

2 KILLED IN CTG Deceased were Jamaat members Party says its 'planned murder'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The two people who were killed in a mob beating "on suspicion of being robbers" in Chattogram's Satkania upazila's on Monday night were identified as active members of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami, said police.

Jamaat leaders claimed that the two members of their organisation were murdered in a planned manner by those who want to establish dominance in the area.

The deceased Md Nezam Uddin, 45, of Kanchana union, and Md Salek, 35, of the same union, were identified as supporters of Chattogram Metropolitan Jamaat's Ameer Shahjahan Chowdhury, said police sources.

"Salek stood accused in two murder cases, and Nezam had also been accused in several cases. After the incident, police and army personnel visited the spot and tried to find out what exactly happened there," Chattogram Superintendent of Police Saiful Islam Shantu told this newspaper.

"The incident took place during the Taraweeh prayer. After they [victims] went to the upazila's Chankhola area, an announcement was made through a mosque's loudspeaker that robbers were spotted in the area, prompting the public to gather," said the SP.

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As office hours end and the time for iftar approaches, the capital's metro stations get packed with commuters rushing to get home. The photo was taken at the Motijheel metro rail station yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

60pc of adults will be obese by 2050 worldwide Say researchers

AFP, Paris

Nearly 60 percent of all adults and a third of all children in the world will be overweight or obese by 2050 unless governments take action, a large new study said yesterday.

The research published in the Lancet medical journal used data from 204 countries to paint a grim picture of what it described as one of the great health challenges of the century.

"The unprecedented global epidemic of overweight and obesity is a profound tragedy and a monumental societal failure," lead author Emmanuela Gakidou, from the US-based Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), said in a statement.

The number of overweight or obese people worldwide rose from 929 million in 1990 to 2.6 billion in 2021, the study found.

Without a serious change, the researchers estimate that 3.8 billion adults will be overweight or obese in 15 years -- or around 60 percent of the global adult population in 2050.

The world's health systems will come under crippling pressure, the researchers warned, with around a quarter of the world's obese expected to be aged over 65 by that time.

Calls grow in Germany to bring back military service

AFP, Berlin

Germany's conservatives who are set to lead the next government argued yesterday that the country should quickly reintroduce compulsory military service.

Friedrich Merz, head of the CDU/CSU bloc that won last month's elections, has argued that in the era of US President Donald Trump, Europe will have to better handle its own security.

The defence policy spokesman of his centre-right alliance, Florian Hahn, told Bild daily that Germany's "suspension of conscription no longer fits the current threat situation".

"The first conscripts will have to walk through the barracks gates in 2025," Hahn told the daily. "We cannot stand by and watch as the world around us becomes more unsafe."

Fears about the future strength of NATO have surged in Europe after Trump has increasingly sided with long-isolated Russia against Ukraine, upending the Western consensus of recent years.

Merz has vowed to break with many policies of former CDU chancellor Angela Merkel, including on migration, but also on her 2011 decision to suspend compulsory military service.

No room for mob justice

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She, however, said the government does not support any form of violence against women.

The press briefing was attended by Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam, Deputy Press Secretaries Apurba Jahangir and Abul Kalam Azad Majumder, and Assistant Press Secretary Suchismita Tithi.

Order came from AL govt high-ups

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"We have received a list of 1,067 Bangladeshis incarcerated in Indian prisons over the last two to two and a half years. We are checking if any of them were victims of enforced disappearance."

The commission has also received a list of 140 individuals who were pushed into Bangladesh from Indian territory since the fall of the Awami League on August 5, 2024. An initial investigation into the list did not find any victims of enforced disappearance, but further investigation is underway.

However, Justice Moyeenul noted that one individual, Mohammad Rahmatullah who was "picked up by Rab" on August 29, 2023, was allegedly pushed into Bangladesh through the Chapainawabganj border in December.

The commission has so far received 1,752 complaints of enforced disappearances and has investigated 1,000 of them.

It has found secret detention centres run by Directorate General of Forces Intelligence, the police's Counter Terrorism and Transnational

Crime unit and Rab in Dhaka, Bogura, Narayanganj, Rajshahi, Chattogram and several other districts. The commission did not disclose the exact number of the sites.

"We found one centre inside the police lines in Bogura that was specially built over the last decade," Nur Khan Liton, a member of the commission, told the press conference.

Commission members Justice Md Farid Ahmed Shibli, rights activist Sazzad Hossain and researcher Nabila Idris were also present at the event.

Speaking about the update on the arrest warrants for 12 individuals, including six former heads of the DGFI, former police IGP and Rab chief Benazir Ahmed and former DIG and counter terrorism head Md Asaduzzaman, Justice Moyeenul said, "If they cannot be arrested, they will be tried in absentia."

The arrest warrant was issued on January 6, but the police have not been able to arrest them yet. The Anti-Corruption Commission raided the home of one ex-DGFI chief, Lt Gen Saiful Alam on February 27, but

did not find him.

Commission member Nabila Idris said that officers have told the commission that they acted on orders from high-ups in the previous government. However, the current government has a mandate to investigate and ensure justice for the victims of enforced disappearances.

"So, those who are now helping generals escape are not acting on the orders of superiors. This is your individual responsibility, and you are perpetuating the cycle of crime," she said.

The commission once again pointed out they had ordered the DGFI and Rab to stop the destruction of evidence that had happened post-August 5 at the secret detention centres housed in their respective headquarters, namely Joint Interrogation Cell and Taskforce for Interrogation centre.

Asked if they are taking action against those who had tried to impede the investigation by destroying evidence, the commission said that determining who should bear the responsibility remains a matter of enquiry.

CR Abrar 'next education adviser'

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Foreign Service Academy in the capital yesterday.

Abrar is a former professor of the University of Dhaka's international relations department and the president of Odhikar, the human rights organisation founded by Adilur Rahman Khan, the adviser for the ministries of industries and housing and public works.

Abrar is also the executive director of the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit founded by his wife Tasneem Siddiqui, a member of the committee formed by the interim government to prepare a white paper report on the Bangladesh economy.

He will take over from Wahiduddin Mahmud as the education adviser.

"Wahiduddin Mahmud has long expressed that managing two ministries simultaneously has been challenging for him. Given his advanced age and the heavy responsibilities at the planning ministry, CR Abrar is being added to the advisory council," Shafiqul said.

Constituent assembly, nat'l polls can be held together

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This justice must serve as a precedent to ensure that no fascist regime emerges in the future."

Sarjis Alam, chief organiser (Northern region) of the NCP, stated that as long as Hasina is not on the gallows, no one should "even mistakenly talk about elections".

"Where killer Hasina has disposed of the bodies is still unknown. Mothers are desperately looking for their children's remains. Until justice is served, how can we think about anything else in this country?"

The party's Chief Organiser (Southern region) Hasnat Abdullah, said the current government came to power through the blood of students and the public.

"They must remember that if justice is not ensured, the entire process [of the interim government's formation] will be questioned. Justice must be ensured as quickly as possible. If necessary, the number of special tribunals should be increased to expedite the trials."

Those present at Rayerbazar also included NCP's Member Secretary Akhtar Hossain, Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwary, Senior Joint Chief Coordinator Abdul Hannan

NEWS

COX'S BAZAR CLASH Father of victims files murder case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A murder case has been filed seven days after the death of Shihab Kabir Nahid during an attack and clash near an under-construction Air Force base beside the airport in Cox's Bazar.

His father, Md Nasir Uddin, filed the case with Cox's Bazar Sadar Model Police Station on Monday night.

The incident occurred on February 24 near Cox's Bazar town.

The air force on February 27 filed a case against two locals of Samitypara and 300 unidentified individuals. According to the case statement, the air force sustained damages worth Tk 69.4 lakh.

Shihab's father in the case filed on Monday said he and his wife had gone to the Community Eye Hospital in town for treatment on the morning of February 24. Around noon, a young man named Mohiuddin informed him that his only son, Nahid, 30, had been "shot dead" allegedly by an air force member and that his body was at Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital.

Upon hearing this, he rushed to the hospital with his wife. The hospital authorities told him that the body would be handed over after an autopsy. The body was handed over at 6:00pm.

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Smoke billows from an apartment targeted in an Israeli raid in the eastern neighbourhood of Jenin amid a weeks-long offensive in the occupied West Bank yesterday.

Ukraine can hold out on frontline

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continue to work with the US through all available channels in a calm manner," he told a press conference. "We only have one plan - to win and to survive. Either we win, or the Plan B will be written by someone else."

Zelensky himself stayed silent over the aid freeze.

Russia said the suspension of US-Ukraine aid was the "best contribution" to peace, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, adding that it was a "solution which could really push the Kyiv regime to a peace process".

Europeans are racing to boost their own military spending and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen yesterday unveiled proposals to boost spending on defence in the EU, which she said could mobilise up to 800 billion euros (\$840 billion). The EU is holding an emergency summit tomorrow.

Meanwhile, Russia said yesterday that any normalisation of relations with the United States would require the lifting of sanctions against Moscow.

"It is probably too early to say anything. We have not heard any official statements, but in any case, our attitude towards sanctions is well known, we consider them illegal," Peskov said.

"And, of course, if we talk about normalising bilateral relations, they need to be freed from this negative burden of so-called sanctions," he added.