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Five cops held for abduction and extortion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

A police officer, three constables from the Detective Branch of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police (RMP), and another constable from the Rajshahi University Police Outpost were arrested in Bogura yesterday on charges of abduction and extortion.

The five were detained by a patrol team from the Kundarhat Police Outpost in the Birgram area of the district's Shajahanpur upazila in the morning.

The arrestees are: Sub-Inspector Shahin Mohammad Anu Islam, and constables Ripon Mia, Abul Kalam Azad, Mahbub Alam, and Bashir Ali. Their microbus driver, Mehdi Hasan, was also arrested and accused in a case filed with Dhunat Police Station.

Another constable, Wahab, was also accused in the case, which was filed by the father of one of the victims, Selim Sheikh, yesterday morning. Wahab is currently in the RMP's custody and is set to be brought to Bogura this morning.

The incident was confirmed to The Daily Star by Bogura's Superintendent

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Hundreds of rickshaws stuck in a jam on Dhanmondi Road-1 around 11:30am yesterday. This street sees a surge in the number of rickshaws during Ramadan due to the increase of seasonal pullers. However, battery-operated rickshaws are more visible this year.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Hamza adds spice to India-Bangladesh tie

ANISUR RAHMAN

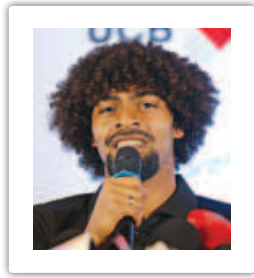
The much-anticipated Asian Cup qualifying showdown between neighbours Bangladesh and India has finally arrived. Tonight, English Premier League-bred midfielder Hamza Choudhury is set to make his long-awaited debut for Bangladesh, a team eager to make strides in international football.

The match kicks off at 7:30 pm (Bangladesh time) at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Shillong, Meghalaya, and will be broadcast live on T Sports. Excitement has been building in both camps, with the pre-match briefing charged with anticipation -- especially following Hamza's inclusion, which has drawn attention not just from Bangladesh and India but from the entire South Asian football community.

India, ranked far higher than Bangladesh in FIFA rankings, hold the historical edge in this fixture. However, past encounters have often been more competitive than the rankings suggest. The addition of Hamza brings a new layer of intrigue, with Bangladesh hoping his experience will tip the scales in their favour.

Hamza's arrival has not gone unnoticed by India, who, in response, have recalled their legendary striker Sunil

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'Thriving ecosystem' discovered after iceberg breaks off

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists have discovered a "thriving ecosystem" of strange deep sea creatures on a newly exposed seafloor after an iceberg broke off near the Antarctic.

The area, which had never before been accessible to humans, is home to giant corals and sponges which support a myriad of life forms including giant sea spiders, octopuses, and icelfish, researchers from the Schmidt Ocean Institute say.

The latest finding at depths as great as 1,300m below the sea surface offers fresh insights into how ecosystems function beneath floating sections of the Antarctic ice sheet.

Until now, very little is known about creatures living beneath Antarctica's floating ice shelves.

A previous British survey in 2021 first reported signs of bottom dwelling life forms beneath the Antarctic's Filchner-Ronne ice shelf.

It found a rich biodiversity hosting hints of several new species unknown to science.

Deep-sea ecosystems typically rely on nutrients trickling from the surface slowly down to the seafloor.

But it remains unclear how Antarctic ecosystems, covered by 150-metre-thick (almost 500ft) ice for centuries, host thriving ecosystems when they are completely cut off from surface nutrients.

Declare AL a 'criminal organisation'

Nahid urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party Convener Nahid Islam said the party's political roadmap is centred on three key agendas: justice, reform, and election for a constituent assembly.

The assembly, which will also function as the next parliament, is essential because the existing constitution is "fundamentally flawed", according to him.

"Only through a new constitution can we lay the foundations of a genuinely democratic state," he said at an NCP iftar party for diplomats at the InterContinental hotel yesterday.

The party wants the emergence of a "Second Republic built firmly upon democracy and the rule of law, accountability, distributed power and inclusive politics, where



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JULY UPRISING IN CTG

Helmeted and masked, AL men gunned down scores

Finds ICT probe, claims to have identified suspects

SHARIFUL ISLAM and SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

In Dhaka, it was the law enforcers who turned on the people they were supposed to protect. It was the law enforcers who preyed upon protesters during the July uprising. But in Chattogram, it was different. The killers were not in uniform. They came clad in helmets and masks, guns ablaze. And now investigators say they have the names of the suspects.

The port city had turned into a hub of protests at the height of the uprising. Its streets had become battlefields where scores were shot dead.

Investigators of the International Crimes Tribunal say they have found evidence that Awami League activists were responsible for many of these deaths.

Led by two prosecutors, a six-member probe team visited Chattogram and identified at least 11 leaders and activists of AL, its student or youth wings who brandished firearms and shot at protesters. Some of them were already known as armed cadres and loyal followers of AL leaders.

The investigators also gathered photographic evidence of the AL men in action -- wielding weapons and shooting them. Video clips of them shooting at demonstrators that went viral on social media show that they had helmets and

face masks.

Those who were identified are AL leader Helal Akbar Chowdhury Babor, ex-councillor of ward 21 (Jamal Khan) Shaibal Das Sumon, Jubo league leader and former councillor of Chakbazar ward Nur Mostafa Tinu, former Halishahar-Nayabazar councillor Abdus Sabur Liton, and Chattogram city BCL former general secretary Nurul Azim Rony, Chandgaon thana Swechchhasebak League President Mohiuddin Farhad aka Mohiuddin, its member Jalal aka Drill Jalal, port city Swechchhasebak League activist Md Delwar, city Jubo League activists Md Farid aka Towhid and HM Mithu aka Nurul Huda Mithu and AL leader Md Firoz of Cumilla's Langalkot.

The ICT probe team also identified at least 11 others who either personally carried firearms during the attacks on protests or patronised armed cadres.

They are AL leader and ex-mayor of Chattogram City Corporation AJM Nasir Uddin, ex-AL lawmaker from Chattogram-6 ABM Fazle Karim Chowdhury, AL leader Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, Chattogram city AL President Mahtab Uddin Chowdhury, AL leader Didarul Alam, city Jubo League Vice-president Debashish Paul Debu, Chattogram city BCL leaders Imran Ahmed Imu and Zakaria Dastagir.

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Ethnic groups to feature in next Mangal Shobhajatra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An inclusive Mangal Shobhajatra will be held on Pahela Baishakh this year, featuring participation from various ethnic communities, including Chakma, Marma, Santal, and Garo.

The decision was taken at a meeting held at Dhaka University's Senate Bhavan yesterday.

The meeting began around 11:00am with DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Niaz Ahmed Khan in the chair. Cultural Affairs Adviser Mostafa Sarwar Farooki also joined the meeting.

Apart from the DU VC, various stakeholders including different cultural figures from the Dhaka University Senate were present at the meeting, among others.

Talking to The Daily Star, DU Registrar Munshi Shams Uddin Ahmed said there is a vision to make the Mangal Shobhajatra, an inclusive event for different ethnic groups, not just Bangladeshis.

The meeting focused on the how the country's ethnic communities and other organisations can participate and how many people will be involved in the procession.

Additionally, he confirmed that

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UK MPs suspect disinformation targeting BB governor

STAR DESK

British MPs suspect they may have been targeted by a "disinformation" campaign aimed at discrediting Ahsan Mansur, the Bangladesh Bank governor, who is leading the efforts to trace funds allegedly laundered from Bangladesh into the UK, British newspaper The Guardian reported.

According to the report published yesterday, MPs raised concerns after receiving emails containing articles questioning Mansur's credibility ahead of a session today with the 47-member all-party parliamentary group (APPG) on responsible tax and corruption.

Ahsan Mansur, a former IMF official, has been in London seeking assistance from the UK government and private firms to track billions of dollars allegedly siphoned off by allies of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, some of which he believes may have been used to buy UK property, said the report.

His visit comes amid a growing controversy involving Hasina's niece, former UK city minister Tulip Siddiq, who resigned this year after Bangladesh's Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) filed a case against her.

MPs are now concerned that efforts to assist Bangladesh's anti-corruption drive

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People protest the arrest of Istanbul Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu as part of a corruption investigation, in Istanbul, Turkey, yesterday. Story on Page 7. PHOTO: REUTERS



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PRAYER TIMING MARCH 25					
Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
AZAN	4:42	12:45	4:45	6:12	7:45
JAMAAT	4:52	1:15	5:00	6:27	8:15
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION					
SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING					
RAMADAN	MARCH	SEHRI	IFTAR		
24	25			6:12	
25	26	4:40	6:12		
26	27	4:39	6:13		