

DB arrests 5 for defaming S Alam owners

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested five people, including a 70-year-old businessman and two minors, for allegedly pasting posters and making social media posts to defame the owners of Chattogram-based S Alam Group.

Abdul Kuddus, a deputy manager of S Alam group, filed the case with Gulshan Police Station on January 5 under the Digital Security Act.

The arrestees are businessman Mohammad Nur Un Nabi, 70; Afsar Uddin Roman, 42; and Abu Sayeed Saju, 21. The two minors are aged between 17 and 15.

The DB produced the three adult arrestees before a Dhaka court yesterday and sought a five-day remand for each.

The court, however, sent them to jail.

Kuddus in the case accused Nur and Golam Sarwar Mia, and Mazharul Islam alias Rasel. Saju and Roman had not been mentioned.

Police arrested Rasel on December 27 in another DSA case filed by an S Alam Group official with

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A firefighter works at a site of a market hit by Russian missiles, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in the town of Shevchenkove, Kharkiv region yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Journo stabbed to death in B'baria

BCL activist detained over killing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Police detained a Chhatra League activist for his alleged involvement in stabbing a local journalist to death in Brahmanbaria town yesterday evening.

The deceased, Ashiqur Rahman Ashiq, 27, of Medda area of the town, was the district correspondent of the daily Porzobekkhon.

Around an hour after the incident, police detained Raihan Mia from the town in connection with the killing, said Emranul Islam, officer-in-charge of Brahmanbaria Sadar Model Police Station.

Ashiq was also a member of "Batighar", a voluntary organisation that buries unclaimed bodies.

"Raihan and four-five other youths stopped the easy bike carrying Ashiq when he was returning after a monthly meeting of Batighar at Faruqi Park in the town. They then stabbed him mercilessly and fled," said the OC.

Ashiq was rushed to Brahmanbaria General Hospital where doctors

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Brazil locks down Congress area after riots

1,500 held; President Lula blames Bolsonaro fans; world leaders condemn attacks

AFP, Brasilia

Brazilian security forces locked down the area around Congress, the presidential palace and the Supreme Court yesterday, a day after supporters of ex-president Jair Bolsonaro stormed the seat of power in riots that triggered an international outcry.

In stunning scenes reminiscent of the January 6, 2021 invasion of the US Capitol building by supporters of then president Donald Trump, backers of Bolsonaro broke through police cordons and overran the seats of power in Brasilia, smashing windows and doors and ransacking offices.

Initially overwhelmed security forces used tear gas, stun grenades and water cannon to fight back the rioters until they finally subdued them.

Newly inaugurated President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, the veteran leftist who narrowly won Brazil's bitter, divisive October elections, condemned the invasions as a "fascist" attack.

The far-right Bolsonaro meanwhile condemned "pillaging and invasions of public buildings" in a tweet. But the politician dubbed the "Tropical Trump" rejected Lula's

claim he incited the attacks, and defended the right to "peaceful protests."

Lula, who was in the southeastern city of Araraquara visiting a region hit by severe floods, signed a decree declaring a federal intervention in Brasilia, giving his government special powers over the local police force to restore law and order in the capital.

"These fascist fanatics have done something never before seen in this country's history," said Lula, 77, who took office a week ago.

"We will find out who these vandals are, and they will be brought down with the full force of the law."

Lula returned to Brasilia and viewed the damage at the presidential palace and the Supreme Court. He said he would work out of the palace despite all the destruction.

Federal District police said at least 1,500 people had been arrested in connection with the unrest.

TV images showed police ushering Bolsonaro supporters in single file down the ramp from the Planalto presidential palace -- the same ramp Lula climbed a week earlier at his inauguration.

Teachers close schools for wedding of minister's son

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Schoolteachers in Chilmari, Roumari and Rajitpur upazilas of Kurigram showed up at the wedding reception of Safayet Bin Zakir Sourav, son of State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Zakir Hossain, on Sunday closing their schools for the day.

Over 1,200 teachers of 264 schools were invited to the reception in Roumari town.

Sources said attendance of teachers was "compulsory".

Many teachers at the reception claimed that they used a "reserved holiday" for the school so that they could join the programme.

The teachers went to the reception with gifts like TV sets and refrigerators.

Abdul Gallar, head teacher of Majiderpar Government Primary School in Chilmari, said teaching activities were suspended on Sunday as it was a "reserved holiday".

However, Nur Islam, a guardian, told The Daily Star that his son returned home from Majiderpar school on Sunday as his school was closed. His son went to school on Thursday, but he was not aware of the closure. It is unethical for teachers to close

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UP chairman sent to jail for failing to submit wealth statement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chattogram court yesterday sent a union parishad chairman to jail in a case filed by the Anti Corruption Commission for failing to submit his wealth statement.

Amzad Hossain Khokon, 36, chairman of Baharchara Union Parishad in Cox's Bazar, surrendered before the court in the afternoon and sought bail.

Chattogram Divisional Special Judge Munsif Abdul Mazid rejected the bail plea and sent him to jail, said Kazi Sanowar Ahmed Lavlu, ACC's public prosecutor.

According to the case statement, on September 20, 2020, ACC Chattogram Integrated District Office-2 served a notice on Amzad, asking him to submit his wealth statement within the next 21 days.

Sharif Uddin, former deputy assistant director of ACC, lodged the case after Amzad failed to submit the documents within the stipulated time.

Man lands in jail over rape, murder of 6-year-old

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

A Dhaka court yesterday sent a man to jail for abducting, raping, and killing a six-year-old in Ashulia's Khejurbagan area.

Abdul Kabir, 20, kidnapped the child on Wednesday from her residence and raped her. He then killed the girl and dumped her body in a nearby manhole on Sunday. He later contacted the victim family and demanded a Tk 6 lakh ransom, said Lt Rakib Mahmud Khan, commander of Rab-4's CPC-2 camp.

The child's father filed a general diary with Ashulia Police Station and also filed a written complaint with Rab 4, a day after his daughter went missing.

The girl's father transacted Tk 15,000 as ransom in two phases through Bkash, a mobile banking service provider, so that Abdul could be tracked. However, he could not be traced initially as he had switched off his cell phone, the commander added.

On information, Rab, on Sunday, went to a local shop that Abdul visited to withdraw the money after the second transaction, and arrested him.

Based on the information given by him during interrogation, the victim's body was recovered later that day.

Thai PM launches re-election bid

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand's embattled Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha yesterday vowed to fix the kingdom's problems as he launched his re-election bid at a major rally in the capital Bangkok.

The move unofficially kicks off months of campaigning ahead of expected polls in the year, where the unpopular ex-general -- who took power in a 2014 coup -- will face his old Palang Pracharath Party (PPRP).

Fakhrul, Abbas walk out of jail

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Speaking at the jail gate, Fakhrul said their struggle for restoration of democracy would be successful through the people's movement.

"A huge number of BNP leaders and activists are still behind bars. The sad thing is that they are living in inhumane conditions. I am demanding their prompt release," he said.

Earlier in the day, defence lawyers submitted bail bonds to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka.

"We sent the bail orders to the jail authorities soon after receiving the bail bonds," Omar Faruk Chowdhury,

judicial bench assistant of the court, told The Daily Star.

On January 8, the Supreme Court upheld the January 3 High Court order that granted ad-interim bail to the two opposition leaders in the case.

The Appellate Division of the SC also withdrew the chamber judge's order, which on January 4 asked the counsels for Fakhrul and Abbas not to furnish bail bonds before the lower court concerned until Sunday.

Besides, the apex court asked the HC to dispose of, within 30 days, the rule that on January 3 ordered the state to explain why the two BNP leaders should not be granted regular bail in

the case.

The two were earlier denied bail four times by different lower courts.

The case was filed with Paltan Model Police Station on December 8, a day after a clash broke out in front of the BNP's Nayapaltan central office, leaving one dead and many injured.

Fakhrul and Abbas were picked up from their homes in the capital around 3:00am on December 9, a day before the BNP's divisional rally in Dhaka. They were sent to jail after Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Jashim rejected their bail petitions.

The two were accused of provoking party activists to attack police.

Thoughtless, likely to fail

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control the lights but that too did not last more than a month and since then the traffic flow has been managed with hand signals, and in cases ropes, cones, and bamboo fences are being used.

Meanwhile, 17 large and 14 small digital boards displaying traffic rules and speed limits were set up at some key points, but they remain largely ignored. Dhaka Metropolitan Police set up those displays at a cost of Tk 27 crore.

Many of them have since been removed for ongoing projects like metro rail and U-loops.

The traffic in the city of more than two crore remains chaotic.

Dhaka is the seventh worst city in terms of traffic management among 241 surveyed, according to the World Traffic Index 2020.

Buet's Accident Research Institute (ARI) said the country lost an estimated Tk 55,685 crore due to traffic congestion in Dhaka city last year.

Urban transport experts blame unthoughtful traffic management, unrealistic projects and unplanned permission for new vehicles on overcrowded road for the situation.

Poor road conditions, rickety public transport, jaywalking, and non-

motorised vehicles also contribute to gridlocks, they said.

Adil Mohammad Khan, former general secretary of Bangladesh Institute of Planners, said, "Though the government had prepared a Strategic Transport Plan (STP) in 2005 for 20 years, later revised for 2015 to 2035, it was not followed properly."

In the STP and RSTP, experts suggested clearing footpaths, constructing eight roads connecting roads outside Dhaka, three ring roads, and discipline in public transport management, said Adil, adding that there were proposals for five metro rails, two bus rapid transport systems, six expressways, and 21 transport hubs.

He said metro rail alone will not solve the problem as it would cater to only 10 percent of the passengers.

Even though the government is working on a bus route rationalisation system, only three routes have been opened and those failed to provide optimum benefits to people due to a lack of buses, he said.

Adil said 20 to 25 percent of areas of a city should be roads but in Dhaka less than 10 percent of the area are roads.

"Even the existing roads cannot function more than 60 to 70 percent due to a lack of coordination among

city corporations and utility service providers, uncontrolled parking, and mismanagement of hawkers."

Monibur Rahman, additional police commissioner (traffic) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said an integrated plan is important to make the city's traffic signals functional and to implement that plan, coordination among all the relevant stakeholders is crucial.

He said traffic police is just one stakeholder among others like Dhaka North City Corporation, Dhaka South City Corporation, Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation, Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, Roads and Highways Department, and Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority.

Bushra

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student of civil engineering at Buet, was found dead in Shitalakkhya in Narayanganj on November 7, three days after he went missing.

After investigating the incident for over a month, the Detective Branch of police and Rab on December 14 said Fardin died by suicide after jumping off a bridge into the river.

A day later, DB Chief Mohammad Harun Or Rashid said they did not find Bushra's involvement in the incident.

Bangabandhu comes home

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As he waved his hand, claps and shouts of "Joy Bangla" rose high into the air. Most who were present there had their eyes brimming with tears -- the man who freed them stood right before them.

As the president of the newly born state, Mujib was given a 21 cannon salute and a guard of honour.

"The scene, even from the air was totally overwhelming. There was an ocean of human heads ...," Dr Kamal Hossain, eminent jurist and politician, wrote in his book titled "Bangladesh: Quest for Freedom and Justice".

Kamal was also jailed in Pakistan and accompanied Bangabandhu from there to Dhaka via London and Delhi.

In his book, he further remembered how on December 26, Bangabandhu was brought to a police academy in Shihala, not far from Pakistan's Rawalpindi.

When Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the then president of Pakistan, visited him, Bangabandhu asked if he (Bhutto) was also detained.

In response, Bhutto proudly said he had come there as the president of Pakistan.

To that, Mujib retorted with laughter. "How did you become the president after I secured twice as many seats as you in the National Assembly?"

A clearly embarrassed Bhutto responded by saying Bangabandhu could become the president if he wished to.

"No. I do not have the desire for that. But I desire to go to Bangladesh as soon as possible," Mujib said.

Bhutto said he would make the necessary arrangements but needed a few days.

Then on January 8, 1972, he was finally released.

That very morning, he flew to London and arrived at the Heathrow airport.

As he walked into the airport, a tearful on duty police official, an English citizen, said, "Sir, we had been praying for you" -- showing the

world's support for Bangabandhu and Bangladesh in the fight for liberation.

While in London, Bangabandhu called for other states to recognise Bangladesh as an independent country.

Then UK Prime Minister Sir Edward Heath welcomed Sheikh Mujib in the evening and said they had, in principle, decided to recognise an independent Bangladesh.

Heath then arranged his own plane -- the British Royal Air Force comet jet -- for Bangabandhu to fly to Dhaka via Delhi.

The plane reached Delhi's Palam Airport in the morning of January 10, where Indian president VV Giri, prime minister Indira Gandhi and other dignitaries received Mujib.

Addressing a public rally in the Indian city during his short layover, he expressed gratitude towards the people of India and its government for lending support to the Liberation War of Bangladesh.

Shortly afterwards, he started his journey towards his motherland.

After landing in Dhaka, Bangabandhu was taken on a truck accompanied by other leaders.

It went through cheering crowds all the way to the Ramna race course, where he made his historic homecoming speech.

"His unbridled joy came through in his speech, as did a deep sense of fulfillment of the mission to which he had dedicated his life," Kamal wrote.

"Today, when I landed in Dhaka, I couldn't hold back my tears, because never did I think I would be back to the land, the people, and the country, Bangladesh, that I love so much," Tarik Sujat quoted Bangabandhu as saying in his book titled Bangabandhu Swadesh Pattayabartan Comet Biman O British Gopon Daili.

Mujib said he did not know whether he would be able to return to his people, adding, "I had only said one thing: I have no objection if you kill me, but please return my body to my Bangalees."

"...I did not know I was sentenced to death by hanging. A grave was dug

for me beside my cell. I had prepared myself. I had said, I'm a Bangalee, I'm a man, I'm a Muslim; I can only die once but not twice. I had said that if death awaits me, I will approach it with a smile on my face. I will not dishonour my Bangalees, I will not beg for pardon."

Sheikh Mujib in his speech made sure to pay due tribute to the millions who sacrificed their lives during the war and played vital roles in rebuilding the nation.

After the rally, around 5:35pm, he boarded a car with a flag of independent Bangladesh and left for his Dhanmondi house.

He was greeted with the embrace and tears of joy of his eldest daughter and first born -- Sheikh Hasina, the current prime minister of Bangladesh.

After exchanging hugs and tears with Sheikh Rehana and the others, he went to meet his parents.

He touched their feet first before greeting them.

And then, upon hugging his mother, he burst into tears and cried like a child in her arms.

He then met his wife Bangamata Sheikh Fazlunnesa Mujib -- who was considered his rock throughout his entire ordeal and for the rest of his life.

IGP's tenure

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IGP was given such an extension. It means that Mamun would be the police chief when the next general election will be held early next year.

According to the circular, Mamun's post-retirement leave and related benefits have been suspended as per section 49 of the Public Service Act-2018 and his tenure as the IGP has been stretched for one and a half years on a contract from January 12 or the date of joining.

On September 30 last year, Mamun became the IGP.

He was the Rab director general when the US on December 10, 2021, imposed sanctions on him and six other current and former Rab officials and the force itself.