

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 Nafiz 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.

Sub-Inspector Arup Kumar Biswas of Sreepur Police Station filed a case in this connection on January 1. After the arrest, Jahangir was handed over to Sreepur Police Station for interrogation and legal action, added the Rab official.

Rab recovers weapons snatched from police outpost

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Cumilla

Rab has recovered weapons that were snatched from a highway police outpost during a recent incident in Muradnagar, Cumilla.

The recovery was confirmed by Maj Sadman Ibne Alam, company commander of Rab-11, CPC-2, adding that they conducted the operation based on confidential information.

A specialised team from Rab-11 carried out a raid late Thursday night near the Bhuiya Bari Bridge area in Lajair village under Babutpara union, where the weapons were found abandoned.

According to Rab sources, the recovered arms include a Chinese rifle and a locally made firearm resembling a rifle, both of which had been taken from the highway police outpost.

Rab suspects the criminals fled, leaving the weapons behind after sensing the presence of the force. Legal procedures regarding the recovered weapons are underway, Rab said, adding that efforts continue to identify and arrest those involved.



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

The National Housing Authority's Rupatali unit in Barishal has been filling up a portion of Lalar Dighi, the largest natural waterbody in the city, raising 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

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 prepare plots for sale," alleged

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.

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 Shahip Kalla Shaheed (R) at Kharmpur 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.



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 Kaziuddin, 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.

Environmentalists disagreed with the claim.

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