

## BCL LEADER MURDER Six detained in Cox’s Bazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Cox’s Bazar

Police on Sunday night detained six people in Khurushkul of Cox’s Bazar in connection with the gruesome killing of a local Chhatra League leader.

Faysal Uddin, 26, joint general secretary of Cox’s Bazar Sadar upazila Chhatra League, died of his wounds at the District Sadar Hospital around 8:00pm Sunday, less than an hour after being attacked by criminals. He was attacked while he was coming home from an Awami League council.

Some AL leaders said criminals tried to attack Faysal at the meeting, but they foiled the attempt.

The leaders said they informed police about the possibility of an attack on Faysal. A police team reached the meeting venue around 7:00pm and sent the BCL leader home by a CNG-run auto-rickshaw.

But criminals ambushed Faysal, a resident of Kawarpara area in Cox’s Bazar Sadar upazila, and stabbed him repeatedly.

AL leaders and Faysal’s family members alleged that law enforcers did not try to protect Faysal. They let the criminals commit the crime and flee.

“Cops just witnessed the incident from a safe distance. Had the policemen been active, the life of my brother would have been saved,” Abul Hashem, elder brother of Faysal, told journalists. Jubo League and Chhatra League men met district Superintendent of Police Md Hasanuzzaman and demanded arrest of the killers and actions against those cops who neglected their duties.

The SP assured them of taking actions against cops if they were found guilty of neglecting duties.

Jashimuddin, former chairman of Khurushkul Union Parishad, said about a year ago the nephew of Aziz Sikder, who leads a gang in the area, was murdered and Faysal was accused in the case. Police, however, dropped him from the charge sheet.



Workers inspect a crater next to a heavily damaged house in a residential area of Kramatorsk, Ukraine yesterday, a day after a Russian rocket attack.

PHOTO: AFP

# Ukrainians take up new positions in east

Prepare for hard new phase in war as Putin proclaims victory in Luhansk

### AGENCIES

Ukrainian forces were taking up new defensive lines in the east yesterday, preparing for a hard new phase in the war as President Vladimir Putin proclaimed Russia’s victory in the months-long battle of Luhansk.

Russia’s capture of the city of Lysychansk on Sunday brought an end to one of the biggest battles in Europe for generations, which saw Moscow bring the full might of its ground forces to bear on a small pocket of the front line for two months.

The battle completes Russia’s conquest of Luhansk province, one of two regions it has demanded Ukraine cede to separatists in the Donbas region.

During a brief televised meeting with his defence minister, Putin congratulated Russian forces on their “victories in the Luhansk

direction”. Those who participated in the combat should “absolutely rest and recover their military preparedness”, while other units continue fighting in other areas, he said.

The battle is the closest Moscow has come to achieving one of its stated objectives since its forces were defeated trying

“Ukraine will reach the level when the fire superiority of the occupiers will be levelled.”

President Volodymyr Zelensky

to capture Kyiv in March, and marks Russia’s biggest victory since it captured the southern port of Mariupol in late May.

Both sides suffered thousands dead and wounded, while claiming to have inflicted far greater losses on their enemy, along a loop of the

Siverskyi Donets river that winds through Luhansk and Donetsk.

Lysychansk, neighbouring Sievierodonetsk and surrounding towns - many with heavy industrialised plants that served as fortified bunkers for defenders - were razed to a wasteland by relentless Russian bombardment. Russia repeatedly tried and failed to surround the Ukrainians, eventually opting to blast them out instead with the brute force of its artillery.

Military experts say the battle could prove to be a turning point in the war - not because of the strategic value of the ruined cities themselves, which is limited - but because of the impact of the losses on both sides’ ability to fight on.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky vowed to regain the lost territory with the help of long-range Western weapons, reports Reuters. “Ukraine will reach the level

when the fire superiority of the occupiers will be levelled,” he said in a video address.

In Sloviansk, west of Lysychansk in Donetsk region, Mayor Vadym Lyakh wrote on Facebook that on Sunday fierce shelling had killed at least six people, including a 10-year-old girl.

Last week, Ukraine scored its own major victory, driving Russian forces off Snake Island, a desolate but strategic outcrop in the Black Sea that Moscow had captured on the war’s first day but could no longer defend from Ukrainian strikes.

Ukraine’s military said yesterday it had now hoisted its flag there.

Neil Melvin of the RUSI think tank in London said the decisive battle for Ukraine was likely to take place not in the east, where Russia is mounting its main assault, but in the south, where Ukraine has begun a counter-offensive to recapture territory.

## Another accused in teacher harassment case arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Police on Sunday night arrested Nurunnabi, a key accused in the case filed over the harassment of the acting principal of Mirzapur Degree College in Narail, bringing the total number of arrests in the case to five.

Meanwhile, Sub-Inspector Sheikh Mohammad Mursalin, the plaintiff of the case and in-charge of Mirzapur police outpost in Sadar upazila, was withdrawn yesterday morning and attached to Narail police lines, said investigating officer of the case Mahamudur Rahman.

Mahmudur said a special team arrested Nurunnabi from Manihar Cinema area of Jashore on Sunday night.

In video footage of the incident, Nurunnabi is seen playing a key role in putting a garland of shoes around the neck of Swapan Kumar Biswas, the acting principal. He had been on the run since the case was filed, Mahmudur added.

Earlier on Sunday, a court granted three-day remand each for Rahmatullah Biswas Rony, Shaon Khan, Monirul Islam and Syed Rimon -- the four other arrestees.

## Student stabbed dead in her own home

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A college student was stabbed to death at her home in Sherpur’s Nakla upazila yesterday.

Police arrested one Ariful Islam, 30, soon after the incident, said Md Mushfiqur Rahman, OC of Nakla Police Station.

The victim is Sohagi Akter, 20, a second-year student of Hazi Jal Mahmud College. Her father, Shahidul Islam, suffered stab wounds and was undergoing treatment at Mymensingh Medical College and Hospital.

The victim’s mother filed a case against Ariful with Nakla Police Station yesterday evening.

Quoting locals and family members, OC Mushfiqur said Ariful, who lives in Narayanganj, came to the locality on Sunday night and went to Sohagi’s house around 5:00am yesterday. As Shahidul opened the door, Ariful stabbed him repeatedly and then stabbed Sohagi.

## Teacher held for abuse of 2 madrasa students

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

A 40-year-old madrasa teacher in Rangpur’s Kaunia upazila was sent to jail yesterday for sexually abusing two 13-year-old residential students, said police.

The arrestee is Amir Hamza, a teacher of Umme Hani Model Madrasa in the upazila.

On June 22, a brother of one of the victims filed a case accusing Amir with the Kaunia Police Station, said Ashraful Alam Palash, ASP of Rangpur police.

A police team arrested him from Mirbagh village of the upazila on Sunday night, and a court sent the accused to jail yesterday afternoon, he added.

According to the case statement, on the night of June 21, Hamza sexually abused the two.

## Edible oil stays hot

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market,” said Md Mohiuddin, owner of Shah Amanat Traders of Khatunganj wholesale market.

Although the wholesale prices have come down by Tk 200 to Tk 300 per maund in one week, it is not having any impact on the retail market due to the government-fixed price, he added.

Using the excuse of higher prices in the international market, traders have raised the prices several times in the

last three months, said SM Nazer Hossain, vice president of Consumers Association of Bangladesh.

“Now, when the reverse is true, they are not changing the prices. It is unfortunate for us that the general public is not getting the benefit of the lower prices in the international market,” he added.

The price of soybean oil has not dropped in Bangladesh following the international price due to the weakening of the Bangladesh taka in recent weeks, said Taslim Shahriar,

senior assistant general manager of Meghna Group of Industries.

According to the National Board of Revenue, more than 16.51 lakh tonnes of palm oil and soybean oil were imported between January and June through the Chattogram and Mongla ports by six refiners.

Bangladesh requires about 20 lakh tonnes of edible oil in a year, according to data from the commerce ministry. Only 2.03 lakh tonnes can be sourced from local producers, with the rest met through imports.

## Gas crunch brings back power cuts

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market, but after the recent price hike, they decided not to buy LNG from the spot market till prices came down.

According to energy ministry data, on average 3,100-3,200 mmcf of natural gas was distributed across the country since the beginning of the year.

But since June 30, the average supply stood at 2,800-2,900 mmcf, according to the daily production and distribution report of Petrobangla.

Petrobangla Chairman Nazmul Ahsan said they would buy LNG from the spot market only after the price comes down.

“The world is in a crisis situation and everyone is taking steps to be thrifty. We are trying to produce more gas from our internal sources,” he said.

Officials of the power, energy and mineral resources ministry said the government is in trouble. “The spot market price of LNG was \$26 per Metric Million British Thermal Unit when we last bought it in May. It has now increased to over \$36,” said an energy ministry official, preferring anonymity.

Dhaka dwellers said they have been experiencing power outages of 30-40 minutes three-four times a day since June 30.

“We didn’t sleep the whole night because the power was out at least four-five times. We have a newborn and he was sweating all night. It was painful,” said Hasina Begum of the capital’s

Banasree area.

Some city dwellers complained that the power cuts sometimes last more than an hour.

“On Sunday, there was no electricity in our home for about an hour,” Hasanur Rahman of Adabor told The Daily Star.

Residents in Chattogram complained that they experienced power outages about 8-10 times a day.

The port city has a daily supply shortage of 200MW, said Shahidul Islam, deputy director of BPDB’s Chattogram zone.

He said they were making up the shortfall mainly by interrupting supply to households, keeping industrial areas unaffected.

Power Cuts Return  
In 2012, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina instructed implementing a two-hour daily outage to manage power supply shortfall.

But since 2018, load-shedding -- the interruption of power supply -- became almost non-existent in urban areas, although there were regular outages in rural areas.

The government had then said there was no load-shedding across the country due to shortage on the production side, and that outages in rural areas happened due to lack of distribution capacity and system loss.

Contacted yesterday, Saiful Hasan Chowdhury, director of public relations of BPDB, said they have a countrywide daily demand of 14,000 megawatts in

peak time.

“But we are generating 12,000-13,000MW,” Hasan said.

“We had no load-shedding due to production shortfalls earlier, but now we are in shortage. If we don’t manage alternate sources, it will continue for some days,” he feared.

DPDC has a peak demand of 1,300MW daily but have been getting 1,000MW for the last two days, according to a power division official.

DESCO, another distributor in Dhaka, has a demand of 1,000MW, but were getting 850MW for the last couple of days, the official said.

Shahidullah Azim, senior vice-president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said many factory owners have been complaining to the association that their production is affected due to load-shedding in industrial zones.

“Many of the manufacturers are facing delays in shipment of goods,” he said.

“The factory owners have to buy diesel for generators to run their production units [in case of power outage]. As a result, the cost of production has been increasing at an already tough time,” Azim said.

An energy ministry official wishing anonymity said, “We have decided on about an hour of load-shedding in Dhaka city. The BPC is also in trouble as fuel prices have gone

up in the international market. To avoid huge losses, we have also decided not to run most of the oil-based power plants.”

Another power division official feared that the power crisis would continue for a long time.

“We are taking various austerity measures to tackle the extraordinary situation. We will reinstitute the measure to shut down all markets and shopping malls by 8:00pm after Eid,” the official said.

SHORTAGE EVERYWHERE

In Gazipur, there were about three-four hours of outages daily in residential areas, while about one hour of power cuts in industrial areas.

“When the power disruption occurs for an hour, the workers have no option but to take a break and at least 1.5 to 2 hours of working hours are wasted,” said Nasir Uddin, director of a knitwear company.

Residents in northern districts including Rajshahi, Bogura, Gaibandha and Joypurhat are facing acute load-shedding.

A doctor of Bogura’s 250-bed Mohammad Ali Hospital said yesterday, “We have experienced load-shedding in the operation theatre while conducting surgeries and the doctors had to wait for generators.”

“Some machines don’t run on generators,” he said.

Residents said they have not seen such outages in the last several years.

Sabina Akter of Rajshahi city’s Laxmipur area said

load-shedding has plagued them day and night for the past few days.

Jakiul Islam, managing director of Northern Electricity Supply Company Limited (NESCO) said the outages are happening as Rangpur and Rajshahi divisions have been witnessing an average 200MW power shortage daily.

[Anwar Ali, Mostafa Shabuj, Nazrul Islam and Abu Bakar Siddique Akand also contributed to the report]

## Businessman

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He further said his brother had been depressed over his investment in the company.

Anis, a father of three, is former president of Kushtia Chhatra League.

## COVID OUTBREAK 1.7m locked down in China

AFP, Beijing

China placed 1.7 million people under lockdown in central Anhui province, where authorities reported nearly 300 new cases yesterday in the latest of a string of outbreaks testing Beijing’s no-tolerance approach to Covid-19.

The country is the last major economy wedded to a zero-Covid strategy, responding to all cases with strict isolation orders and tough testing campaigns.