

## Two held over Kushtia journo murder: Rab

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) detained two people early yesterday on suspicion of their involvement in the killing of local journalist Hasibur Rahman Rubel in Kushtia.

The detainees are Kazi Sohan Sharif (40) of Thanapura area of Kushtia town and Khandaker Ashikur Rahman Jewel (35) of the same area.

They were detained from Kushtia town around 3:30am, said Squadron Leader Ilyas Khan, Rab-12 company commander.

The Rab team handed over them to Pabna Naval Police after primary interrogation. A press release, signed by Squadron Leader Ilyas Khan, said important information was obtained from the detainees that will be useful to the investigating agency involved in the case.

When asked whether the detainees were accused in the journalist's murder case, the Rab official said no one was accused in the case.

Rubel's office and family sources said, Rubel was working in the office of the daily Kushtia Khobor building at Singer intersection in the town on July 3. Around 9:00pm, he received a phone call and went out of the office. He also informed an office clerk that he will return soon. Since then, his mobile phone had been found switched off. On July 7, police recovered body of Hasibur Rahman Rubel, editor of online portal Crime Vision BD, who was missing for five days in Kushtia. He also worked with Amader Notun Somoy newspaper.

On July 8, Rubel's uncle Mizanur Rahman filed a murder case at Kumarkhali Police Station accusing unnamed persons.

## AL MP 'beats up' party leader on JS premises

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After the incident of an Awami League MP in Rajshahi beating up a college principal, another ruling party lawmaker allegedly attacked a Cumilla Awami League leader yesterday on parliament premises.

Razee Mohammad Fakhru, MP from Comilla-4 (Debidwar), allegedly punched and kicked Debidwar upazila chairman Abul Kalam Azad during a meeting at the LD Hall of Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, stirring up resentment among the local AL leaders and activists.

Aggrieved grassroots leaders of Cumilla (north) AL, rushed to the residence of AL presidium member Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim in the city to seek remedy in this regard, meeting sources told The Daily Star.

They claimed that Fakhru publicly kicked, punched and slapped Abul Kalam over the formation of Elahabad union under Debidwar upazila.

Three AL leaders of Cumilla present in the meeting -- Raushan Ali Master, AKM Shafiqul Alam and Mehdi Hasan

-- confirmed this information while talking to this correspondent.

However, lawmaker Fakhru didn't receive calls when this correspondent phoned him to get his version of the incident.

Cumilla north district AL general secretary Raushan Ali said when the names of president and secretary of Elahabad union of AL were announced, the lawmaker became furious as Abul Kalam supported the committee.

Mehedi, a member of Cumilla (north) AL who was sitting close to the MP, said, "All of a sudden, he [Fakhru] swooped on Abul Kalam and started kicking and punching him on his leg, neck, nose and head repeatedly."

Shafiqul, youth and sports affairs secretary of Cumilla (north) AL, echoed him.

Abul Kalam was first taken to ENT Hospital at Tejgaon. Later, he was shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Recently, AL MP from Rajshahi-1, Omar Faruk Chowdhury, allegedly assaulted a college principal at his office.

## DNCC opens control

FROM PAGE 3

number of dengue patients rose to 1,670. Among the patients, 220 are still undergoing treatment.

A total of 1,449 patients

have been released from hospitals and one patient died so far.

Warning the Dhaka city corporations of a major outbreak of dengue virus

this year compared to the last couple of years, experts suggested the corporations to take extensive measures immediately to control the Aedes mosquitoes.

## Labour rights violation

FROM PAGE 3

and other issues with the authorities. A delegation of six members of European Parliament will also be visiting Bangladesh from Sunday, see the factories and meet the authorities to understand the whole range of trade-related issues, including labour rights, environmental standards and investment.

Bangladesh's single largest destination for RMG is the EU. Bangladesh currently gets GSP facility that provides duty and quota-free market access to the EU, but with Bangladesh graduating out of LDC, the facility will be over by 2029.

Then, Bangladesh has a scope to avail another scheme, GSP Plus, but more stringent conditions will be attached to avail that. Those include labour rights, human rights, democracy and environmental compliance. Whiteley said Bangladesh has already signed all the related UN conventions, but implementation is now

the key. The country has already done well in terms of green industries.

On Bangladesh's demand of lifting western sanctions, he said he understands the concerns, but the fact is that the six rounds of sanctions imposed by the EU do not apply on food imports by Bangladesh from Russia.

"We did not, in anyway, hamper wheat being imported under sanction regime...", he said, adding that there may be other reasons being faced by the banking system and supply chain. "We see misleading information that food crisis or high prices are due to sanctions." He said the biggest embargo on the 20 million tonnes of grains export by Russia is to blame for rising cost of food.

He said the fact that Russia is invading Ukraine and killing thousands of people is unthinkable today. There is now an enhanced awareness of the need to defend oneself among the nations of Europe; for this reason, even historically neutral

nations are opting to join Nato. EU also considers China a strategic partner in Asia. However, the EU will strictly oppose China if it hampers freedom of navigation in the South China Sea. And lastly, the EU considers Bangladesh pivotal in providing stability in the South Asia.

Considering that Bangladesh is a key country in the Indo-Pacific region, Whiteley said the EU is eager to work with Bangladesh in maritime and security aspects.

Asked about the foreign diplomats' recent meetings with the Election Commission and BNP, he said they meet to understand the political situation, and even the Bangladesh ambassadors abroad do the same.

Asked if the EU is sending election monitoring delegation to the next parliamentary election, he said there is nothing decided yet as it is still 18 months away.

The event was moderated by Zillur Rahman, executive director of CGS.

Echoing him, noted educationist Prof Syed Anwar Husain said, "State religion is in contradiction with democracy, the constitution of 1972, and principles of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman."

He demanded a stop to politicisation of religion and abolishment of state religion.

Addressing the event, Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, said, "We want to dream of a state where people of all religions and ethnic communities will live together with equal rights. A state where there will be no discrimination between people, no discrimination due to religious and ethnic identity; everyone desires that kind of state."

## Titas snapped 996km illegal

FROM PAGE 3

resources Nasrul Hamid talked several times in this regard. The meeting minutes said Titas formed 47 teams to detect illegal connections, and a vigilance team called "Titas Force" conducted operations to snap them.

Since January, 2021, Titas Force conducted 166 operations, including 82 mobile courts, and cut off 2.1 lakh household burner connections as well as two industrial and three commercial connections, and collected Tk 13.63 crore as penalty.

In those operations, the officials faced obstacles multiple times from locals. Last month, during an operation at Narayanganj's Sonargaon upazila, the officials were insulted by locals.

On July 3, locals attacked officials and vandalised cars in Narayanganj's Rupganj area.

In another ministry meeting held on June 28, the energy division decided to ask for a permanent

magistrate for Titas.

Minutes of the latest meeting also showed that Bakhraabad -- largely serving Cumilla, Feni, Noakhali, Chandpur and Brahmanbaria -- snapped the second highest connections, illegal lines stretching for 172 km.

The company snapped 20,001 connections during the period. This year, Bakhraabad sacked four of its employees who were proven to be involved with setting up illegal connections.

Karnaphuli, the distributor of Chattogram region, claimed it has no illegal connections. This year, they have removed lines running for only 0.04 km.

In the meeting, MA Majed, managing director of Karnaphuli, said some legal gas users in high-rise buildings use extra burners. A vigilance team faced trouble when it tried to take action in this regard.

Dr Moha Sher Ali, additional secretary of the energy division, presided

over the meeting.

Contacted, Senior Vice President of Consumers Association of Bangladesh and prominent energy expert Prof Shamsul Alam said he does not trust such information, as it is provided by the companies for their self-interest.

"Officials and employees of those companies themselves are involved with the irregularities and corruption, but companies never publish their names nor take any action against them," he said.

He said until they publish data of involved officials and what actions have been taken against the beneficiaries of illegal connections, this whole situation will remain a farce and fraud.

"The illegal connections cannot be installed automatically. So, if they want to bring transparency in this sector, they need to involve the state's detective agencies in the process of detecting and removing illegal gas connections," he added.

## WB approves \$500m

FROM PAGE 3

disaster preparedness in the non-coastal flood-prone areas."

It will also support the country's transition from a disaster response to a disaster risk management approach, she said.

The project will help save lives and properties in the highly flood-prone districts in the Teesta-Brahmaputra-Jamuna, Padma, and Surma-Meghna river basins, which are: Nilpamari, Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Rangpur, Gaibandha,

Bogura, Pabna, Sirajganj, Rajbari, Faridpur, Gopalganj, Madaripur, and Sunamganj, Habiganj.

"Inadequate evacuation facilities for people and their livestock in highly flood-prone areas not only leads to the loss of lives and livelihoods, but it also hampers the ability to provide adequate relief," said Ignacio Urrutia, World Bank's team leader for the project.

The project will also develop a database on the availability and condition of flood shelters, which

will be critical for disaster preparedness and future investment planning.

The project will support the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100, a long-term plan to achieve a safe, climate-resilient, and prosperous delta, as well as the World Bank Group's Climate Change Action Plan 2021-2025. The credit is from the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA), which provides concessional financing, and has a 30-year term, including a five-year grace period.

## Readjust edible oil

FROM PAGE 3

decreasing regularly in the international market.

He also blamed the BTTC for its reluctance every time for the edible oil price adjustment.

Alleging that BTTC only works for the interest of businessmen, the CAAB vice president said, when prices of edible oil go up in the international market, BTTC raises the price in the local market.

But when price decreases in the international market, it does not show interest to readjust the prices.

The statement said the prices of edible oil went up and down five times from October last year to June

this year, while Bangladesh has hiked the oil price in three phases.

On May 5, the government approved a fresh hike in the prices of soybean and palm oil by Bangladesh Vegetable Oil Refiners & Vanaspati Manufacturers Association (BVOVMA) on grounds of an increase in the global market.

BVOVMA fixed bottled soybean oil at Tk 198 per litre while loose soybean oil at Tk 180 per litre.

It means bottled soybean oil price increased by Tk 38 per litre and loose soybean oil price went up by Tk 44 per litre.

### Parents

FROM PAGE 5

The UNO said evidence of child marriage was found by checking birth certificates and other documents. Kabir married off his school-going teenage daughter to a grown man, and Sajib married off his minor son to an adult girl.

The three were convicted under Prevention of Child Marriage Act 2017.

### Railway

FROM PAGE 5

team will assess whether the vibration on the road bridge will cause problems for track installation. They will solve if any problems arise, he added.

Md Kamruzzaman however said operation of vehicles on the bridge would not hamper track installation works.

## Communal forces out to turn country

FROM PAGE 3

was somewhat moderate, compared to what we saw around the world. But now again... the Hindu community is being attacked. What else can I call it other than a pre-planned incident?"

He urged everyone to be unified to fight communalism like the way Gono Adalat and Gonojagoron Moncho were united as a single platform.

Speaking at the programme, the party's general secretary Fazle Hossain Badsha said, "It is not very easy to make Bangladesh a secular state in the practical sense and within a short time. But, if we fail to create the environment to continue that effort, dire situations await us in the days ahead."

"If we become a little careless, various forms of religious fundamentalism can give communalism a totalitarian form. Only a secular Bangladesh can stand firm against terrorism and fundamentalism," he added.

He also warned that if the communal forces are not resisted and the government does not keep state and religion separate, then Bangladesh's situation will become that of Afghanistan.

Ekatrotor Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee President Shahriar Kabir said not only the state but politics also needs to be kept separate from religion. Then Pakistan government oppressed Bangalees and killed 30 lakh people during the Liberation War

in the name of religion.

"In the 15th amendment of the charter, Islam was kept as the state religion to satisfy HM Ershad and to lure him to join the 14-party alliance. But it's directly contradictory to the charter. When you are restoring secularism as one of the four principles of constitutions, how can you keep one particular religion as a state religion?" he said.

He also alleged that the state has failed to play its due role regarding different communal attacks.

"The communal terrorists have to be brought to book immediately, otherwise no one can prevent Bangladesh from becoming another Afghanistan," he said.

সিরাজুল ইসলাম চৌধুরী  
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**Announcement**

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	Subscription open	Subscription close
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Date of Publication of Prospectus: 17 July 2022 on "The Daily Kaler Kantho" and "The Financial Express."

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**OBITUARY**

**Syed Khaledur Rahman,**  
s/o Late. Dr. Syed A.K.M.  
Hafizur Rahman, Ex-Managing  
Director of Rahman  
Chemicals Ltd. died on

July 06, 2022 at the Square Hospital in Dhaka due to respiratory complications. He played a Pioneering role in establishing starch-glucose Industry in Bangladesh as an agrobased industry. He was born on October 12, 1944 and is survived by his wife Mrs. Tahmina Rahman and three sons. His Janaza will be held on July 20, 2022 baad Zohor at the Ferdous Masjid at Lalbagh and buried at the Banani Graveyard the same day.

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