

Fugitive criminal hacked to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

An alleged criminal who had earlier escaped from jail was hacked to death by assailants in Raipura upazila of Narsingdi on Monday night.

The deceased was identified as Apu Ahmed, 45, a fugitive convict accused in eight cases involving murder, drugs and arms offences. Police suspect the killing was the result of a dispute with rival criminals.

The incident occurred at a sawmill in Marjal union of the upazila, said Md Kamal Hossain, officer-in-charge of Raipura Police Station.

Apu, son of Habibur Rahman of the Pahar Marjal area, had escaped from Narsingdi jail during an attack on the prison amid the 2024 July movement.

According to locals, the assailants hacked him to death during the night. On Tuesday morning, residents found his blood-stained body inside the sawmill and informed police.

Police recovered the body and launched an investigation, the OC said.



PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Abdul Aziz wears a cheap pair of sunglasses to protect his eyes while sharpening a stone grinder. Although such workers have largely disappeared from metropolitan areas due to technological advances, the 85-year-old still goes door to door at Moheshkundu village in Rajshahi's Mohanpur upazila, earning around Tk 300 to Tk 400 a day. The photo was taken yesterday.

SECURITY CONCERNS

SC tightens access to court premises

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court administration has imposed restrictions on the entry of litigants and other unauthorised individuals into the court premises, including courtrooms and the Supreme Court Bar Association building, citing growing security concerns and disruptions to judicial proceedings.

SC's Registrar General Mohammad Habibur Rahman Siddique issued a notification to this effect yesterday saying that the unrestricted movement of litigants and unexpected visitors across various buildings, corridors and courtrooms of SC has been hampering the smooth conduct of judicial activities and posing risks to the safety of judges, lawyers and court officials.

In order to ensure overall security, the notice requested all practising lawyers and their assistants to carry their

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RAMPURA KILLINGS

Witness recounts father's killing by BGB men at ICT

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mithu Rajbonshi answered a call on his father's mobile phone, only to hear an unknown voice tell him that his father, Gongga Choron Rajbonshi, had been shot by Border Guard Bangladesh personnel and was lying critically injured on the Rampura Bridge.

The caller urged him to rush there immediately.

The account was placed before International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday by Bishojit Rajbonshi, the younger brother of Mithu, as the first prosecution witness in a crimes against humanity case over the killing of 28 people in Rampura on July 18-19, 2024, during the mass uprising.

Two former BGB officers -- Lt Col Mohammad Redowanul Islam and Maj Rafat Bin Alam Moon -- who are currently in custody, and two former police officers, Md Rashedul Islam, then additional deputy commissioner of Khilgaon, and Md Moshior Rahman, then officer-in-charge of Rampura Police Station, who remain fugitives, are accused in the case.

The two former BGB officers were present in the dock during the testimony.

Bishojit, 29, an AC mechanic from the city's Badda, told the tribunal he received the call around 10:00pm on July 18, 2024. He rushed towards Rampura Bridge



with his mother and several acquaintances, only to find his father's bullet-riddled body lying on the road.

Unable to find a rickshaw, they continued on foot. Along the way, people warned them not to proceed, saying BGB personnel were firing indiscriminately and they could be killed.

They somehow reached Aftabnagar Gate, where BGB members and police stopped them. "When we said my father was sick

and we were going to bring him home, BGB and police asked us to proceed with our hands raised," Bishojit said.

He testified that a boy aged about 14 or 15 was standing beside his father's body, holding Gongga's mobile phone, and told them that BGB personnel had shot him.

The area was dark, filled with smoke and the stench of gas. After repeated pleas, they found a pedal van and carried Gongga, a private car driver, home around 11:30pm.

Later that night, Bishojit said he went to Badda and then Rampura police stations to report the killing, but police barred him from entering and drove him away. The family cremated Gongga at the Postogola cremation ground the following day.

After internet services were restored, Bishojit said media reports revealed that BGB and police personnel had killed his father on instructions from their superiors. He sought justice from the tribunal.

The tribunal set January 26 for cross-examination of the witness.

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'Prioritise CHT Peace Accord in manifestos' Rights org urges parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Accord Implementation Movement has urged all national political parties to include the full implementation of the CHT Peace Accord in their upcoming election manifestos.

In a statement released yesterday, signed by joint conveners Zakir Hossain and Prof Khairul Islam Chowdhury, the movement said letters were sent to major political parties, including BNP, Jamaat, NCP, and others participating in the elections.

The letter highlighted that the CHT is a diverse region with multiple ethnic communities that have historically been deprived of political rights and opportunities to preserve their culture and traditions.

Despite the signing of the historic accord on December 2, 1997, after decades of armed conflict, key provisions remain unimplemented, and the region continues to face conflict and marginalisation of indigenous communities, the letter said.

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US deports 36 more amid crackdown

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United States sent back 36 Bangladeshi nationals yesterday.

They arrived at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka around noon on a special US military flight, according to a press release issued by BRAC.

Among the 36 returnees, 21 are from Noakhali, two from Lakshmipur, and one each from Munshiganj, Dhaka, Lalmonirhat, Shariatpur, Barguna, Feni, Sirajganj, Gazipur, Kishoreganj, Tangail, Cumilla, Chattogram, and Netrokona. One of them is a woman.

BRAC learned that most of the 36 individuals had initially travelled to Brazil legally, with permission from the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training. Later, they travelled through Mexico and entered the US illegally. They applied for asylum there, but after a lengthy legal process, their applications were rejected, resulting in their return.

The press release also said many of the returnees had spent huge amounts of money to pursue a better life abroad, and they returned empty-handed.

Returnee Zahidul Islam, from Noakhali, said he paid brokers nearly Tk 80 lakh, hoping to reach the US, while Sultana Akter from Gazipur said she paid Tk 30 lakh to brokers to cross the Mexico border through Brazil.

Other returnees spent Tk 50 to 60 lakh before coming back.

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