

4 bodies found in dists over two days

STAR REPORT

Police have recovered the bodies of four people, including a college student, in separate incidents in Savar, Mymensingh, Pabna and Noakhali since Saturday evening.

In Savar, the victim was identified as Sakib Al Mahmud, 18, a resident of Bongoan area and a twelfth grader at the capital's Mirpur Mofidium School and College.

Sakib had remained missing since March 17 night.

On Saturday evening, locals smelled some bad odour coming from a septic tank a few yards away from Sakib's home and discovered the body.

On information, police rushed to the spot and recovered the body.

Rakib Mahmud, the victim's elder brother, alleged that Sakib's friend Piyash had borrowed money from him. As Sakib was pressuring him to return the cash, Piyash and some others killed him and dumped his body in the septic tank.

After Rakib filed a case against Piyash and four unnamed people the same day, police arrested Piyash, who gave a confessional statement during interrogation, said Moklesur Rahman, sub-inspector of Savar Model Police Station.

He added that Piyash was later produced before a court, which granted him a three-day remand.

Meanwhile in Mymensingh, a teenage boy was hacked to death by unknown miscreants in his house in Nandail upazila early yesterday.

The dead was identified as Mahfuzur Rahman Sajid, 16.

Quoting the victim's family, Mizanur Rahman Akanda, OC of Nandail Police Station, said Sajid was home alone while his family was out at a relative's home, when the criminals entered his house and hacked him to death early yesterday.

Neighbours found the body in the morning and informed police, who came and recovered it.

In Pabna, police recovered the body of a garment seller – Imran Hossain, 21 – from a field in Bera upazila yesterday morning.

Locals found the body on the field in Al Hera Nagar area and informed police, who went to the spot and recovered the body, said Arbinda Sarkar, OC of Bera Model Police Station.

In Noakhali, police recovered the body of a teenage boy from a pond in Noakhali's Subarnachar upazila on Friday, a day after he went missing.

(Our correspondents from Savar, Mymensingh, Pabna and Noakhali contributed to the report.)



This 160-foot-long national flag was created by the Upazila Parishad in Dhunat, Bogura, using the effects of light on water in a pond to celebrate the Independence Day.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Russia wants to split Ukraine into two

Says Kyiv, calls for more arms as Moscow's forces destroying fuel, food depots

AGENCIES

Russia wants to split Ukraine into two, as happened with North and South Korea, Ukraine's military intelligence chief said yesterday, vowing "total" guerrilla warfare to prevent a carve up of the country.

President Volodymyr Zelensky urged the West to give Ukraine tanks, planes and missiles to help fend off the Russian forces, which the Kyiv government said were increasingly targeting fuel and food depots.

Meanwhile, US officials continued efforts to soften comments on Saturday from US President Joe Biden, who said in a fiery speech in Poland that Russian leader Vladimir Putin "cannot remain in power".

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Washington had no strategy of regime change in Moscow, telling reporters in Jerusalem that Biden had simply meant Putin could not be "empowered to wage war" against Ukraine or anyone else.

After more than four weeks of conflict, Russia has failed to seize any major Ukrainian city and Moscow signalled on Friday it was scaling back its ambitions to focus on securing the

Donbass region of eastern Ukraine, where Russian-backed separatists have been fighting the Ukrainian army for the past eight years.

A local leader in the self-proclaimed Luhansk People's Republic said yesterday the region could soon hold a referendum on joining Russia, just as happened in Crimea after Russia seized the Ukrainian peninsula in 2014.

Crimians voted overwhelmingly to break with Ukraine and join Russia -- a vote that much of the world refused to recognise.

"In fact, it is an attempt to create North and South Korea in Ukraine," Kyrylo Budanov, the head of Ukrainian military intelligence, said in a statement, referring to the division of Korea after World War Two.

Ukraine's foreign ministry spokesperson also dismissed talk of any referendum in eastern Ukraine.

Kyiv and Moscow, meanwhile, agreed two more "humanitarian corridors" to evacuate civilians from frontline areas yesterday, including allowing people to leave by private car from the southern city of Mariupol, Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said.

The encircled port of Mariupol has been devastated by weeks of heavy bombardment, forcing thousands of residents to take shelter in basements with scarce water, food, medicine or power, reports Reuters.

In a late-night television address on Saturday, Zelensky demanded that Western nations hand over military hardware that was "gathering dust" in stockpiles, saying his nation needed just 1% of Nato's aircraft and 1% of its tanks.

The United Nations has confirmed 1,104 civilian deaths and 1,754 injuries across Ukraine but said the real toll is likely to be higher. Ukraine said yesterday 139 children had been killed and more than 205 wounded so far in the conflict.

The British Ministry of Defence said Russian forces appeared to be concentrating their efforts on encircling Ukrainian troops directly facing separatist regions in the east.

"The battlefield across northern Ukraine remains largely static with local Ukrainian counterattacks hampering Russian attempts to reorganise their forces," the ministry said.

A big leap in tech industry

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"The ICT division was also very cordial and helpful. As a result, we could complete all the initial tasks such as land allotment, power supply, and various other complicated works at great speed despite the pandemic," he said.

Thanks to the BHTC authorities' cooperation, in two years' time human plasma-based lifesaving pharmaceutical products, such as albumin, immunoglobulin, will be produced in Bangladesh, which are currently produced only in developed countries like the USA, Japan, Italy, France and the UK and in a few developing nations.

In the next three years, Oryx Bio-tech will invest \$300 million in BHTC and has proposed to employ 2,000 workers in the plant.

Oryx Bio-Tech Ltd is just one of the 70 tech companies that have invested millions of US dollars in BHTC to produce world-class tech-based products in Bangladesh.

So far, 44 companies have been allotted plots in the park and many of them have started to construct their factory buildings.

According to the BHTC authorities, all the companies, who have been allotted plots, will start their production in full scale by 2025 if everything goes at the current pace.

The authorities have constructed an eight-storey service building, where two companies have been allotted more than 20,000 square feet of office space.

Five more companies have obtained office spaces in the newly-constructed administrative building.

The entire hi-tech city is divided into four blocks.

The 65-acre block-1 will have residential facilities, a hotel, and administrative buildings. There will be training centres, a convention hall, mosques, shopping centre and other residential facilities in block-2.

Block-3 (40 acres), block-4 (36 acres), 5 (29 acres), and block-6 (97 acres) will be entirely industrial areas, and a special zone comprising 97.33 acres of land has been developed for establishing research and development facilities.

The government has been constructing all types of associated infrastructures with its own funds in the park. All the necessary roads, electricity and gas lines, 48 core fibre optic cable network, lighting, power station, sewerage line bridges, and culverts have already been set up.

The mosque, shopping centre, several other buildings and a picturesque artificial lake are currently under construction.

Bikarna Kumar Ghosh, managing director of Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority (BHTPA), asserted, "Within the next two years, the hi-tech city will be completed and by 2025, all the companies will start their operation.

"At that time, the hi-tech city will employ around 50,000 skilled workers and we shall be able to attract billions of dollars' worth of investments from home and abroad."

The BHTPA has already taken several pragmatic steps to make investments easy and hassle-free for attracting investors.

Potential investors can quickly apply for land, and acquire different types of

licences and certificates with the help of BHTPA's one-stop service centre.

The authorities are also working with the National Board of Revenue (NBR) to arrange tax exemption for IT devices and raw material needed for industries located at the hi-tech city.

Ghosh said, "We have sent a special proposal to NBR to arrange tax rebate and customs exemption for IT devices and raw material for our industries. Besides, we have hired former NBR members as our consultants to train our investors about our laws related to tax and customs.

"We are also working with Bangladesh Bank and Brac Bank to arrange loans on easy terms for our small and medium-sized entrepreneurs. We also arrange training and send trainees to international business expos regularly."

SK Tito's Sidney Sun International is one such medium-sized companies that will start producing CCTV, XBR, NVR and other video surveillance accessories in BHTC by May this year.

Tito commented, "We are really impressed with the fact that we can now import our raw material more easily than before. Thanks to the authorities' training and consultation, we can now efficiently interact with the customs officials and have our goods quickly released from the ports.

ICT State Minister Zunaid Ahmed Palak said, "Bangabandhu Hi-Tech City is a dream project of our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Through BHTC, we shall rebrand Bangladesh as an ICT exporter country in the world.

Bangladeshi journalist, engineer missing in Libya

FROM PAGE 1

her request, the state minister contacted the home ministry and asked it to contact the Bangladesh embassy in Libya over the matter.

Zahidur is also a director of Enam Medical College Hospital in Savar, on the outskirts of the capital. State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Dr Md Enamur Rahman is the founding chairman of the private hospital.

Taslima said that after she could not trace her husband, she informed the matter to Enamur. The MP later told her he learnt from different sources that Zahidur did not return to his hotel in Tripoli.

In a Facebook post at 1:49am (Bangladeshi time) on March 23, Zahidur mentioned he was at Corinthia Hotel Tripoli. He hasn't posted anything on the social media platform since then.

Taslima said that on

matter. She then came to know her husband had been picked up by some people. "We were informed the same by NTV."

Zahidur's son Farhan Asif Rahman, a third-year student of a private

university, said, "We are worried about my father's safety. We have been told he might have been picked up by the Libyan police



PHOTO FROM FACEBOOK

March 22, Zahidur went to Tripoli's Green Square, also known as Maydan ash-Shuhada, and took pictures. From there, he went to Leptis Magna area. Several photos uploaded by Zahidur on Facebook show him accompanying an old man holding the national flag of Libya, at the Green Square. Engineer Saiful and driver Khaled were also there.

The area was known as Green Square under Gaddafi's rule. Rebel groups took control of the area on August 21-22 in 2011. It was later named Martyred Square in memory of those killed fighting Gaddafi's men. Zahidur might have drawn the attention of some ruling people after he took photos there with the Libyan flag. He might have been picked up over the matter from a nearby place.

Engineer Saiful's father Darul Islam said, "A

journalist named Zahidur Rahman came from Dhaka. My son and a Libyan driver went along with him. They have been missing since March 23."

"Despite the crisis in Libya, militia have no control over Tripoli. Driver Khaled has spoken to his family. We are speculating that the journalist might have been captured by someone from the government forces for taking pictures at certain places. On Sunday, August 21-22 in 2011. It was later named Martyred Square in memory of those killed fighting Gaddafi's men. Zahidur might have drawn the attention of some ruling people after he took photos there with the Libyan flag. He might have been picked up over the matter from a nearby place.

Engineer Saiful's father Darul Islam said, "A

Half-day hartal today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Left Democratic Alliance (LDA) is all set to observe a half-day strike across the country today protesting the price hike of daily essentials.

The LDA, a coalition of eight left-leaning political parties, would observe the strike from 6:00am to 12:00 noon.

The strike would be observed with the demands of breaking the "business syndicate" that manipulates the market of essential commodities and issuing ration cards for those in need.

Communist Party of Bangladesh General Secretary Ruhin Hossain Prince, who is also a leader of the LDA, said the strike belongs to left-leaning parties and not just the left-leaning parties.

Sagar-Runi probe lingers on

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday asked Rab to submit by April 26 the probe report in journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi murder case.

With this, officers investigating the case have so far taken 87 dates to complete the probe.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Debdash Chandra Adhikary passed the order after Rab's Additional Superintendent Khondoker Md Shafiqul Alam, the current investigation officer, failed to submit the report yesterday, court sources said.

Sagar, news editor at private TV channel Maasranga, and his wife Runi, a senior reporter at ATN Bangla, were killed in the early hours of February 11, 2012 in their rented flat in West Razabazar.

Court accepts charges against PK Halder

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday accepted charges against PK Halder, former managing director of NRB Global Bank, and 13 others in a graft case.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh passed the order after scrutinising case documents and other relevant papers, said court sources.

The 13 others included PK Halder's mother Lilabati Halder and brother Pritish Kumar Halder.

Of the 13 accused, eight including, the three, were shown fugitives in the chargesheet while the six others were shown in jail.

The judge issued arrest warrants for the eight absconding.

The ACC filed the case on January 8, 2020 over acquiring illegal assets worth around Tk 275 crore.

Petition seeks pry school closure in Ramadan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court lawyer yesterday filed a writ petition with the High Court seeking its directive on the government to keep the functions of primary schools across the country closed during the upcoming holy Ramadan.

Lawyer Md Eunus Ali Akond submitted the petition as a public interest litigation also challenging the government's decision to continue running the primary schools till 20th of Ramadan.

In the petition, he also urged the HC to ask the government to cancel the decision.

The lawyer said the court may hold a hearing on the petition today.