

## Man killed in 'shootout' with police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

An alleged drug dealer was killed in a "gunfight" with police in Cumilla Sadar South upazila early yesterday. The dead was Bappy alias Razib, 26, of Uttar Rampur village in the upazila.

Komol Krishna Dhor, inspector (investigation) of Cumilla Sadar South Police Station, said police were conducting an anti-narcotics drive in Uttar Bijoypur village around 2:30am.

Sensing the law enforcers' presence, Bappy and his three to four cohorts opened fire. Police also retaliated, triggering a "gun battle". After the "gunfight", police found that Bappy was bullet-hit. He was declared dead after being taken to Cumilla Medical College Hospital, said the police official, adding that others managed to flee.

Abdullah Al Mamun, officer-in-charge of Sadar South Police Station, said Bappy stood accused in at least 11 cases, including narcotics ones, filed with the police station.

Police claimed to have recovered 1,200 yaba pills and several sharp weapons from the spot.

## 19 districts get

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and district magistrate of Gopalganj. Md Mizanur Rahman, DC and district magistrate of Naogaon, was transferred to Mymensingh, Md Jasim Uddin, DC and district magistrate of Pabna, to Narayanganj and Md Moniruzzaman Talukdar, personal secretary to the chairman of the Anti-Corruption Commission, was made the DC and district magistrate of Munshiganj.

Md Hamidul Haque, DC and district magistrate of Jhalakathi, was transferred to the same post in Rajshahi, Md Mamunur Rashid, a deputy secretary, was made the DC and district magistrate of Bagerhat, and Md Shaful Arif, DC and district magistrate of Lalmonirhat, was transferred to Jashore in the same capacity.

Begum Nazia Shirin, DC and district magistrate of Nilphamari, was transferred to Moulvibazar in same capacity, Faruq Ahmed, a deputy secretary, was made the DC and district magistrate of Sirajganj, and Deputy Secretary Dilshad Begum was made DC and district magistrate of Rajbari.

Deputy Secretary Md Zohar Ali was made the DC and district magistrate of Jhalakathi, Md Harun-Or-Rashid of Naogaon, Md Abu Zafar of Lalmonirhat, Md Hafizur Rahman Chowdhury of Nilphamari, Md Asif Ahsan of Rangpur and Mostain Billah was made the DC and district magistrate of Barguna.

## Huge 'mass'

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larger than the Big Island of Hawaii and burying it underground. That's roughly how much unexpected mass we detected," said Peter B James, assistant professor of planetary geophysics in Baylor's College of Arts & Sciences and lead author on a new study of the huge chunk.

The crater that the mass sits under is oval-shaped and 2,000 kilometres wide. It goes down several miles.

Though it is incredibly vast, it can't be seen from Earth because it is on the far side of the Moon, which faces away from us at all times.

Instead, it was examined by data collected by Nasa spacecraft that sent back data on the small changes in gravity around the Moon.

"When we combined that with lunar topography data from the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter, we discovered the unexpectedly large amount of mass hundreds of miles underneath the South Pole-Aitken basin," said Professor James, whose research has been published in Geophysical Research Letters. "One of the explanations of this extra mass is that the metal from the asteroid that formed this crater is still embedded in the Moon's mantle."

Scientists simulated a possible collision with an asteroid on a computer, and found that some kinds of metal could settle into the layer between the crust and the core, where this chunk is still sitting.



PHOTO: AFP

This handout picture released and taken by the Royal Thai Government yesterday shows Prayut Chan-O-Cha paying respect before a portrait of King Maha Vajiralongkorn during the royal endorsement ceremony appointing him as Thailand's new prime minister at Government House in Bangkok.

## Cracks appear in economy

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sources for financing," said Debapriya.

Financing from other sources, such as banks and foreign lenders, will worsen the macroeconomic stability as the interest rates of those sources are very high, the CPD said, adding that macroeconomic stability was a strength of the country in the past.

The CPD estimated the revenue shortfall in the current fiscal year to be around Tk 85,000 crore.

It recommended an all-out effort to accelerate revenue collection by expanding the tax base and curbing tax evasion.

Apart from low growth in tax collection, pressure on balance of payment is rising despite an increase in export and remittance inflows, the CPD pointed out.

The think-tank suggested that the government allow depreciation of taka against the greenback to increase export competitiveness and encourage

Bangladeshis abroad to send remittance through formal channels.

The rate of inflation is low now, and if taka is devalued now, the economy has the capacity to absorb the possible import-induced inflationary pressure, the CPD said.

If the government devalues taka gradually, it will not need to provide fresh cash incentives to exporters and remitters in the next fiscal year, the think-tank mentioned.

According to its estimate, Tk 7,900 crore will be needed to provide 1 percentage point additional cash incentives on export earnings and 3 percent cash incentives to remitters.

"Depreciation is a must," Debapriya said, adding that taka remains overvalued artificially.

The other problem in the macro economy is crisis in the banking sector. The sector has been suffering from many problems like under

capitalisation, high volume of non-performing loans, liquidity crunch, and falling deposits in banks, the CPD mentioned in its report.

All the steps that the current government took to address the problems in the banking sector actually caused harm to the sector, Debapriya said, adding that defaulted loans rose significantly in the last few months.

As per a new policy of Bangladesh Bank, defaulters will be allowed to reschedule their classified loans by providing down payment of only 2 percent, instead of the existing 10-50 percent.

A maximum of 9 percent interest rate will be levied on the rescheduled loans, while the existing rate is 12-16 percent. The time for repayment was also generously set to 10 years with a grace period of one year.

The CPD yesterday said the government should not intervene

in determining interest rates in the banking sector.

Debapriya mentioned that the beneficiaries of the crisis in the banking sector are very powerful, and their influence was apparent in policy formulation in the sector.

"People may lose confidence in the banking sector if the money launderers and scamsters are not brought to justice ... Otherwise, it will not be good for the nation."

Besides, there have been reports that the government is going to allow black money holders to whiten their undisclosed income, the economist said.

"This will be a clear deviation from the Awami League's election manifesto," he said, calling for an independent banking commission to bring about reforms in the sector.

Towfiqul Islam Khan, senior research fellow at the think-tank, presented the CPD report.

## Ex-MP Kader gets life term

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possessing a firearm and an additional 15 years for possessing ammunitions.

Dilip Kumar Bhawmik, judge of Special Tribunal-1 in the district, passed the order after hearing witnesses and seeing proofs.

The convict would face the imprisonments concurrently, the court said in its 11-page verdict.

Besides the murder case Kader was facing, police filed a separate case against him under the Arms Act on February 23, 2017, after the law enforcers recovered a pistol,

one magazine and ammunitions concealed under a mango tree at his native home in the district's Sundarganj upazila.

Abdul Kader Khan, who served Gaibandha-1 as lawmaker between 2008 and 2012, hid the firearms at the yard of his native home. The firearm and ammunitions were used in the murder of Manzurul Islam Liton, suspected police.

**MURDER OF MANZURUL ISLAM LITON**

Manzurul Islam Liton, ruling Awami League lawmaker of Gaibandha-1,

was killed after unknown assailants opened fire on him inside his home at Sundarganj upazila of the district on December 31, 2016.

Manzurul's younger sister Fahmida Bulbul Kakoli filed the murder case with Sundarganj Police Station the next day.

A Gaibandha court on February 7, 2018, framed charges against eight people, including Col (ret'd) Abdul Kader Khan and AJM Shamsuzzoha.

Police submitted the charge sheet of the murder case against the eight -- Col (Rtd) Abdul Kader Khan,

Anowarul Islam alias Rana, Shaheen Mia Santo, Rashedul Hasan Mehdi, Shamsuzzoha Sarker, Chandon Kumar Roy, Subol Kumar Roy and Abdul Hannan -- on April 30, 2017.

The law enforcers arrested seven of the accused while Chandon went into hiding.

All the seven accused confessed to their involvement in the murder before magistrates under Section 164. In the charge sheet, it was mentioned that Kader had been planning for killing Liton since 2014.

The murder case is still under trail.

## BNP MP wants

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11:00pm that the moon was sighted in Kurigram. Can the moon be sighted at 11:00pm?" he said.

The BNP MP also demanded incorporation of the authentic meaning of "Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim" in the constitution.

Harun said there was a campaign promoting the theme "religion for individuals, festival for all" in the country, but Islam did support it.

"Those who carry out such campaigns lack religious knowledge," he added.

He said as long as Islam remained the state religion, no one should create misleading statements about

the fundamental issues of the religion.

Meanwhile, Jatiya Party MP Pir Fazlur Rahman (Sunamganj-4) also criticised Abdullah over the moon-sighting issue.

He said the state minister made two contradictory announcements on the night before the Eid day.

The JP MP also demanded a statement from the housing and public works minister over the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant pillow and household appliance purchasing corruption controversy.

**RUMEEN LAMBASTS GOVT**

BNP MP Rumeen Farhana (Reserved Seat-50) criticised the government's role "in not granting bail to BNP

Chairperson Khaleda Zia".

"Khaleda Zia is definitely eligible for getting bail considering her age, health condition, social status, gender and merit of the case. But she was denied bail due to pressure from the government," she said.

Rumeen, the lone reserved seat BNP lawmaker, said that her party chairperson was in jail over a "false case", while BNP's acting chairman Tarique Rahman was being forced to live abroad due to government threats.

"This is a great opportunity to come in the parliament as a politician. I am grateful for it. But honorable Speaker, you know this

parliament was constituted through a faulty election which drew criticism at home and abroad. This is an illegal parliament," she said in her two-minute speech.

At this stage, the ruling party lawmakers started hue and cry protesting her remarks and Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury asked the MPs to keep silent.

Later, Railways Minister Md Nurul Islam Suhan demanded expunging Rumeen's remarks over the legality of parliament and election.

Responding to his demand, the Speaker, who was presiding over the sitting at the time, expunged those words.

## 3 more killed

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Since May 23, when election results were announced, at least 15 people have been killed from both parties, a senior police officer said.

On Saturday four people died and at least 18 were injured in gun battles between BJP and Trinamool supporters in Sandeshkhali district.

The BJP, which has traditionally held sway in the Hindi-speaking belt in the north, has been trying hard to pick up support in West Bengal.

At an event in Kolkata yesterday, Trinamool Congress party chief Mamata Banerjee said, "There is a concerted effort to incite violence in Bengal by the BJP. They will not succeed."

The BJP, which had so far been a bit player in West Bengal's politics, said its workers had been continuously targeted by Banerjee's party.

"Trinamool is losing, they have lost the people's favour and they are trying to retain power through violence," BJP State President Dilip Ghosh told Reuters.

In the elections that ended last month with a big national victory for Modi, the BJP increased its tally of seats in the state to 18 from just two at the last vote in 2014.

Locals in Sandeshkhali remained tense yesterday. "There is a continuous sense of fear," resident Rabin Mondal told AFP by telephone. "We are spending sleepless nights. Many have fled."

Last month, a BJP supporter was shot dead in the state capital Kolkata, and a car belonging to a Trinamool member was pelted with rocks. In February, a Trinamool lawmaker was shot dead.

Political killings are rife across India. National Crime Bureau data showed more than 100 political murders in 2016, but experts say the figure was likely much higher.

## Lobby to make

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military crackdown since August 2017 in Rakhine state of Myanmar where they have been denied citizenship and basic rights for decades.

"The delay of repatriation of Rohingyas, who have been deprived of basic rights for decades, may threaten regional security and stability," he wrote in the letter, according to a statement from the foreign ministry issued yesterday.

Bangladesh is sincerely trying to find a sustainable solution to the Rohingya crisis bilaterally, as they had fled from waves of violence which put serious pressure on Bangladesh, he said. It has signed three deals since 1978 for repatriation of the Rohingyas refugees with the latest signed in November 2017.

"Yet, Rohingya repatriation in a safe, dignified and voluntary manner remains uncertain because of Myanmar's sheer lack of interest and failure in creating conducive conditions in Rakhine," Momen further wrote in the letter.

Bangladesh expects an active role from the international community in this regard because the country has sheltered refugees under humanitarian grounds despite various challenges.

In September that year, the United Nation's Independent Fact Finding Mission in its report said the Myanmar army must be held accountable for allegations of genocide.

The UN Security Council has not referred the situation of Myanmar to the International Criminal Court mainly because of opposition from its permanent members China and Russia.

Bangladesh, meanwhile, faces huge financial, environmental and diplomatic challenges for the presence of 1.1 million Rohingyas in Cox's Bazar.

## Booters bring joy

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the home side had they not spoiled few good chances and their performance was also not all that praiseworthy but this draw was good enough for the men in red and green to ensure a host of matches against some of the stronger teams in Asia.

So, Jamie Day's charges had reason enough to celebrate the success.

## Well equipped, but underutilised

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They claimed that two of the three beds were occupied by two elderly women diagnosed with cancer, who were admitted just the day before for chemotherapy. The third bed's occupant was a woman who came to get a test done.

But the "patients" said they were never diagnosed with cancer and that they only had problems like headache, chest pain and abdomen pain.

Pori Jaan, from Shyampur, is one of them. She said the hospital authorities brought them to the hospital from their home that very morning, and not the day before as the hospital authorities initially claimed.

That morning, the hospital held its annual general meeting in its conference room. The meeting was attended by the trustee board members and other dignitaries.

"The women were made to impersonate patients to show the meeting participants that there were some kind of activities in the hospital," said a source, requesting

anonymity.

Pressed for an answer, Dr Patrick Bipul Biswas, one of the founders of the hospital, admitted that the women were not cancer patients.

"Something went wrong... The cancer patients scheduled to visit today [January 26] could not come," he said.

About why they were occupying beds, he said they had come to "visit the hospital."

During the four other visits -- on January 22 and 30 and on May 21 and 30 -- The Daily Star found no cancer patients.

One cancer patient who took treatment at the hospital in the past said cancer specialists were available only for an hour, two days a week. So she stopped going there.

Patrick said the hospital's annual budget of Tk 40 lakh was not sufficient to hire expert doctors on a permanent basis.

**EQUIPMENT RARELY USED**  
Bangladesh has more than 15 lakh cancer patients now, with about 2 lakh

new cases detected every year, according to the World Health Organisation.

For many of these people, cancer treatments are still a dream for two reasons -- it is highly expensive and cancer treatment facilities are inadequate

According to Cancer Awareness Foundation Bangladesh, there are only 37 hospitals in the country that treat cancer. The list does not include Rajshahi Cancer Hospital and Research Centre.

Even so, most equipment at the Rajshahi Cancer Hospital and Research Centre remain unutilised for most part of the year.

Last year for example, this hospital bought the lone mammogram machine in all of Rajshahi region, which detects breast cancer which is common among women in Bangladesh.

The machine has so far been used only 18 times, records show.

Also last year, the Rotary International donated a "Mobile Clinic Vehicle" to detect cancer through field visits. Although it is



Rajshahi Cancer Hospital and Research Centre in Shyampur area on the outskirts of the city. The hospital authorities say they get only a few cancer patients due to shortage of oncologists. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANWAR ALI

scheduled to go on field visit four days a week, it did so only six times till date.

Its blood bank, equipped with a

modern blood separating machine, was used only once last year and not at all so far this year. The hospital also has a rich stock of vaccines for

preventing cervical cancer in women, which are all lying idle in the freezer. And in its two operation theatres were used to perform 14 surgeries in the last two years. But all were either circumcisions or cleft lips operations, records show.

Once a doctor at a Christian missionary hospital in Rajshahi and Rangpur region, Patrick said he had seen many cancer patients suffer, often because of late diagnosis and inadequate treatment facilities. He wanted to do something about it and subsequently started collecting funds from his friends abroad.

"Building this hospital was my dream. But we have yet to build the capacity to make it fully functional. We have a long way to go," he said.

At present, the "non-profit" hospital can treat about 50 outdoor cancer patients daily, he said.

Asked about the lack of patients, he said, "In general, there is a lack of oncologists. Also, cancer patients do not come to our hospital in large numbers as they do not know about our treatment facilities."