

## 32 killed as Israel pounds Gaza

Hamas team to hold truce talks in Cairo

### AGENCIES

At least 32 Palestinians were killed in Israeli strikes across Gaza overnight and into yesterday, Gaza medics said.

Meanwhile, the Israeli military said it had killed a militant who took part in the Oct 7, 2023 Hamas attacks on Israel and who it said was employed by a US-based charity, World Central Kitchen, in Gaza.

The official Palestinian news agency WAFA reported that three employees of World Central Kitchen were killed when an Israeli strike targeted a civilian vehicle in Khan Younis, southern Gaza.

The military did not offer any evidence and Reuters could not independently verify the man's identity and whether he took part in the attack on Israel last year.

There was no immediate comment from World Central Kitchen on the Israeli statement.

Hamas did not immediately comment.



People use a boat through a flooded street during heavy rain in Pasir Puteh, in Malaysia's Kelantan state yesterday. The death toll from the worst floods in decades in southern Thailand and northern Malaysia climbed to at least 12 yesterday, authorities said, as tens of thousands of people were evacuated due to rising water levels in the past three days.

PHOTO: AFP

Medics in the enclave said that a total of five people were killed in the strike, which they said targeted a vehicle east of Khan Younis.

In a later attack in Khan Younis, medics said at least nine Palestinians were killed when an Israeli airstrike hit a car near a crowd receiving flour, a vehicle that was used by security personnel tasked with overseeing aid deliveries into Gaza.

Among the 32 killed, at least seven died in an Israeli strike on a house in central Gaza City, according to a statement from the Gaza Civil Defense and WAFA early yesterday.

Meanwhile leaders of Hamas were expected to arrive in Cairo yesterday for ceasefire talks with Egyptian officials, days after Israel and Hezbollah agreed to a ceasefire in Lebanon, two officials of the group told Reuters.

The visit is the first since the United States announced earlier this week it would revive efforts in collaboration with Qatar, Egypt, and Turkey to negotiate a ceasefire in Gaza.

The Hamas delegation is expected to meet with Egyptian security officials to explore ways to reach a ceasefire deal with Israel that could secure the release of hostages in return for Palestinian prisoners.

## Two cases filed

FROM PAGE 12

Jubo League, and Awami League, either directly or indirectly instigated the murder.

It also mentioned that the plaintiff came to know that from Saiful's colleagues and local sources following his death.

On Tuesday, police, lawyers, and followers of Chinmoy, also spokesperson for Sammilita Sanatani Jagaran Jote, clashed when the followers blocked a prison van after a Chattogram court sent the former ISKCON leader to jail in a sedition case filed over disrespecting the national flag.

Chandan Das, a key accused in the murder case, was seen wearing a helmet with an orange T-shirt and a black pair of pants. He was carrying a sharp weapon and was seen hacking Saiful in the CCTV footage, said police.

Meanwhile, Saiful's brother Khan-e-Alam yesterday lodged another case accusing 115 people, including two local journalists of Chattogram, for attacking lawyers, vandalism, and exploding crude bombs on the court premises on Tuesday.

Among the accused, 70 are lawyers and two are journalists. Besides, 400-500 unidentified were sued under the Explosive Substances Act.

With the two new cases, a total of five cases have so far been lodged with Kotwali Police Station over the violence and killing.

Court sources said senior lawyer and former president of Mahanagar Puja Udjapan Parishad Chandan Kumar Talukdar, Bangladesh Hindu-Buddha-Christian Oikya Parishad General Secretary of Chattogram unit lawyer Nitai Prashad Ghosh, Mahanagar Puja Udjapan Parishad acting secretary lawyer Nikhil Kumar Nath, lawyers Chandan Das, Rubel Paul, Suman Achharya, and Ashirbad Kumar Biswas are among the accused.

Sukhlal Das, former secretary of Chattogram Press Club and senior reporter of Dainik Azadi, and Ayan Sharma, adviser to local daily Chattogram Pratidin, were also sued in the case, the sources added.

Denying the allegation, lawyer Nikhil told journalists that slain lawyer Saiful was their colleague and brother. Those who murdered him must be punished. But the matter of sorrow is that 70 of the 115 accused are lawyers. All are members of Bijoya Sammilan Parishad, a platform of Hindu community lawyers in Chattogram.

"No lawyers were involved in any kind of vandalism or attacks," he claimed.

Journalist Sukhlal also dismissed the allegation brought against him.

Police also filed three cases against 79 named individuals and 1,400 unknown others over the assault, vandalism, and obstruction of police in performing their duties during Tuesday's clash.

Authorities have arrested 34 people, including nine suspects linked to Saiful's murder. The nine were identified after scrutinising the CCTV footage, according to police.

## Ohidur Bahini

FROM PAGE 1

Pakistani forces and Razakars (local collaborators).

The demolition of the Sahagola Bridge in Atrai upazila, Naogaon, on September 6 was a crucial victory for Ohidur Bahini against the Pakistani forces.

Over one hundred Pakistani soldiers were killed in this battle, according to Mizanur Rahman's book "Muktijudde Ohidur Bahini" (Ohidur Bahini in the Liberation War).

Sheikh Anisur Rahman, a member of Ohidur Bahini, said that they received intelligence that a Pakistani train would be passing through Atrai on its way from Natore to Naogaon. So they decided to blow up the Sahagola bridge and lay an ambush. As they didn't have the necessary explosives, they approached the members of the Raja-Malek group, a local guerilla who had training in handling explosives, for a joint operation.

"On the night of the operation, we reached a point between Sahagola station and the bridge by boat. From there, we stealthily approached the bridge and rounded up seven Razakars guarding it. The Raja-Malek group then set the detonator and placed anti-tank mines on both sides of the railway bridge. After we took up positions with our LMGs and SMGs, the detonator was then activated, resulting in an explosion that caused a large section of the bridge to collapse. The heavy rainstorm that night ensured that the Pakistani military in Atrai did not hear the explosion."

Mozahar Hossain, another freedom fighter of Ohidur Bahini who took part in the operation, said, "As the train approached, it turned off its engine light and proceeded onto the bridge. In seconds, five of the six train coaches plunged into the canal water. The military personnel in the remaining compartment immediately opened fire. We returned fire from three LMGs. After a while, their firing ceased, and we realised that the remaining Pak soldiers were also killed."

Initially, the Ohidur Bahini started with some one hundred freedom fighters. However, as the war progressed, its ranks grew to exceed 2,000. The bravery and exploits of this force have been documented in two separate books, which detail its formation, training, attacks, counterattacks, and other significant exploits during the war.

The Ohidur Bahini acquired a large quantity of arms and ammunition by raiding various police stations and Razakar camps in Naogaon, Rajshahi, and Natore.

They carried out raids at Razakar camps in places like Begunbari, Baigacha, Sonadanga, Mainam, Taherpur, and Sadakkutia.

Among notable battles fought by Ohidur Bahini during the war are the Bannigram ambush, Barnitala battle, Taherpur-Bhabaniganj and Brahmapurhat operations, Naldighi battle, Naldanga Bridge operation, and Bhabaniganj skirmish.

### FORMATION

According to the books "Muktijudde Ohidur Bahini" and "Mukti Sangrame Atrai", Ohidur Bahini's influence

Purba Banglar Communist Party's stance against participating in the Liberation War, several leaders, including Ohidur Rahman, defied the majority and decided to join anyway.

In the first week of April, an 11-member Sarbodaliya Sangram Parishad in Atrai upazila of Naogaon was formed, with Ohidur Rahman in the council.

The initial training of the



Ohidur Rahman.

- **Area:** 14 upazilas in Naogaon, Natore, Rajshahi and Bogura.
- **Tactics:** Operated on a large fleet of boats.
- **Timeframe:** Apr 10-Dec 14.
- **Operations:** At least 50.
- **Members:** At least 2,000.



Present photo of Sahagola Bridge in Atrai upazila, Naogaon. Part of the bridge was demolished during an operation on Sept 6, 1971. An incoming Pakistani train was derailed, and over 100 enemy soldiers were killed in a subsequent gunfight.

PHOTO: AHMAD ISTIAK



Present photo of the banks of Atrai river in Taranagar-Baullapara village, Kalikapur union, Atrai. An ambush on a Pakistani army boat convoy here on Sept 19, 1971, resulted in casualties of over 150 enemy soldiers.

PHOTO: AHMAD ISTIAK

extended across 14 upazilas in four districts, stretching from Naogaon to Natore and Bogura in the east and Rajshahi in the west.

In February of this year, this reporter visited Naogaon, Rajshahi, and Natore and interviewed 50 freedom fighters of this group, including Ohidur Rahman himself, now 81 years old.

They said that despite the

freedom fighters involved the use of dummy guns at Sahebganj field near Atrai Police Station, according to Khalequzzaman Bulu, a member of Ohidur Bahini.

### FIRST OP

On April 10, Ohidur Rahman decided to lead a raid on the Atrai Police Station to loot weapons.

Ohidur Rahman said, "We divided 25 men into three groups to attack

were actively considering calling a vote, which would circumvent the UN's traditional approach of agreement by consensus.

It was a possibility being increasingly discussed as a "last resort," said the of Congo's Lapwong.

"I think that if we can't reach an agreement, we'll be obliged to go to a vote. We cannot come all this way, all these kilometres, to fail," he told AFP.

"True, it's not the usual way at UN meetings, and we will do it to our shame -- because when you negotiate, you don't expect to win it all."

More than 90 percent of plastic is not recycled, while plastic production is expected to triple by 2060.

Environmental groups have pushed ambitious countries to move to a vote if progress stalls, arguing that countries like Saudi Arabia and Russia have not offered any compromises during talks.

He warned that "some countries"

## 116 Rohingyas rescued off Indonesia: UN

AFP, Banda Aceh

More than 100 Rohingya refugees including women and children have been rescued after their boat sank off the coast of Indonesia, the United Nations refugee agency said yesterday.

The Rohingyas are heavily persecuted in Myanmar.

"We received a report from the East Aceh government that there are 116 refugees in total," UNHCR's Faisal Rahman told AFP yesterday.

"The refugees are still on the beach right now, it has not been decided where they would be taken."

He said the flimsy wooden boat carrying the Rohingyas was found half-submerged not far from the beach off the coast of northeastern Sumatra island.

## NATO MEMBERSHIP Kyiv seeks invite soon

REUTERS

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha has urged his Nato counterparts to issue an invitation to Kyiv at a meeting in Brussels next week to join Nato, according to the text of a letter seen by Reuters.

The letter reflects Ukraine's renewed push to secure an invitation to join Nato, which is part of a "victory plan" outlined last month by President Volodymyr Zelensky to end the war triggered by Russia's 2022 invasion.

Zelensky told Sky News that offering Ukraine Nato membership while allowing Russia to keep for the moment territory it had captured could be a solution to end the "hot stage" of the 33-month-old war.

steadfastly denied any involvement in the war.

When asked how they escaped, Manjur Alam said, "After three days of interrogation, the Pakistani major handed us over to Naogaon Shanti Committee Chairman Badiul Alam, who then confined us in his house. One night, the man guarding us got drunk and passed out, and we managed to break free and escape."

However, they discovered that their money and revolver had been taken, forcing them to abandon their trip to India.

### RAIDS, OPS CONTINUE

With their plan to acquire weapons from India falling through, Ohidur Bahini began targeting police stations for firearms. One notable operation was the raid at the Bagmara Police Station in Rajshahi on August 14, Pakistan's Independence Day.

Khalequzzaman Bulu, a member of Ohidur Bahini, stated, "We intended to take advantage of the Independence Day celebrations as a diversion to raid the police station."

The freedom fighters were divided into two groups and hit the police station around 2:00am.

"When they resisted our initial attack, we decided to retreat. The next morning, we renewed our assault on the police station and managed to snatch 40 rifles and 2,000 bullets." The Ohidur Bahini had raided the Bagmara Police Station a second time on November 21.

On September 19, Ohidur Bahini launched an ambush on a Pakistani army boat convoy at Taranagar-Baullapara villages. The convoy was returning from Bandaikhara village in Atrai, where they had committed mass killings, looting, and rapes.

Over 150 Pakistani soldiers were killed in the attack, according to Ohidur Rahman's book "Mukti Sangrame Atrai" (Atrai in the Liberation War).

Mojibor Rahman, a freedom fighter of Ohidur Bahini, said, "Upon receiving intelligence that the Pak soldier was heading to Bandaikhara village, hundreds of freedom fighters took positions on both sides of the Atrai river to ambush them on their return. At noon, when 11 military boats approached, we launched a coordinated attack. Ten boats were sunk in the river, and the remaining boat fled towards Atrai."

On December 9, the force attacked the Raninagar Police Station in Naogaon, forcing 40 Razakars to surrender and seizing more than 50 rifles.

On the morning of December 14, Ohidur Bahini captured the Atrai police station and raised the flag of independent Bangladesh for the first time in Atrai.

Translation and editing by Subrata Roy.



SCAN  
THE QR  
CODE TO  
WATCH  
VIDEO