

## Arsonists took his life, his family's dreams too

DIPAN NANDY

Twenty-year-old Nayem was the eldest of four siblings. He became a transport worker when he was 16 to support his parents run the family.



Nayem

As a driver's assistant, he used to spend the days on the doors of buses. He carried the hopes and dreams of his younger siblings on his young shoulders.

Drained after a hard day's work, he and another worker named Rabiul went to sleep inside a bus of Achhim Paribahan on Saturday night.

Around 3:00am, hours before BNP and Jamaat's dawn-to-dusk hartal began, arsonists set fire to the vehicle which was parked by a road in the Paschim Deila area of Demra.

Nayem was burnt to death while Rabiul suffered serious injuries.

"I'm not sure how his family will cope with this loss," Nayem's uncle Al-Amin Khalifa told The Daily Star.

"We are poor people who work for food. To us, the BNP and Awami League are the same thing. We stay out of politics. Why do we have to die like this?" he asked.

Nayem was from Barishal's Chormonai Union. His shell-shocked parents Alam Chowkidar and Parvin Begum took his remains to their village and buried him last night.

"We want justice for Nayem and compensation for the loss," said Al-Amin.

Mohammad Jahurul Islam, officer-in-charge of Demra Police Station, said the arsonists were not identified yet.

Rabiul, 25, the injured worker is undergoing treatment at Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery with 17 percent burns.



A bus burning near the south gate of Baitul Mukarram mosque after criminals set it on fire around 8:30am yesterday. The BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami enforced a dawn-to-dusk hartal yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## At least 10 dead in Indian train collision

REUTERS, Bhubaneswar/Hyderabad

At least 10 people were killed and about 25 were injured in a collision between two passenger trains in India's Andhra Pradesh state yesterday, a senior government official said.

The railway ministry said in a statement that two coaches of one of the trains carrying passengers were derailed, and a preliminary investigation found that "human error" had led to the collision, caused by "overshooting of signal" by the Visakhapatnam-Rayagada passenger train between Alamanda and Kantakapalle.

Nagalakshmi S, a senior government official stationed in Vizianagaram, a district near the accident site, told Reuters that 27 people were injured and more than 90 people were travelling in the two coaches hit by the collision.

The accident occurred when the

Visakhapatnam-Rayagada passenger train stopped due to a break in an overhead cable and the oncoming train, a Visakhapatnam-Palasa Express service, rammied into it, derailing carriages of the stationary train, a senior railways official said.

Andhra Pradesh's Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy ordered immediate relief measures to be taken and asked for ambulances to be rushed from Visakhapatnam and Anakapalli, the nearest districts to Vizianagaram, his office said in a statement.

The minister also issued orders to coordinate other government departments to initiate disaster-relief measures.

The accident comes just months after India's state-run railways suffered their worst train crash in two decades when 292 people were killed. In that accident, a passenger train hit a stationary freight

train, jumped off the tracks and hit another passenger train coming from the opposite direction.

Federal police arrested three railway employees on charges of culpable homicide and causing evidence to disappear.

Indian Railways, the fourth largest train network in the world, is a state monopoly run by the Railway Board. The board reports to the federal Railways Ministry.

The rail network is undergoing a \$30 billion transformation with new trains and modern stations under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's push to boost infrastructure and connectivity.

On Sunday, Modi said on social media platform X that he had spoken with the railways minister.

"Authorities are providing all possible assistance to those affected," he said.

## Journalist Rafiq dies in road accident

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Journalist Rafiq Bhuiyan, a permanent member of the Jatiya Press Club, died of brain haemorrhaging while undergoing treatment at the National Institute of Neurosciences and Hospital in the capital yesterday.

He was 72.

Rafiq received critical head injuries after falling from a rickshaw when another rickshaw rear-ended the one carrying him at Shegunbagicha around 6:00pm on Saturday, Urmee Bhuiyan, his daughter, told this newspaper.

He was taken to the neurosciences hospital, where he died of his injuries at 12:30am yesterday.

Rafiq was on his way to the Press Club from his Bashabo Madartake residence when the accident took place.

His body was kept at the mortuary of Samorita Hospital. His two sons, who live in Canada, are on their way home. The decision about the place of his burial will be taken after they reach.

Rafiq was also the former executive committee member of a faction of the Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists.

Born in 1951 in Feni's Daganbhuiyan upazila, Rafiq is survived by four sons and two daughters. He has also left behind a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

Rafiq began his career in journalism in Chattogram, working for Dainik Samachar. Later, he moved to Dhaka and worked for various newspapers. He also published several newspapers. During his extended stay in Canada, he continued to be involved in journalism, reports UNB.

Press Club President Farida Yasmin and General Secretary Shyamal Dutta today expressed profound shock and sorrow at Rafiq's death.

In a message, they prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed condolences to the bereaved family, reports BSS.

## Young man's throat-slit body found

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

Police recovered the throat-slit body of a young man from a paddy field in Narsingdi's Shibpur upazila last morning.

The deceased, identified as Robiul Islam, 20, son of late Sobuj Mia, resident of Dulalpur union, was a battery-run auto-rickshaw driver.

His body was found just half a km from his house, said Firoz Talukder, officer-in-charge of Shibpur Police Station.

Police suspect Robiul might've been killed at any time Saturday night.

OC Firoz said, "The body has injury marks. However, we don't have a lead into the murder at this time. The body was sent to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital morgue for an autopsy."

## BNP plans tougher anti-govt movement

FROM PAGE 1

able to distance itself from the violent street programmes that it launched before the 2014 election. At the time, the party faced huge criticisms at home and abroad for violence and arson attacks to foil that election.

However, throughout its ongoing movement, BNP high-ups announced their street agitation programmes very carefully, and have been able to keep their activists in check during demonstrations.

But its high-stake October 28 rally suffered a setback as it suddenly turned violent, leaving a policeman and a BNP leader dead, and injuring scores more, as protestors clashed with cops. The day also saw a return of vandalism and arson attacks on vehicles.

Senior party leaders blame the government and law enforcement agencies for the "unexpected and planned attack" on the opposition leaders and activists.

They say Saturday's turn of events has made them revisit their "go-slow" strategy to press home their demand. It has also prompted the party to immediately go for tougher programmes like blockade and hartal, although it was not in their plan, not for now at least.

After BNP was forced to abruptly end its rally in the face of police action, the party's standing committee yesterday sat to weigh their options in the changed scenario.

Sources at the two-hour meeting say they had a plan to announce programmes like laying siege to important establishments from the Saturday's grand rally. But the sudden violence has upset their plan and forced them to call hartal.

The decision to call hartal was made on the rally stage, just minutes before BNP leaders were forced to leave the venue in the face of police excesses, they add.

Party leaders say stray incidents may take place in big rallies like the one held on Saturday, which was joined by tens of thousands of BNP leaders and activists from Dhaka and elsewhere.

"But the way the police swung into action and lobbed sound grenades and teargas shells and fired rubber bullets indicate they had a plan to foil our rally," Standing Committee Member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We were not prepared for Saturday's incident. We never even thought of it. But the way the police and ruling party activists attacked our rally, we

were compelled to announce tougher programmes," he added.

According to BNP leaders, the grand rally was attacked to demoralise the opposition camp as the government knew that BNP supporters were "unarmed," said another senior BNP leader.

Still, BNP activists were able to fend off the attackers for about five hours, he added.

"We are hopeful about our success this time," he said.

Party sources say the government used the rally to suppress the opposition party just weeks before the announcement of the election schedule.

"These are democratic programmes to oust the autocratic and fascist government. In the past, political parties enforced such programmes to press home their demand," Amir Khasru said when asked why the party is now opting for hartal and blockade.

"By arresting our secretary general, the government has sent us a signal that it will arrest more of our leaders in the coming days. In this context, we have no way to look back," another senior party leader told The Daily Star yesterday.

## A towering scholar of exceptional brilliance

FROM PAGE 1

ideas regarding this highly complex and multi-faceted problem that humanity is facing.

Being recognised and honoured as a global climate change expert was far more challenging than a similar recognition in a comparable discipline. There were thousands of scholars and researchers, from every nook and cranny of the world, with backing from institutions of international repute, not to mention substantial budget support and global connection who competed for the distinction that Prof Saleemul was able to earn. His own brilliance and capacity for hard work placed him, in 2019, among the 20 influencers on global climate change. In 2022, the influential international science journal, Nature, named him as one of the 10 top scientists of the year. In 2023, he was appointed adviser by the UN to the Scientific Advisory Board for Advice on Breakthroughs in Science and Technology.

His role within the UN system, especially in giving an edge to the developing countries demands, was salutary. He had two-pronged task - on the one hand to convince the developing countries to take the climate crisis seriously and on the other, to persuade the developed world to listen to the voices of the suffering countries, victimised by no fault of their own as their carbon emission was almost nothing compared to the

developed world.

He worked tirelessly to convince the developing countries' leaders to build their own scientific expertise to face the challenges emanating from the changing weather patterns. One of his constant messages was that the crisis though very challenging, was manageable, that they should not get overwhelmed by it, that there was enough scientific knowledge available within their own countries to tackle the issue. All they needed to do was to come together, exchange knowledge and make whatever investment they could for this purpose. Cooperation was the only way forward, he would say.

To the developed countries, he would never tire of stating, that it was the industrialised world that was largely responsible for the carbon emission that caused the climate crisis and bore the maximum responsibility and as such should fund the mitigation and adaptation efforts. He pleaded for more resources for the disadvantaged. He was the lead author of the third, fourth and fifth assessment reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which was awarded the Nobel Prize for its work in 2007. He worked as an advisor to the UN's LDC Group and was the co-chair of the UN Food system summit, Action Track 5 that focused on resilience building for vulnerable countries.

His service to Bangladesh was unmatched. He worked with the government and advised them on every

aspect of the climate change struggle - from the forest preservation, to the protection of the coastal areas and the highly riverine zones to the highest level of policy formulations. His was a constant presence. Prof Saleem's work in climate adaptation were creative, based on locally available resources, cost effective and most importantly sustainable. He advised almost all delegations of Bangladesh to every major world and regional conference and worked tirelessly to sharpen and strengthen our arguments in global fora. He understood the complexity of challenges that lay ahead for Bangladesh and would be deeply hurt at the corruption in many projects that became exposed from time to time.

For us he was one of our most valued columnists for the climate crisis for many years. Through his column he tried to create the much needed public awareness and also reach the politicians, parliamentarians, academics, bureaucrats, etc. whose collective efforts were needed to take the urgent actions we needed to take.

With his passing the UN system lost one of its most insightful experts, the world a passionate fighter for its survival, the developing world an effective advocate for its cause and Bangladesh a patriotic voice who loved his country, felt enormously for the downtrodden people and was its most effective fighter at the global level.

May his soul rest in peace.

## Govt takes hard line against BNP

FROM PAGE 1

Faruk Hossain, deputy commissioner (media) of the DMP, said police arrested 696 people in the capital. At least 445 of them were taken to different Dhaka courts for hearings.

Besides, at least 265 BNP activists were arrested in Rangpur, Faridpur, Pirojpur, Jhalakathi, Jhemidah, Tangail, Narayanganj, Rajshahi, Brahmanbaria, and Jashore, report our correspondents.

All these happened amid a countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal the BNP and Jamaat had called in response to what the BNP said was police action during its Nayapaltan grand rally on Saturday.

Clashes between BNP activists and police left a policeman and a ward-level Jubo Dal leader dead on Saturday. The spate of violence changed the political atmosphere ahead of the national election in January next year.

After Fakhru was detained, he was taken to the Detective Branch (DB) office on Minto Road.

His wife Rahat Ara Begum said, "Police came and seized all the CCTV equipment from our building. They said they had orders to arrest my husband. I hope they return him soon. He is very sick."

Detectives searched two flats of

BNP standing committee member Amir Khasru in the capital's Banani, his son Israfil Khasru told reporters.

"Around 9:30am, DB police came to our flats [in the same building] looking for my father. They searched every room. They took my father's passport and my mother's phone and returned those after 40-50 minutes," he said.

In the capital's Shahjahanpur, Afroza Abbas, president of Jatiyatabadi Mahila Dal and wife of BNP standing committee member Mirza Abbas, alleged that men in plainclothes claiming to be law enforcers had searched their home twice to look for her husband.

"Men in plainclothes first came knocking around 3:30am and then returned hours later," she told reporters in the evening.

Shahjahanpur police filed a case accusing Abbas and 48 other named and 700-800 unnamed people of attacking policemen near Kamalapur Railway Staff Quarters.

DB teams raided BNP Joint Secretary General Syed Moazzem Hossain Alal's Lalmatia and Banani homes, BNP chairperson's press wing member Shamsuddin Didar told The Daily Star.

Didar added that the DB also raided the home of BNP executive

committee member Ishraque Hossain in Gulshan and picked up his younger brother Ishfaq Hossain and driver Rajib.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan told reporters in the afternoon that the top leaders of BNP cannot shrug off their responsibility for the murder of a policeman.

Cases will be filed over the murder, attack on the chief justice's residence, and vandalism on vehicles, he said, adding that the victims will lodge the cases.

Later in the day, he told parliament that at least 115 law enforcers were injured in the attacks by the BNP. He then showed photos of the clashes and vehicles on fire.

They had set 26 vehicles on fire, he said, adding, "What is surprising is that they assaulted police, journalists, hit the girls of Mohila League, and burnt vehicles. And then they did not even hesitate to call for a strike."

A case was filed over the killing of the policeman, and police arrested two suspects. One of them is Shamim Reza, convener of Palashbari Jubo Dal in Gaibandha, and the other is Muhammad Sultan from Demra.

Biplob Kumar Sarker, joint commissioner (operation) of the DMP, told The Daily Star that a few more cases would be filed.

## What went wrong in Chandika's planning?

FROM PAGE 1

the ongoing ICC World Cup when he was reappointed to the helm for a second time in January.

But with the Tigers, led by Shakib Al Hasan, losing their fifth successive match of the tournament on Saturday against the Netherlands - the only non-Test playing country at the tournament - that top-four dream has indeed come to a premature end.

With only one win in the bag, Shakib agreed following their 87-run humiliation that it was indeed Bangladesh's worst World Cup campaign.

In the coaching scheme of things, however, things look similarly bleak, with Hathurusingha apparently running low on ideas. In recent contests, his answer to variable scenarios in games, specifically in the faltering batting department has been moving Mehedi Hasan Miraz up the order. Apart from the match against South Africa when Miraz batted at seven - a somewhat familiar position other than batting at eight - the right-handed batter came out to

bat at one down on three occasions and also has had the experience of batting at four and five, all in one tournament.

Now what this has done is unsettled the likes of Towhid Hridoy and Najmul Hossain Shanto, with the former eventually losing his place in the side.

While Miraz's promotion in the Afghanistan match made sense as he reads mystery spin the best in the line-up, overdoing it in the other games had little to back it.

According to media reports, Hathurusingha's sacking as head coach of Sri Lanka in 2019 had stemmed from similar issues.

With Bangladesh cricket going through an off-field fiasco centring Shakib and former skipper Tamim Iqbal partly due to decisions relating to on-field tactics, the finger can be pointed at the Lankan coach for failing to keep situations in check as these situations resulted in affecting the team's frame of mind heading into the World Cup, a case that Shakib himself agreed to.

As things stand, it seems that

the Bangladesh team management can learn a lot from their superior counterparts, especially in cricketing terms and how they deal with and manage setbacks relating to the team.

Five-time world champions Australia had lost Travis Head in September when he fractured his left hand right before the mega-event but the Aussies had a clear plan, Plan B it may seem, which saw them play Mitchell Marsh as an opener. After Head was cleared for action, the left-handed batter was slotted right in at the top of the order, moving Marsh down to three.

It is, however, easier to make adjustments when there is trust in the player pool and the reinforcements a team can bring in.

In Bangladesh's case, a sorry state looms as the players have maintained their tradition of losing form and then looking out of sorts after coming into a World Cup. A quick fix is difficult in such scenarios and can never materialise into a sustainable solution without proper planning.