

SATCHHARI FOREST
CTTCrecovers
15 mortar
shells, huge
bulletsOUR CORRESPONDENT,
Moulvibazar

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime Unit (CTTC) recovered 15 mortar shells and four boxes of bullets during a search operation at Satchhari National Park in Habiganj yesterday.

Since 2014, yesterday's raid was the ninth consecutive arms recovery drive conducted in the park, also a popular tourist spot.

A number of senior law enforcement officials were monitoring the raid that was continuing as of filing this report around 6:00pm.

Mohammad Asaduzzaman, deputy inspector general (DIG) of police, said the operation was ongoing in some areas inside the park.

At the end of the search operation, more information will be shared, he further added.

On March this year, the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) members recovered 18 rocket launchers wrapped in polythene bags from the forest.

In another haul, the BGB members in a drive recovered 12 guns and 19 bullets from the same park on August 13.

Earlier, on November 24 in 2019, several explosives, including 13 rocket launchers were recovered from the forest.

Before that, 10 high explosive 40mm anti-tank rockets were recovered during a search operation at the park on February 2, 2016.

Moreover, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) recovered 334 artillery shells, 298 rocket chargers, a rocket launcher, 16 machine-guns, a beta gun, six SLRs, an auto rifle and five empty machine gun barrels during separate operations from June 1 to September 17, 2014.



The collapse of a boat ghat on Gaddimari-Barakhata road at Niz Gaddimari village of Hatibandha upazila in Lalmonirhat causing untold sufferings to the residents of six villages.

PHOTO: STAR

People suffer as floodwater washes away boat ghat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Several thousand people of six villages are in dire straits due to disruption of communication as flood waters of Teesta washed away a portion of Gaddimari-Barakhata road at Niz Gaddimari village of Hatibandha upazila in Lalmonirhat.

About 100-metre-long stretch of the road including the ghat was devoured by the Teesta waters on October 20 this year snapping communication of the villagers.

Meanwhile, one Dulal Hossain has taken lease of the ghat collecting a toll Tk 5 from each to cross the ghat. People have to pay Tk 10 to cross it with a bicycle and Tk 20 with a motorcycle.

Dulal Hossain, the lessee of the temporary ghat, said that he is earning Tk 1,000-Tk 1,200 every day. Half of the money has to be deposited in the development sector of the Union Parishad (UP). The temporary ghat remains operative from morning to evening.

Locals said that they were having great difficulty to cross the river at night.

About 100-metre stretch of a road and the ghat was devoured by the Teesta on October 20 this year. Later, one Dulal Hossain took lease of the ghat and has been collecting Tk 5 toll from each to cross the ghat.

Mujibur Rahman of Niz Gaddimari village said that they were in trouble as the road was destroyed by untimely flash floods. They have to spend money to cross the broken part of the road by boat. It costs them extra bucks.

The collapsed road needs to be repaired immediately to ease the movement of the villagers, he said.

Mozammel Haque of the same village said that the boatman and

the UP were benefiting from the devastation of the road.

"We have been the worst sufferers of the devastation. We neither can cross the river free of cost nor can transport goods because of the disaster," he said.

Abu Bakkar Siddique Shyamal, the chairman of Gaddimari union parishad, said that he has already written to the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) seeking its intervention to repair the flood-ravaged road. LGED authorities have inspected the area and confirmed that the road will be repaired soon.

"Even though it is a temporary ghat, teachers, students and farmers are not being charged for crossing it," he said.

Ashraf Ali Khan, executive engineer of Lalmonirhat LGED, said that preparations were being made to repair the road with emergency funds.

In the future, a bridge will be built on the broken part of the road. Funds would be sought to the higher authorities for the construction of the bridge, he said.

Chia seeds

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68mg manganese, according to BBC Good Food.

One and a half tablespoon of chia seeds twice a day can impact health positively in many ways.

Chia seeds also promote bone health. Its poly-unsaturated fat content, high fibre levels and anti-inflammatory properties are good for heart health and lower blood pressure in those with hypertension. Chia seeds can help diabetes patients by improving insulin resistance. Regular use also reduces risk of developing diabetes. High fibre in the seeds help improve digestive health too.

It is usually recommended to soak chia seeds in water before consuming. We should drink plenty of water after having it.

Chia seeds can be used in making several dishes as well. Smoothies, salads, baked items, pudding are items which can be made using chia seeds as ingredient.

However, if you are on medication for high blood pressure or diabetes you may need to moderate your intake of chia seeds.

83pc filed

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75 journalists were prosecuted, informed Anwar Rosen, a programme officer with Article-19.

As many as 15 of the journalists prosecuted this year were arrested and subsequently jailed.

These journalists were accused in a total of 32 DSA cases, the speakers of the organisation went on to add.

"It is evident that the existing mechanisms have been struggling to protect citizens' right to express their views online and to address the challenges produced by the digital revolution in Bangladesh," said a statement circulated by Article 19.

Faruq Faisal, regional director of Article 19 South Asia, Dr Syeda Aireen Jaman, secretary general of PEN International Bangladesh, and others spoke at the event.

Mahfuz Anam elected

FROM PAGE 3
Sri Lanka, The Korea Herald from South Korea, Go Go Mongolia, Eleven Media from Myanmar, The Nation from Thailand, The Star and Sin Chew Daily from Malaysia, Viet Nam News, The Japan News, Vientiane Times from Laos, Borneo Bulletin from Brunei, and The Phnom Penh Post and Rasmei Kampuchea from Cambodia.

ANN was founded in 1999 and aims to establish a global footprint as Asia's most authoritative media voice. It works to bring Asia closer through editorial collaboration, said the statement.

The announcement went on to say that Anam will be chairperson of this body for the next two years. This is the second time that he was given this honour; he was first appointed ANN chairperson in 2007.

This time, he was nominated by Warren Fernandez, editor-in-chief of The Straits Times and the English/Malay/Tamil Media Group of Singapore Press Holdings (SPH) Media, and unanimously elected by the ANN board.

He will be taking over the responsibility from Fernandez, who is the outgoing chairperson, said ANN.

"Mr Anam started his journalism career in 1972 and brings with him several

Joynal Hazari passes away

FROM PAGE 12
in 1996-2001, Hazari created a state of terror in Feni.

He formed steering committees and a class committee to conduct his activities during that time, creating huge controversy.

Apart from repressing political opponents, Hazari was accused of torturing the then ruling party men and even journalists were not spared. For his controversial and notorious activities, the then Awami League also faced huge criticism.

When the caretaker government assumed power in 2001, law enforcers raided his house in Feni but he had left the country by then.

He was sentenced to 60 years in five cases in absentia.

After staying eight years abroad, Hazari returned in February 2009 and surrendered

Law minister sends opinion

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my opinion until the prime minister sees it," Anisul told The Daily Star.

Replying to a question, he said, "I have given my opinion considering all the legal precedence. What I said earlier about the demand for allowing Khaleida Zia to go abroad is right. There is no legal support on the demand by pro-BNP lawyers in this regard."

The government released Khaleida on March 25 last year after suspending her jail sentence as per section 401 (1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC).

Section 401(1) of the CrPC says, "When any person has been sentenced to punishment for an offence, the government may at any time without conditions or upon any conditions which the person sentenced accepts, suspend the execution

decades of experience as a media and communication specialist to lead the regional alliance," read the announcement.

"After working in the United Nations for 14 years, he co-founded The Daily Star newspaper in 1991, as Bangladesh was transitioning to a democracy. His editorial direction and commentaries on the country's socio-political issues saw the paper fast rising to be the most-read English daily in the country," it added.

ANN's statement stated that Anam has been sued in court for his criticism of the country's two largest parties.

The statement quoted Anam as saying, "ANN aims to tell the world how Asia is forging ahead in this complex and ever-changing world and share knowledge and experience to build a better future."

Fernandez said ANN is currently established on a proper legal and financial footing, and now requires the mantle to be handed over in the interest of good governance.

There are few who have both Anam's breadth of experience and sense of strong commitment to regional collaboration, which are essential to take on the challenge of leading ANN and bring it forward at this critical time, said Fernandez.

to the court.

He ran for the 10th parliament as an independent.

He was expelled from Awami League on May 2, 2005 for his involvement in anti-organisational activities.

The veteran politician returned to the party after 15 years as an adviser to the central committee in 2019.

He was appointed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

He had received a grant of Tk 40 lakh by the prime minister for his medical expenses.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Awami League general secretary Obaidul Quader expressed deep condolences and sympathy over his demise.

Hazari was the owner and editor of "Hazarika Pratidin", a local newspaper in Feni.

AL perform

FROM PAGE 1
56 percent; and in the first phase held in June and September, they won 76 percent.

Independents won 45 percent of the chairman posts in the third phase, 40 percent in the second phase, and 24 percent in the first phase.

On Sunday, polls were held in 836 UPs.

The EC so far announced the unofficial results of 796 union parishads.

According to EC data, AL chairman nominees won in 396 UPs and independents in 390. At least 48 AL nominees got walkovers.

AL insiders said more than 200 of the winning independents are AL men who became independents after failing to get AL tickets. Six Jatiya Party nominees, two Islami Andolan Bangladesh nominees, and one each from Jatiya Party JP and Jaker Party won in the fourth phase.

The EC has so far announced unofficial results of 2,985 UPs in four phases. The AL chairman nominees won in 1,674 UPs and independents in 1,251. Most of the independents are disgruntled AL men, said party insiders.

In the fifth phase, elections will be held in 707 UPs on January 5, and in the sixth, elections will be held in 219 UPs on January 31.

IS-linked man executed for suicide attack plot: Saudi

AFP, Riyadh

Saudi Arabia yesterday executed a Yemeni man accused of plotting a suicide attack in the kingdom and of links to the Islamic State jihadist group, the interior ministry said.

The wealthy Gulf country, with one of the world's highest execution rates, has been the target of a series of deadly IS shootings and bombings since late 2014.

Ousted Swechhasebak League man extracting soil from river bank

Illegal soil extraction from the bank of Bhairab continues unabatedly in Jashore's Chaugachha upazila

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

An expelled leader of Awami Swechhasebak League has been illegally extracting soil from the bank of Bhairab river in Chaugachha upazila of Jashore district in the middle of the night despite an administrative ban on such activities.

Siddiqur Rahman, the expelled president of Awami Swechhasebak League Patibila village unit, has allegedly been carrying out the illegal act despite being warned by the local administration not to carry out the act.

Trucks loaded with the soil are being driven through farmlands crashing Robi crops, farmers said.

Farmers of Niamatpur, Ichapur, Mukhadaha, Rostampur and Sadipur villages said the clique helmed by Siddiqur intimidated them saying that they were extracting soil 'managing' the administration.

Based on the allegation, the Chaugachha upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) verbally instructed Siddiqur to stop the act immediately.

However, one day after that order, the miscreants started soil extraction by changing the location.

According to the locals, they were first extracting soil from the banks of Bhairab at Niamatpur village in Patibila union of Chaugachha upazila.

Several mobile courts headed by Assistant Commissioner (Land) Kafi Bin Kabir conducted drives but the gang could

not be stopped.

On December 20, in response to the complaint of the locals, a team of Chaugachha Police Station seized a dump truck carrying soil. However, police released the driver along with the vehicle after taking an undertaking stating that they would not extract soil anymore, sources said.

Newly-elected UP member of Patibila Union Parishad (UP) Monirul Islam said that soil extraction is going on unabatedly at night.

On the other hand, the vehicles carrying soil are speeding through the village in the middle of the night. The crop fields are also being marred due to the movement of the vehicles, he said.

It was seen that the poor drivers were the victims of jail and fines, however, the main culprits remain out of reach, said the UP member.

Ziaur Rahman Rintu, the convener of the Upazila Swechhasebak League, said that Siddiqur was expelled from all the posts of the party as he had extended his support to BNP-backed chairman candidate Ataur Rahman Lal in Patibila UP election held on November 11.

Contacted Siddiqur Rahman said that he stopped soil extraction after being warned by the UNO.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Erufa Sultana said mobile courts will be conducted to prevent the illegal act.

If necessary, regular cases will be filed against the culprits, said the UNO.

Sleeping couple killed

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the highway after 3:00pm, demanding punishment of the driver. The vice-chancellor talked to the students, but they did not leave the highway until yesterday evening, police said.

"A Khulna-bound bus of Dola Paribahan rammmed the rickshaw-van that Raisul and his two friends were on. The injured were taken to a hospital where a doctor declared Raisul dead. The rickshaw-van puller was admitted to the hospital and the two others passengers were released," said Nihad Adnan Taian, assistant superintendent of

police (crime) in Gopalganj.

In Dhaka's Nawabganj yesterday, four women were killed after a truck hit an auto-rickshaw at Mirrdhakanda.

Moina Begum, 50, Rahela Begum, 40, Sufia, 30, and Mala Begum, 46, were residents of Gungarpar area.

Witnesses said a sand-laden truck rammmed the auto-rickshaw, carrying the four women, around 7:00am, leaving them dead on the spot.

Sirajul Islam Sheikh, officer-in-charge of Nawabganj Police Station, said the truck was seized.

Zeesan running show here with

FROM PAGE 12
Zeesan, who is now staying in Dubai.

Police identified the death row convict in Kashimpur jail as Mamun.

The seven arrestees are: Mohammad Nasir, Omar Khaiam, Jiban Hossain, Farhan Masum, Nayeem, Kawsar Ahmed Emon, and Mohammad Aslam.

Police recovered two foreign pistols, one revolver, 13 bullets and 6,000 yaba pills from them, Mashur Rahman, deputy commissioner of DB, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Zeesan had frequent communications with Munna, who was sentenced to death for four murders in South Badda in 2006, over the phone, said police.

Of the arrestees, Aslam was in jail for nine years in a case filed under the arms act. The others stand accused in several arms and narcotics cases, said detectives.

Regarding the arrests, police said they traced Nasir through footage of a CCTV installed near the house of Shahidul. The others were arrested later.

Abhijan-10 owner held

FROM PAGE 12
administration, 35 people went missing.

However, Moshur Rahman, president of Jhalakathi district unit of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, said they prepared a list of 51 missing passengers.

Family members of the missing people are still desperately looking for their near and dear ones. They are visiting hospitals and offices of deputy commissioners (DC). Riding on trawlers, many are searching the Sugandha river to find their missing relatives.

Yesterday, family members of 35 missing people gave samples to Barguna General Hospital for DNA testing. The samples would be cross-matched with those from the bodies buried as unidentified launch passengers.

Md Harun, a resident of Barguna town, said: "My daughter Hanufa Akhter is a student of Islamic University. Hanufa along with her daughter was travelling on the launch to come to Barguna. They are still missing. Now I have come here to give samples for DNA testing."

Jony Hawlader, a resident of the capital's Demra area, said four of his family members, including his son, sister and niece, went missing.

"They were travelling to Barguna from Dhaka to visit a relative," he added.

Kalam Meer from Barguna town said his son was still missing. "I looked for him in the Sugandha River in the last three days, but in vain."

Speaking to The Daily Star, volunteers of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society said many people on trawlers were still searching the Sugandha river for their missing relatives. Najmul Alam, additional deputy commissioner of Jhalakathi, said a body

"During primary interrogation, the arrestees admitted that they work for top criminal Zeesan. We also found their involvement in extortion using technology," said DC Mashur.

On the communication between Zeesan and Mamun, he said the jail authorities need to be more careful so that inmates cannot maintain such communications with anyone outside. "They need to be more alert so that inmates cannot use cell phones," he also said.

The Daily Star called the inspector general of prisons and additional inspector general several times for comments, but they did not pick up the calls.

A top official of Kashimpur jail, requesting anonymity, however, said the DB claim that Mamun used cellphones inside jail was baseless. "We also have high vigilance in jail. Besides, our staffers remain present near inmates when they are allowed to call their families over the phone," the official added.

was recovered from the Sugandha river yesterday, but they were yet to ascertain whether it was of a victim of the launch fire.

"As the Barguna district administration is preparing the list of missing people, we have sent a photo of the body to Barguna," he added.

AM Saiful Islam, director at Barishal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital, said a total of 35 people, who sustained burns, were receiving treatment at the hospital. Three of them were at the intensive care unit.

Meanwhile, the parliamentary standing committee on the shipping ministry yesterday asked the authorities concerned to provide financial compensation to the families of the deceased and those injured.

It also asked the ministry officials concerned to make all arrangements to ensure free treatment of the wounded.

Our Barishal correspondent contributed to this report.

Russia increases jail sentence for Gulag historian

AFP, Moscow

A Russian court yesterday increased to 15 years the jail sentence of a prominent Gulag historian who supporters say is being targeted for exposing horrors from the Soviet era.

In 2020, Yury Dmitriyev was sentenced to 13 years in prison on a controversial child sex charge in north-western Russia. In December, prosecutors requested that his sentence be extended by two years.