

Main accused in Gazipur police attack case arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Gazipur

Rab has arrested Jahangir, the main accused in a case over attacking police, vandalising government vehicles, and snatching an accused during a drug recovery operation in Gazipur's Sreepur.

Rab-1 arrested him in the Ansar Road area of the upazila early yesterday.

Confirming the development, Lt Md Nazif Bin Jamal, company commander of Rab-1, said on December 31, when three people were arrested with 30 pieces of yaba during a drive in the Maona area of Sreepur, miscreants attacked the police. Several policemen were injured and two government vehicles were vandalised.

"During the attack, Jahangir seriously injured a policeman with a sharp weapon and helped snatch the accused," he added.

Bodies

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to Sir Salimullah Medical College, Mitford Hospital morgue for autopsy.

According to police and relatives, eighth-grader Fatema went to her neighbour and private tutor Mim's flat for lessons around 5:00pm on December 25. When she did not return, Rokeya went to look for her, but neither came back.

On December 27, Rokeya's husband, Shahin Ahmed, filed a general diary with Keraniganj Model Police Station. Later on January 6, he filed a kidnapping case, accusing unidentified suspects, as his wife and daughter still remained missing.

Shahin told reporters they had suspected Mim from the beginning and repeatedly informed police.

OC Saiful Alam said Mim initially lowered suspicion by posing as a responsible tutor, claiming Fatema had left after lessons. CCTV footage showed Fatema entering and leaving the flat.

Investigators later found that after Fatema was killed, Mim's younger sister wore her clothes and left the flat to mislead CCTV. She changed outside and returned minutes later.

Police said the motive stemmed from financial disputes. Rokeya had stood guarantor for an NGO loan taken by Mim, who failed to make regular payments, straining relations between the families.

According to OC Saiful Alam, a quarrel broke out between Mim's younger sister and Fatema on the night of the incident. In anger, the younger sister strangled Fatema, who died instantly. When Rokeya arrived, she too was strangled with a scarf.

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Vice Chancellor Prof Abdur Rab inaugurates the 35th founding anniversary of the International University of Business Agriculture and Technology (IUBAT) at its Uttara campus yesterday. Pro-VC Prof Mohammad Mahmudur Rahman, Treasurer Prof Selina Nargis, Registrar Prof Md Montazur Rahman, Controller of Examinations Brig Gen (retd) Dr Md Zahid Hossain, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering Prof Md Monirul Islam, and Dean of the Faculty of Business Prof Mozaffar Alam Chowdhury were, among others, present.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Parts of Lalar Dighi being filled up

DoE asked to intervene

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

within the waterbody rather than on the embankment.

"This more than century-old waterbody has faced repeated attempts at illegal encroachment through forgery. No one could occupy or fill it earlier as the city corporation intervened. Now NHA is filling up part of it to serious environmental and legal concerns.

Locals said sand filling using pipes from a neighbouring river has been underway along the Lalar Dighi embankment adjacent to the Rupatali Housing Estate under Barishal City Corporation for the past 15 days.

The nearly six acre waterbody is largely owned by the district administration. It is bordered by the Rupatali Housing Estate on three sides and a 12-foot-wide road on the western side.

The housing estate, one of Barishal's most upscale areas, was developed in 1977-78 and now covers more than 40 acres.

According to SA land records, Lalar Dighi has around four acres of waterbody, with the remaining area comprising land surrounding it.

NHA authorities, however, claimed ownership of 50 decimals of land along the embankment on the western side of the dighi and said they were filling only that portion.

Officials argued that records identify the land as pond embankment rather than waterbody and that erosion over time caused it to submerge. They said the land is now being reclaimed and that no permission was required, as it is not classified as a waterbody.

However, an on-the-spot visit found that the portion being filled -- around 300 feet long and 80 feet wide -- appears to fall

officer of the Rupatali Housing Estate, said the authority is reclaiming 50 decimals of land acquired in 1977-78 that later eroded into the dighi.

"As this is embankment land and not part of the dighi itself, we did not seek permission from the Department of Environment," he said.

Under the Waterbody Conservation Act, 2000, and the

divisional coordinator of the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association in Barishal, said the Department of Environment has been informed and legal notices have been served on nine entities, including the NHA, BCC and the DoE.

On the seventh day of hearings, the EC also upheld the candidacies of four others, including BNP-nominated Sabira Sultan in Jashore-2. The rest are Arif Ul Islam Mridha (independent, Narshingdi-3), Saifuddin Khaled (NDM, Cox's Bazar-4), and Md Anwar Hossain (independent, former BNP vice president, Sunamganj-3).

The EC heard 43 appeals yesterday -- 30 scheduled and 13 pending. Of these, 21 were rejected, four kept pending, and 18 approved.

Among the valid appeals, seven were from independents, five from the Communist Party of Bangladesh, four from Islami Andolan Bangladesh, and one from Ganosamhati Andolan. As of yesterday, 353 aspirants have regained candidacy over seven days. Earlier, 2,568 aspirants submitted nomination papers to contest the 13th national election from 300 constituencies by the December 29 deadline.

VOTER ASSAULTED

Around 3:30pm, Sherpur-2 voter Yazdayin -- who had appealed for cancellation of BNP candidate Mohammad Fahim Chowdhury's nomination -- was assaulted on the EC premises. He was later dragged onto the street and beaten before police intervened.

On the assault incident, Election Commissioner Abdur Rahmehl Masud said voters lodging complaints out of anger would face firm action.

"There is no place for extremists. They will try to create terror, but they must be discouraged. Whatever the candidate, we will take lawful measures to the fullest extent possible," he told The Daily Star.



PHOTO: STAR

local resident Jahangir Molla.

Following the allegations, Dipak Lal Chatterjee, deputy assistant land commissioner in Barishal, visited the site recently. He said a portion of the land belongs to the district administration and that the issue has been brought under official notice.

Rafiqul Islam, administrative

environmentalists disagreed with the claim.

Rafiqul Islam, Barishal divisional coordinator of Bangladesh Pribesh Andolok, said, "Whether marked as pond or embankment, it is part of a major waterbody. Filling it and selling plots is not acceptable for a government institution."

Echoing him, Lincoln Biyen,

Bangladesh Water Act, 2013, filling or altering waterbodies without environmental clearance from the DoE is a punishable offence.

Contacted, Kazi Kazi Saifuddin, assistant director of the DoE in Barishal district, said they have already asked NHA authorities to stop filling the waterbody and submit all documents related to land ownership.

Prolonged cold wave Ensure justice for Hadi

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from Tk 800-1,000 to only around Tk 400 per day.

Shafiqul Islam, a rickshaw-van puller from Aziznagar area, said, "I can work for four to five hours during the daytime, but it has become almost impossible to stay on the road and pull the van amid cold weather in the early morning and evening."

Moreover, poor people -- especially children and the elderly -- are bearing the brunt of the prolonged cold spell.

Amena Bewa, 72, of Sardarpura village, said it has become a daily struggle to just survive the cold.

To support cold-stricken poor people, the government and various non-government

organisations have been distributing blankets and warm clothes, though the supply remains inadequate compared to demand.

Contacted, Afroz Shaheen Qhosru, upazila nirkabhi officer of Tentulia, said 3,500 blankets have been distributed among people, with around 400 more in the pipeline.

Meanwhile, hospitals across the region have reported an influx of patients suffering from cold-related ailments, particularly children and elderly people.

Agriculture officials advised farmers to take precautionary measures to protect crops, especially Boro seedbeds, which have already been affected in some areas.

prospective candidate for the Dhaka-8 constituency, was shot in the head on December 12 while traveling in a rickshaw on Culvert

Road in Puratan Paltan. He was later airlifted to Singapore for advanced treatment, where he succumbed to his injuries on the night of December 18.

Two killed, three hurt

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the two persons dead on the spot, said Arifur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Nangalkot Police Station.

Additional law enforcers were deployed to avoid further violence, he added.

No case was filed till last evening, said the OC.

Local sources said the same groups clashed earlier on August 3, 2025, when former UP member Alauddin was killed.

Following that incident, both the groups carried out vandalism and arson

attacks on houses of one another, forcing several families to leave the area. Recently, those families returned to their homes following intervention of joint forces.

Presenting the keynote paper, IPD Executive Director Dr Adil Mohammed Khan said the interim government had formulated several laws and regulations on planning, building construction, and urbanisation over the past year, but failed to resolve citizens' everyday urban issues.

They urged the next elected government to move away from mega projects and prioritise effective planning, coordinated initiatives, improved urban management, and meaningful public participation.

Existing fragmented plans have seen little progress in implementation, leaving the country without a single properly planned city, he added.

Dr Forhadur Reza, associate professor of Urban and Regional Planning at Jahangirnagar University, warned that revisions to the DAP would increase population density in Dhaka and further paralyse the city.

State University of Bangladesh teacher KM Asif Iqbal Akash said existing policies have failed to curb unregulated industrialisation and environmental pollution.

IPD member Tofayel Ahmed Sajib, planner Sajid Iqbal, and IPD research associates Jinias Jannat and Kazi Tasnia Tabassum also spoke, among others.

'Interim govt not favouring anyone' Says press secy, terms Rumeen Farhana's allegations baseless

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam yesterday said the interim government is not favouring any candidate contesting for the upcoming national elections.

He made the remark in response to Brahmanbaria-2 constituency's independent candidate Barrister Rumeen Farhana's allegation that her rival candidate may carry out vote rigging on the election day. "Her allegations are baseless. There is no possibility of vote rigging. The government is not working in favour of anyone," he said.

The election will be held in a free, fair and peaceful manner, he expressed hope while talking to journalists after visiting the shrine of Hazrat Shahipir Kalla Shaheed (R) at Kharmapur area of Brahmanbaria's Akhaura upazila yesterday.

He also said unlike previous elections, practices like intimidating oppositions and arrests during campaigning will not recur during the upcoming polls.

Talking about the referendum, Shafiqul Alam said it is essentially a vote in favour of reforms aimed at ending misrule and ensuring that authoritarian governments do not return in the future.

Voting "Yes" in the referendum is necessary to put an end to large scale plundering of public resources that took place in previous regime, he added.

Regarding the implementation of the Wage Earners' Welfare Board for journalists, he said media owners should answer such questions, as journalists are often deprived of their rights despite working under risky conditions. Earlier, during a stopover at the Brahmanbaria Circuit House, Shafiqul Alam told journalists that there is no discussion about reconciliation with killers.

EC reinstates 18 more aspirants

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission yesterday reinstated the candidacy of 18 aspirants, approving their appeals against returning officers' decisions that had earlier cancelled their nominations.

On the seventh day of hearings, the EC also upheld the candidacies of four others, including BNP-nominated Sabira Sultan in Jashore-2. The rest are Arif Ul Islam Mridha (independent, Narshingdi-3), Saifuddin Khaled (NDM, Cox's Bazar-4), and Md Anwar Hossain (independent, former BNP vice president, Sunamganj-3).

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Govt failed to ensure

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fields still restricted. He also said the government ignored citizen movements opposing the destruction of Panthakunj Park for a car-dependent expressway link road and cancelled the bus rapid transit (BRT) project from Gazipur to the airport, which was based on public transport.

They also criticised the government for not addressing persistent problems such as traffic congestion, waterlogging, and noise pollution.

Speakers noted that the absence of ward councils weakened community-based problem-solving, while the government failed to involve neighbourhood residents in addressing local issues.

Existing fragmented plans have seen little progress in implementation, leaving the country without a single properly planned city, he added.

Dr Forhadur Reza, associate professor of Urban and Regional Planning at Jahangirnagar University, warned that revisions to the DAP would increase population density in Dhaka and further paralyse the city.

State University of Bangladesh teacher KM Asif Iqbal Akash said existing policies have failed to curb unregulated industrialisation and environmental pollution.

IPD member Tofayel Ahmed Sajib, planner Sajid Iqbal, and IPD research associates Jinias Jannat and Kazi Tasnia Tabassum also spoke, among others.

He said the occupation of playgrounds and parks continued, with public access to many urban

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 5:30 12:45 4:15 5:40 7:00

JAMAAT 6:05 1:15 4:30 5:44 7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION