some Democrats -- that they could create a “blue wave” even when playing defense on the Senate map -- proved unfounded.

Meanwhile, former US president Barack Obama spoke of his pride over Democratic gains made in the mid-terms-- but warned the battle for much-needed reforms had only just begun.

“Our work goes on. The change we need won’t come from one election alone -- but it is a start. Last night, voters across the country started it,” Obama said in a statement.

“I’m hopeful that going forward, we’ll begin a return to the values we expect in our public life -- honesty, decency, compromise, and standing up for one another as Americans, not separated by our differences, but bound together by one common creed.”

In one of the most closely-watched races, Democratic Senate candidate Beto O’Rourke, a charismatic congressman and former punk rocker, fell short against Republican Senator Ted Cruz in Texas.

372 arrested in one day

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Relatives of the others arrested consoled Sufia by saying nothing would happen to her son if he was innocent.

Sufian, 20, a vegetable vendor at Karwanbazar, was picked up by a team of Tejgaon Shilpanchal police from Shaatraasta area around 11:30am while he was going to his sister’s Rampura home from his Karwanbazar house, his mother said.

She added that Sufian was not involved with any politics and did not commit any crimes. However, she could not immediately say on what charges he was arrested.

According to court sources, the people were arrested by 27 police stations on charges that include attacking police with brick chips, illegal assembly, creating obstacles to police duties, creating anarchy and attempt to murder.

Despite the serious nature of these charges, no such incident was reported and no signs of such activities were found after visiting different places across the city.

The mass arrest came after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina assured the Jatiya Oikyafront leaders during a dialogue that there would be no further arrests without criminal charges.

Of the 372 people, 38 were arrested by Paltan police, 16 by Motijheel, 15 by Shahjahanpur, 12 by Wari, 16 by Sutrapur, seven by Gendaria PS, five by Kotwali, 40 by Dhanmondi and Hazaribagh, 13 by Demra, 27 by Ramna and Shahbagh, five by Darussalam, 25 by Jatrabari, 41 by Tejgaon, 27 by Tejgaon Shilpanchal, 23 by Hatirjheel, nine by New Market and Kalabagan, one each by Uttarkhan and Dakkhinkhan, 16 by Mohammadpur, two each by Mirpur and Kafur, 13 Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, 13 by Shyampur and five by Kadomtoli police.

SPATE OF ARRESTS

A top pro-BNP lawyer claimed that police picked up around 1,000 people in the city and 400 of them were arrested from DMP areas on Tuesday.

The arrestees were brought to the court starting from 3:30pm yesterday and many of the accused were placed on one to three days remand.

Zia Uddin Zia, a lawyer, said his five clients were innocent yet Demra police had arrested them from a road in the

area on Tuesday.

BNP’s Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday claimed that over 1,300 BNP leaders and activists across the country were arrested by law enforcers in the last 48 hours.

Mahbubur Rahman, a relative of Tejgaon Thana BNP member Hafizur Rahman Kabir, said they did not get any trace of Hafizur since Tuesday afternoon, while talking to this correspondent yesterday. His mobile phone had been switched off since then, said Mahbub while waiting in front of the Detective Branch headquarters on Mintoo Road in Dhaka, along with 40 to 50 family members of those arrested before and after the rally.

Apart from the mass arrest on Tuesday, around a hundred others were picked up from different areas of the capital on Monday.

Rawshan Ara, wife of SM Zilani who is the Dhaka City South Swachhasebak Dal president, said her husband was arrested from the High Court area around 2:00pm on Monday.

“After a day of anxiety, I finally found my husband when he was taken out of the DB office at 4:00pm on Tuesday,” she told The Daily Star yesterday.

“It’s a strange country where we don’t know the whereabouts of a man picked up a day ago,” she told this correspondent in front of the DB office. Zilani stands accused in around 80 cases.

CTG BNP PRESIDENT ARRESTED

Plainclothes men picked the Chattogram BNP unit President Shahadat Hossain from CMM court area in Dhaka around 5:00pm yesterday, claimed Shamsuddin Didar, a member of the BNP chairperson’s media wing.

He had gone to the court to talk with lawyers regarding cases against some of his party men, Didar added.

Abdul Baten, DMP Additional Deputy Commissioner, and Kotwali Police Station Officer-in-Charge ABM Moshir Rahman said they had no information about Shahadat’s arrest.

Meanwhile, police arrested 88 BNP men in Narayanganj and five in Jashore on Tuesday while 55 people were arrested in Satkhira yesterday.