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BANGLADESH'S

NO.1 CEMENT BRAND

‘Teesta and Farakka will be our priorities’

Says Fakhrul in Chapainawabganj

STAR REPORT

The BNP, if voted to power, will lay special priority on solving the issues of Farakka Barrage, Teesta river, and border killings, said its Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

“Fair share of water and border killings will be treated as major concerns. Also, we will prioritise stopping Indian dominance over Bangladesh,” he told reporters after inspecting a rubber dam built on the Mahananda river in Chapainawabganj yesterday.

The BNP leader went to Chapainawabganj to attend a rally organised as part of the “Save Padma, Save the Country; Bangladesh First” movement.

He said India can maintain good relations with Bangladesh if it wishes.

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The century-old paddle steamer PS Mahsud returned to the water yesterday as a luxury cruise vessel celebrating the country's river heritage. After inauguration by Shipping Adviser Brig Gen (retd) M Sakawat Hussain at Sadarghat, the vessel sailed to Chandpur and back. Weekly heritage cruises on the Dhaka–Barishal route begin on November 21. The photo was taken from the Postogola Bridge over the Buriganga. Related story on B3.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

ASHRAFUL'S MURDER

DB cites love triangle

Rab claims extortion plot

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two suspects arrested over the murder of Rangpur trader Ashraful Haque, whose dismembered body was recovered from two plastic drums near the High Court on Thursday, have given conflicting statements, law enforcement officials have said.

Rab arrested Shamima Akhter Kohinur from Cumilla on Friday, while Detective Branch detained Jarezul Islam from Daudkandi upazila.

Based on interrogations, Rab and DB held separate press conferences yesterday to share details of the murder.

Rab claims extortion plot

Addressing a press briefing at Karwan Bazar Media Centre, Rab 3 CO Lt Col Fayezul Arefin said Ashraful was killed in a scheme of blackmail and extortion involving Tk 10 lakh.

He said Shamima had been in a relationship with Jarezul for over a year. Rab claimed that Jarezul had planned to honey trap one of his friends, record compromising footage, and extort money.

As a part of the plan, Shamima developed a romantic relationship with Ashraful, the Rab official said.

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2 BNP leaders murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A local BNP leader was hacked by criminals and later shot dead over establishing supremacy in Lakshmipur last night, said police.

Kalam Johir, 40, was the general secretary of Ward-4 BNP in Chandraganj union, the union's BNP president Md Bellal Hossain told The Daily Star.

Lakshmipur Additional Superintendent of Police (Sadar Circle) Md Rezaul Haque told The Daily Star the incident occurred in front of a shop near Kalam's house in Pashchim Latipur village around 8:30pm. Receiving the news, the additional SP visited the scene.

Chandraganj Police Station acting officer-in-charge Fayzul Azim Noman said police have not been able to confirm who carried out the murder and the motive. They suspect that he was murdered over establishing supremacy.

According to police and locals, criminals hacked and shot Kalam on the road. He died on the spot. A bullet shell was found beside the body.

Meanwhile, an expatriate was hacked to death during a clash between two factions of BNP over a land dispute in Jhenaidah yesterday.

Deceased Mahbub Hossain, 40, was killed around 10:00am in Kala village. He had returned home four months ago from Cambodia.

After returning home, he got involved in local politics of a BNP faction led by local Jubo Dal leader Ziaur Rahman.

Zia said, “Members of Humayun Group, a faction of the local BNP, attacked Mahbub with machetes. We rushed him to Jhenaidah Sadar Hospital, but he died shortly.”

Attempts to reach Humayun by phone were unsuccessful.

Faria Tahsin, a physician at the emergency department of Jhenaidah Sadar Hospital, said the victim had deep head injuries caused by sharp weapons, along with wounds to his neck, back and lower waist.

Jhenaidah OC Abdullah Al Mamun said police had been deployed to prevent further clashes.

Arson, crude bomb attacks go on

STAR REPORT

Several crude bomb blasts were reported in the capital yesterday, while reports of arson attacks came from three districts.

The incidents occurred as the law enforcement agencies are on high alert with the International Crimes Tribunal-1 preparing to deliver its verdict on November 17 in a case against deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina on charges of crimes against humanity.

The Awami League, whose political activities are currently banned, had announced a “Dhaka lockdown” for last Thursday, when the tribunal announced the verdict date. It then announced a fresh four-day programme, including a two-day countrywide lockdown starting today.

In the last five days, more than 30 arson attacks, mostly targeting buses, and crude bomb blasts have occurred nationwide. Two deaths have been reported so far.

Around 10:00pm yesterday, an abandoned bus was set on fire near Genda in the capital,

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CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

Trial proceedings of four cases likely to be wrapped up in Dec

Probe into 10 cases almost complete

SHARIFUL ISLAM and SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

Trial proceedings in four crimes against humanity cases, excluding the one against deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her two aides which is set for verdict on November 17, are expected to be completed by December.

At the same time, investigations into 10 additional cases linked to the July uprising and an enforced disappearance during the Awami League government are nearing completion, with probe reports expected to be submitted to the prosecution of the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) soon.

Within the next one to one-and-a-half months, witness testimony and arguments in the four ongoing cases at ICT-1 and ICT-2 are expected to be complete, Prosecutor Gazi Monwar Hossain Tamim told The Daily Star.

He hoped that trial proceedings of five more

TRIALS LIKELY TO END IN DEC

- Killing of six people at Chankharpul in Dhaka on Aug 5 last year
- Killing of seven people, burning six of the bodies in Ashulia that day
- The killing of Abu Sayed by police on July 16 of last year
- Murder of two, wounding of two in police firing at Rampura on July 19, 2024

cases -- three filed over crimes against humanity during the July uprising and two relating to enforced disappearances during the Awami League's immediate past rule -- would conclude from the part of the prosecution within two to three months.

“It is up to the tribunals when the verdicts will come,” he added.

Among the five cases, ICT-2

indicted former minister and JSD president Hasanul Haq Inu on November 2 on charges including murder, instigation, abetment, persecution, complicity and aiding ruling party leaders and law enforcers in killing unarmed civilians during the July uprising.

On the same day, the tribunal framed charges against AL Joint General

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Internet freedom improves in Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's internet freedom has improved significantly, rising to a score of 45 out of 100 in the Freedom on the Net 2025 report by Freedom House.

This marks a five-point increase from the previous year, the biggest improvement among all 72 countries assessed.

The most significant improvement came in the category “Obstacles to Access”, where regulatory changes under a new interim government helped curb internet shutdowns.

The July uprising played a central role in driving reforms, said Freedom House, a Washington DC-based non-profit working on issues of democracy, political freedom and human rights.

The report says Muhammad Emdad-Ul Bari, who was appointed as chair of the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) in September last year, “pursued policy changes to prevent internet shutdowns and pledged to treat internet access as a human rights concern”.

A major legal reform came in May, when the Cyber Security Act (CSA) was repealed and replaced by a Cyber Security Ordinance (CSO). The new ordinance “featured some positive provisions, including safeguards

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CYCLONE SIDR

18 years on, trauma perists in Sarankhola



PARTHA CHAKRABORTTY

Eighteen years after Cyclone Sidr tore through Bagerhat's Sarankhola upazila, the memories remain painfully fresh for those who lived through it.

The storm of November 15, 2007 killed at least 908 people in this upazila alone, leaving behind a trail of devastation that changed the landscape and the lives of its people forever.

Families who survived that night say the trauma still weighs on them, worsened by broken dykes, fragile riverbanks, and a coastline that remains dangerously exposed.

Standing beside the same banks where Sidr's tidal surge

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Bicycle shops in Chattogram's New Market area have completely occupied the footpath. The bikes are even hung from bamboo poles to attract customers. Pedestrians are forced to use the busy streets instead. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

‘A life taken for just Tk 1,500’

Rab briefs on Ctg phone repairman's murder; three arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Rab 7 yesterday arrested three youths in connection with the killing of a mobile repairman who was stabbed to death in Chattogram's Enayet Bazar area early Friday.

After arresting the trio, Rab officials said the murder took place over a brawl centring an unpaid cellphone display repair bill of just Tk 1,500.

The arrestees are Md Sani, 24, his brother Md Yousof, 35, and Shakil Alam Faisal, 26.

Addressing a press briefing, Lt Col Towhidul Alam, camp commander of Rab 7's Bahaddarhat Camp, said Sani went into hiding at his maternal uncle's residence in Chandanaish upazila. He was arrested from there, while the other two were later detained from Reazuddin Bazar and the Kotwali areas.

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