

Houses of 5 BNP men vandalised in Narayanganj

AL activists 'took part in it'

A CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Activists of Awami League and its associate bodies allegedly vandalised and looted houses of at least five BNP and Jubo Dal leaders in Chonpara area of Narayanganj's Rupganj upazila on Sunday night and early yesterday.

These incidents happened barely a day after at least five houses and shops of Jubo Dal and Chhatra Dal leaders were attacked, allegedly by AL men, in the upazila's Bhulta on Saturday night.

BNP leaders alleged that activists of AL, Jubo League, and Chhatra League carried out the attacks between 11:00pm Sunday and 1:00am yesterday. The attackers are supporters of upazila AL member Bazlur Rahman.

"At least 50 people, carrying sticks, entered my house in Chonpara around midnight on Sunday by breaking the padlock at the main

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Man killed in 'gunfight' with Rab

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

An alleged drug peddler was killed in a "gunfight" with Rab in the district's Teknaf upazila early yesterday.

The victim was identified as Mohammad Momin, 30, a resident of Whykong union in the same upazila. Billal Uddin, additional superintendent of police working at Rab-15, said a "gunfight" took place between a Rab team and drug peddlers. One of the peddlers was killed in the incident.

He claimed that the team recovered 2.20 lakh yaba pills, a pistol, and some bullets from the spot.

Teknaf Police Station OC Hafizur

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A worker sorts used plastic bottles by colour at a recycling factory in Khulna city's Khalishpur check post area yesterday. The labourer removes the caps and labels from the bottles before packing those in large bags. She can pack three bags a day and earns Tk 60 for each bag containing around 30-35 kg of plastic bottles.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

No let-up in fight to regain territory

Vows Zelensky as Ukrainian troops prepare assault on Donbas; Kyiv accuses Russia of striking nuke plant in the south

REUTERS, Kyiv

President Volodymyr Zelensky has vowed that there will be no let-up in Ukraine's fight to regain its territory as Kyiv said its troops had crossed the Oskil River, preparing for an assault on Russia's occupation forces in the eastern Donbas region.

Reflecting the dramatic change in momentum since Ukrainian forces routed Russian troops earlier this month in the northeast, US President Joe Biden offered his strongest prediction so far that the Ukraine would win the war.

"They're defeating Russia," Biden said in an interview with CBS's "60 Minutes". Victory would come only when Russian forces were completely driven from Ukrainian territory, and the United States would support Ukraine "as long as it

takes", Biden said.

"Russia's turning out not to be as competent and capable as many people thought they were going to be."

Crossing the Oskil River is another important milestone in Ukraine's counter-offensive in the northeastern Kharkiv region. The river flows south into the Siversky Donets, which snakes through the Donbas, the main focus of Russia's invasion.

Further beyond lies Luhansk province, base for Russia's separatist proxies since 2014 and fully in Russian hands since July after some of the war's bloodiest battles.

Ukrainian troops "have pushed across the Oskil. From Sunday, Ukraine controls the east bank", the Ukrainian Armed Forces wrote on Telegram.

Serhiy Gaidai, Ukrainian governor of Luhansk, wrote on Telegram: "Luhansk

region is right next door. De-occupation is not far away."

Ukraine yesterday accused Russian forces of shelling near the Pivdenoukrainsk nuclear power plant in Ukraine's southern Mykolaiv region.

A blast occurred 300 metres away from the reactors and damaged power plant buildings shortly after midnight, Ukraine's atomic power operator Energoatom said in a statement. The reactors were not damaged and no staff were hurt, it said, publishing photographs showing a huge crater it said was caused by the blast.

"The invaders wanted to shoot again, but they forgot what a nuclear power plant is," Zelensky said in a social media post. "Russia endangers the whole world. We have to stop it before it's too late."

Our time to give back

FROM PAGE 1

Women's Championship final to present the football-turned-cricket-crazy nation with their first regional footballing glory after 19 long years.

It was in 2003 when the Bangladesh men's team won the SAFF title on their home turf, defeating regional superpower India. Domestic football was very popular at the time, yet girls across the country could hardly kick a football due to the social stigma associated with women playing football.

Since those heady days, the footballing landscape in the country has witnessed a fall from grace from which it has not recovered.

The only exception has been this set of girls, who won almost every age-group regional trophy since their chequered journey started in 2015 in Kathmandu with a triumph in the AFC U-14 Regional Football Championship before retaining it in 2016. Their impressive trophy cabinet also includes the title of the U-18 SAFF Championship in 2018 and the U-19 SAFF Championship trophy last year.

They even made it to the AFC Under-16 Championship finals twice after finishing as zonal group champions in 2017 and in 2019.

While they might have lost all their games on the big stage against heavyweights like North Korea and Japan, their outings against Australia demonstrated how competitive they were capable of becoming. After losing 3-2 to the Soccerros in a closely-contested game in 2017, these girls came back stronger in 2019 and settled for a 2-2 draw against the same opposition.

Bangladesh were imperious this time around, coming into this SAFF Championship final with a whopping record that read 20 goals scored and zero conceded. Their journey included a maiden win over five-time

champions India, a 3-0 thrashing.

However, it is not the margin of their victories that has defined a team which has come up the ranks together under the tutelage of Golam Rabbani Choton. It is their fearless and attractive brand of football that has been a hallmark of their continued success.

And that success is even more befitting considering their personal struggles along the way.

These champions were born in a society where parents, fearful of backlash, are reluctant to allow their daughters to play football while wearing shorts. They come from communities where daughters are married off as adolescents. These girls showed grit and determination in defying those social taboos.

Ahead of Monday's final, Sanjida Akhter, a member of the winning team, posted a very significant message on Facebook, which went viral.

"Those who are pensively waiting to embrace the dream, we want to win it (the title) for those dreamers. We want to repay their unequivocal support. We are not thinking of a victory parade on an open-top bus with the trophy in our hand. We want to win it for those who have helped us to touch the green grass (of a football field) by shielding us from social stigma," Sanjida wrote.

Now that they have lived up to their promise, a celebratory atmosphere might linger for a while. There may be promises of financial rewards. But this success can only be turned into a watershed moment provided that women footballers get a structure that can enable them to consider taking up the game as a profession.

The BFF had revived the women's football league for the 2019-2020 season, but that is not inviting enough to give financial comfort to those who want to take up the game professionally.

Rejoinder, our reply

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the reconciliation in 2016 and the amount was never spent as a loan, it claimed.

The rejoinder mentioned that the BPC needed to buy extra cargo oil for fulfilling the growing demand and increasing its stock capacity. Lighterage bill was recollected on time.

About borrowing from the government despite having its own money in the banks, the rejoinder said the BPC had no other option but to take loans as it was facing liquidity crisis due to huge losses in fiscal 2010-11 and 2011-12 and had later repaid all the loans by 2015-16.

OUR REPLY

The Daily Star published the report based on the working paper of the

Parliamentary Committee on Public Undertakings on August 23.

The paper was prepared to discuss the BPC accounts of the last 10 years in a meeting of the committee. However, the CAG in the meeting submitted the 2012-13 audit report of BPC as the latest one.

In that context, quoting the committee chief, ASM Ferroz, The Daily Star wrote that the BPC conducted only internal audits over the last 10 years whereas it was supposed to be done by the CAG.

It was not in the public domain that government auditors conducted audits for 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21, which the rejoinder mentioned. The audit reports are yet to be published.

The BPC also had audits carried

out by private firms as claimed in the rejoinder.

The newspaper considered only the CAG as the external auditor. We stand corrected that the BPC actually conducted external audits.

Nowhere in our report did we mention that the BPC spend Tk 2,597 crore as a loan to other organisations.

About the reconciliation, this newspaper only said the BPC never initiated any reconciliation of accounts for eight years [till fiscal 2012-13].

Regarding the stock capacity, lighterage bill and taking loan from the government, we wrote only what was mentioned in the CAG's audit report, which is still to be settled.

We stand by our report.

Household survey focuses on food security

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conducted two telephonic surveys during the pandemic to assess the poverty situation.

From the in-person survey of 14,000 households, the government found the poverty rate has increased to 29.4 percent from 20 percent.

This is lower than what the think tanks concluded after their independent surveys. They found the poverty rate was 40 to 42 percent.

For instance, the Power and Participation Research Centre and

Brac Institute of Governance and Development inferred from their surveys that about 3.7 crore people or 22 percent of the population became poor during the first wave of the pandemic, taking the poverty rate to 42.5 percent.

Planning Minister MA Mannan has acknowledged that the poverty rate has increased during the pandemic.

In 2019, the poverty rate was 20 percent but it jumped to 30.35 percent during the pandemic and

then dropped.

"The Russia-Ukraine War, on the other hand, has disrupted the descent. We want the rate to be below 20 percent, but I believe it may rise," Mannan told The Daily Star.

He went on to cite the expansion of social safety net programmes and the universal pension schemes to further his point.

"To continue these programmes, we need a huge investment. But where can we find it? It is possible if we can raise wealth and get more tax."

Take necessary actions

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Rohingya displaced camp between the borders, resulting in a boy being killed and five others critically injured, read the letter.

It added that Rohingyas were feeling unsafe due to "heavy weapons shelling" from the Taung Pyo camp of Myanmar army situated close to the Rohingya camp between the borders.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Dil Mohammad said he issued the letter addressed to the UN. This newspaper has obtained a copy of the letter.

Over the past few weeks, the Myanmar military has been carrying out air and ground assaults against the Arakan Army, an ethnic armed organisation based in Rakhine State.

Locals in the upazila have heard gunshots and heavy blasts on the

Myanmar side of the border since last Friday. Yesterday too, gunshots were heard from across the border for four hours since 6:00am.

Yasmin Parvin Tibriji, Bandarban deputy commissioner, and Md Tariqul Islam, the district's superintendent of police, visited the border areas yesterday.

The Bandarban DC said they were analysing the border's security issues. "We are taking the highest security measures to ensure locals' safety," she said after visiting the area.

"Besides, local public representatives were asked to identify risk-prone families in the border area for evacuation," said the DC.

Yasmin, however, said they would prioritise family members' opinion on evacuation.

On Sunday, the issue of evacuating families was discussed in an emergency meeting held at the UNO office.

Regarding this, Salma Ferdous, upazila nirbahi officer of Naikhyanchhari, said they would evacuate the families if normalcy did not return.

Bandarban SP Tariquul said they have increased intelligence vigilance in the border areas and are working in coordination with Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB).

Additional BGB and police officials were deployed in the area, according to police and BGB sources.

Our Cox's Bazar and Bandarban correspondents contributed to this report.

Rab sees major reshuffle

FROM PAGE 12

communication wing, Additional DIG Rafiqul Islam Gani of the training wing, and Additional DIG Alimuzzaman the director of the investigation wing.

In the same order, Superintendent of Police Joyita Shilpi was transferred to Rab-14 from Rab-4, SP Masura Begum to Rab-4 from Rab-14, Captain Faisal Ibn Moïn to the administration and finance wing of Rab HQ from

the army, Lt Abul Hashem Sabuj to Rab-12 from the navy, Additional SP Motiar Rahman to Rab-11 from Sylhet Metropolitan Police, and Additional SP Kamrul Hasan was posted to Rab-3 from Chattogram Metropolitan Police.

Meanwhile, Dhaka Metropolitan Police has reshuffled the posts of OC in Ramna, Gulshan, Shahbagh, Turag and Airport police stations.

According to an order of DMP

headquarters, Gulshan Police Station OC Abul Hasan was transferred to Ramna Police Station, Airport Police Station OC BM Farman Ali to Gulshan Police Station, Shahbagh Police Station OC Maudud Howladar to Turag Police Station, Ramna OC Monirul Islam to Airport Police Station, and Inspector (Investigation) Nur Mohammad of Ramna Police Station was made the OC of Shahbagh Police Station.

Govt relaxes restrictions

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development partners, universities or countries, under fellowships with foreign funding.

"Besides, they can participate in specialised or professional training programmes organised under the same budget on the basis of a memorandum of understanding signed between the government and other foreign training institutions or universities," it said.

The government also allowed

their participation in foreign training through invitation and full funding by a foreign government, institution, or development partner.

In order to audit or inspect the quality of services or products, officials concerned, including those with technical knowledge, can travel abroad, if funded by suppliers, contractors, or consulting firms.

The circular said the decision was taken to ensure the skill upgradation of government officials.

However, exposure visits, study tours, foreign trips, workshops or seminars covered under the Annual Performance Agreement and Innovation, under the management and development budget, would remain closed due to the current global economic situation, according to finance ministry officials.

Earlier, the restrictions on foreign trips were imposed in the context of post-Covid economic recovery and ongoing global crisis.

Jubo League activist killed by rivals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Jubo League activist was hacked to death allegedly by rivals in Chattogram's Mirsharai upazila last night.

The victim was Md Akash, 24.

Some criminals hacked Akash with sharp weapons inside his furniture shop near his house in Purba Joraganj around 7:45pm, leaving him critically injured, said Inspector (investigation) Khairul Azam of Joraganj Police Station.

He was rushed to Chattogram Medical College Hospital where he died later, the police official added.

Supporters of an Awami League leader of the upazila carried out the attack, police said, quoting locals.

Man sent to jail over rape

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

A Bogura court yesterday sent a 60-year-old man to jail on charge of raping a two-and-a-half-year-old girl.

The victim's mother filed a rape case against Abdul Aziz, of Dahapara village in the district's Sherpur upazila.

According to the case statement, the victim's parents are day labourers and they work at a rice mill near their village. On Saturday, the parents were working at the mill and their daughter was playing nearby. At that time, the accused took the girl to his home and raped her.

As the girl screamed, locals rescued her. But Aziz managed to flee the spot, the statement added.

Four get life term for killing sand trader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A Pabna court yesterday sentenced four people to life imprisonment for killing a sand trader in 2000.

Judge Ahsan Tarek also fined each of them Tk 25,000. If they fail to comply, they have to spend one year more in prison, said Dewan Mojmud Haque, public prosecutor.

The convicts are Jahangir Hossain, 52, of Sujanager upazila, Robiul Islam Robi, 50, Abul Kalam Sheikh, 48, and Nazrul Islam, 45, of Pabna Sadar upazila.

According to the case statement, Jahangir bought sand from trader Alauddin alias Alal in 2000, but Jahangir refused to pay him the money.

On August 3, 2000, Jahangir called him in Bhadanga area in the name of giving him the money. He later killed him and dumped the body in the Padma.