

SNAPS

Robbery by Rab-posers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Agroup of miscreants on Saturday posing themselves as Rab members raided the house of Khoda Box Sardar of Budhata in Assassuni upazila and committed a robbery at gun point. They looted cash and ornaments worth Tk 20,000 from the house.

15 restaurant owners sued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Fifteen owners of restaurants, sweetmeats and bakeries were sued for violating the Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institute (BSTI) rules while preparing food recently.The Patuakhali Pourasabha authorities took action against them by launching a drive led by Sanitary Inspector Abdul Halim. The rule violators are Golam Kibria, Parimal Chandra, Abdul Khaleq, Dipak Chandra, Shankhan Chandra Das, Harun, Abu Jafor, Abul Kalam, Ansar Mia, Mahbul Alam, Gouranga Chandra, Ripon, Khaleq, Ansar Ali and Parimal.

Bid to grab temple land protested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Several hundred people including members of the Hindu community on Thursday protested an attempt to grab land of a temple and a football ground at Raipur in Tala upazila.They lodged their protest by bringing out a procession and holding a meeting at Tala upazila headquarters. The processonists paraded the streets of the upazila town and held a meeting in front of Tala Upazila Nirbahi Officer's (UNO) office. They also submitted a memorandum to the UNO.Among others, Mirmal Kanti Roy, Tushar Kanti, Ganesh Mondol, Arun Mondol and Ashok addressed the meeting.Speakers blamed one person named Golok Mondol for trying to grab 2.87 acres of land with the help of unscrupulous settlement staff.

Freshers' orientation held at PSTU

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

An orientation meeting for newly admitted students at Patuakhali Science and Technology University (PSTU) was held Saturday evening. Sultan Ahmed, Deed of Agriculture Department, presided over the meeting while Vice-chancellor Prof Dr. Wahiduzzaman was the chief guest.

Proctor Nizam Uddin, Hall Superintendent Samsul Haq Howlade, Deputy Registrars Harun-or-Rashid and Ali Akbar and teachers Jahangir Kabir and Arifur Rahman Noman addressed the students at the meeting. Students of all faculties attended the meeting.

The teachers urged the students to maintain discipline on the campus and help protect the good academic atmosphere. Disciplinary action will be taken for violating university rules, they said.

They also called for maintaining a good teacher-student relationship on the campus.

No progress in cases against JMJB

22 murders allegedly by cadres: Lack of witness, evidence is main reasons, police say: Victims' relatives allege negligence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

There has been virtually no progress in investigation into the cases of murder and torture by Bangla Bhai's Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) cadres last year.

Police have given final report in one case and submitted charge sheet in another case, according to police sources.

A total of 22 murders were committed allegedly by JMJB cadres and many people were tortured, according to sources including victims' families.

Police said 'lack of complainant, witness and evidence' are the main causes for slow progress in the probe.

But family members of a good number of victims this correspondent talked to alleged police indifference in probe.

JMJB started its 'operation' in the region with the murder of Wasim, also known as Osman Babu of Palashey in Bagmara upazila on March 31 last year.

Sub Inspector Abdul Karim filed a case as Babu's family did not dare.

Later, SI Sirajul Islam submitted final report in the case saying, "Local people informed that a group of bearded men killed Osman Babu but none could be accused due to lack of witness".

The cases for murdering Abdul Quayyum Badsha, Khejur Ali, Afzal Hossain, Mosarraf Hossain and Ziaul Haque Zia of Raninagar upazila; Sheikh Farid, Diponkor Roy of Atrai in Naogaon; Golam Rabbani Mukul of Kanapara; Ali Akbor of Taherpur in Bagmara upazila in Rajshahi and Saifur of Peergachha in Natore are still under investigation. But there has been no progress, it was gathered from police sources yesterday.

Police filed all the murder cases except hose for the murders of Diponkor and Ali Akbor.

Police said they are yet to find any witness in the cases.

Golam Mustafa, brother of cultural activist Golam Rabbani Mukul who was killed on April 11, alleged that he had gone to file a case accusing 12 JMJB men including Bangla Bhai but police did not record it.

"JMJB cadres circulated Mukul's screams through loudspeaker when

he was tortured to death. Yet, police recorded their own case in which no one was accused. They even did not visit the spot for investigation", said Mustafa.

"Badshah and Khejur were murdered after making day-long announcements over loudspeakers and people were asked openly to witness his killing.

"Still, investigators could not find any witnesses", lamented a relative of Badshah.

Police submitted charge sheet against three persons Abdul Kuddus, Zamal and Abdul Kuddus, 2-- in the case for murdering Yasin Ali of Maria in Bagmara.

Yasin, reportedly an Awami League activist, was kidnapped and beaten to death by hanging him upside down from a tree in front of Kodapara Madrasah on June 29 last year.

"Police did not listen to me when I told them about witnesses who saw Ammar of Khoirabari, Shahadat of Chapainawabganj and Sohrab Master of Kodapara along with three others killing my brother ", Ibrahim, complainant in the Yasin murder case said. The three others were chargesheeted in the case.

"Police asked me to inform them whenever I see Yasin's killers, but they (police) never came when I called them ", Ibrahim told this correspondent yesterday during a visit to Bagmara.

Dizendra Nath, father of slain Diponkor of Kasiabari village in Raninagar in Naogaon, filed a case. Investigation into the case is still on but nothing has been found. Diponkor was murdered on April 27 last year.

Kasiabari Union Parishad Dafadar Zamir Uddin was killed on the same day, but no case was filed.

Besides, three unidentified youths were killed in Atrai on May 5 last year. Their bodies were found at Basudevpur in Natore.

ABM Golam Kibria, Officer- in-Charge of Bagmara police station said police have nothing to do when there was no complainant and witness to any case.

"In many incidents, police file cases do did not find any witness", he said.

Kibria denied allegations that police refused to record cases or ignored any culprit during investigation.

JU Proctor again threatened with death

JU CORRESPONDENT

An unidentified telephone caller Friday night again threatened to kill Jahangirnagar University (JU) Proctor Ali Akanda Mamun.

The incident has created a panic among teachers.

"The death threat was given over phone at round 1:00am. You will be killed soon as you are collaborating with conspirators to destroy the congenial atmosphere on the campus" Ali told the Daily Star quoting the caller.

This was the third such threat to the Proctor in about a week, he said.

Two threats were given over cell phone last weak and I informed the VC about it", he said. He however declined to speculate who the caller might be and whether all the threats were by the same person.

Sources in Jahangirnagar University Teachers Association (JUTA) when contacted said they are concerned at the repeated threats to the Proctor. The JUTA will launch agitation for authorities' steps to stop such incidents and to identify the culprits.

Vice Chancellor Prof Khandaker Mustahidur Rahman was not available for comment.

Barisal Rab nabs three 'criminals'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested alleged criminals Kalu Khan and Sobhan Khan from Nayakandi Loharpole area in the city on Friday and handed over them to police after primary interrogation.

Barisal Kotwali police said there are four cases against Kalu and 13 including three murder cases against Sobhan.

Sobhan is a fourth class employee of Begum Tofazzal Hossain Manik Mia Mohila College.

Police said they were involved with the notorious gang in the city, led earlier by Tera Shahjahan. Later Tera Shahjahan was killed by rivals.

In another haul, police nabbed Kawsar Ahmed from Islam Para area in Sagordi with six kilograms of hemp on Saturday from the house of drug lord Sultan. But Sultan escaped.

During preliminary interrogation, Kawsar confessed that he was a resident of Kushtia district and supplied narcotics to Sultan-Shahjahan gang.

Shrimp enclosure occupied in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

An influential person occupied a shrimp enclosure at Haskhalibee in Kaliganj upazila by force and looted shrimp worth Tk 250,000 from it recently.

This was disclosed by the enclosure owner, Anisur Rahman of Kakshiali village at a press conference held at Satkhira Reporters' Club on Thursday.

In the press statement, he said the miscreants led by Sirajul Islam, younger brother of a Union Parishad (UP) leader of Dakhhin Sreepur union had occupied his shrimp enclosure by violating Section 144 imposed on it by a court here earlier.

An enmity developed between Siraj and Anis over taking lease of the enclosure.

After occupation of his enclosure, Anis went to lodge a complaint with Kaliganj Police, but they refused to register it. He demanded immediate return of his enclosure and punishment to culprits.

Rice prices increase in dists

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Prices of different varieties of rice have increased in a week in different districts.

Traders say this is due to short supply in markets in view of frequent hartals and production shortfall in the last season.

Our Barisal Correspondent reports:

Prices of rice have been increased by Tk 200 to Tk 400 per quintal in a week in Barisal.

Traders said this is due to short supply in the market. It would continue till April.

The lowest price in the retail market is Tk 18 per kg and the highest Tk 24.

In wholesale market, coarse Balam sells at Tk 1600 against Tk 1800 per quintal earlier, Minicate of Kushtia at Tk 2200 against Tk 2400, Kazla at Tk 1500 against Tk 1750, Balam-28 at Tk 1950 against Tk 2200, Swarna at Tk 1650 against Tk 1800 per quintal.

Siddique Hossain, a trader at Fariapatty rice market in the city, said, only 45 to 50 tonnes of rice are being supplied in the market daily against at least 100 tonnes earlier.

Rice is brought to the market Jhenidah, Kushtia, Patuakhali, Banaripara in Barisal district and some other places.

The supply is lesser due to frequent hartal, he said. Production shortfall due to the last flood is also another case, they said.

Truckers now demand more fare due to fuel price rise and risky road journey during hartal, they said.

A truck from Kushtia or Jessore now demands Tk 8000 against at Tk 5000 earlier, they said.

Besides, imports from India are not arriving due to hartal.

The price spiral will continue till mid-April when harvest will begin. OMS (open market sale) of rice is yet to begin.

Our Gaibandha Correspondent reports:

Coarse rice is selling at Tk 18 per kg now in Gaibandha markets against Tk 14 last month. Price of fine rice has also increased to Tk 22 per kg.

Traders said the sudden rise has been caused by short supply due to hartal.

Taking the advantage, traders have also increased the price of flour, which now sells at Tk 18 per kg.

Poor people have been affected by the rise, they are often out of job due to hartal.

Traders said the prices will not come down unless OMS or harvest begins.

JHENIDAH COUPLE'S DEATH IN FIRE Police suspect arson, brother's involvement

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

The fire that killed a couple in their house at Daharpukuria village in Jhenidah Sadar upazila on the night of January 26 could be an incident of arson.

This was suspected by the investigation officer (IO) of the case who visited the spot along with a fire brigade team on Saturday.

"We are now sure that the fire did not originate from a short circuit. It was an arson", said Jhenidah Sadar Thana Officer-in-charge (OC) Azizul Haq yesterday.

"Now we are trying to trace who did the arson", he added.

When contacted over telephone yesterday Jhenidah Police Superintendent Akram Hossain also said, "It was a pre-panned murder.

"We will know everything after arrest and interrogation of the accused".

Nazrul Islam and his wife Asma Khatun were fatally burnt in a fire incident in their house.

Nazrul died next day at Jhenidah Sadar Hospital and Asma on Thursday at Dhaka Burn Hospital after seven days' fight for life.

At first it was thought that the fire had originated from a short circuit.

But Asma told her parents a different story before her death at Dhaka Burn Hospital on Thursday.

Her father Akkas Ali in a written complaint to Jhenidah Police Superintendent Akram Hossain Friday morning claimed that an

elder brother of Nazrul was involved in the arson at her house.

SP Akram Hossain immediately visited the spot and ordered a probe. The Sadar thana OC visited the spot and then took the case filed by Asma's father.

Three persons have been accused in the case. They are Nazrul's elder brother Golam Murtoza, his wife Tahmina Kahtun and Tahmina's brother Haidar Ali. They are absconding, police said.

According to case filed by Akkas Ali, Nazrul, son of Ahamed Ali married Asma in June last year. After the marriage Asma came to know that Nazrul's elder brother Golam Murtoza often used to threaten her husband in a dispute over family property and realised money from him.

Police, quoting Akkas Ali, told this correspondent that on the night of January 26, Nazrul went out of his room on nature's call. He had closed the door from outside. But on return, he saw the door open. He asked his wife who opened the door. Asma said she knew nothing.

After some time, the room caught fire and the couple was burnt critically.

"Some body entered the room just after Nazrul went out", the OC told this correspondent.

When asked, Nazrul's another brother Alauddin declined to comment.

WDB sues 10 for 'sabotage' in Teesta Project

Locals say case filed to hide 'faulty repair'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nipahmari

The Water Development Board (WDB) in Syedpur says Wednesday night's breach in the Dinajpur Canal embankment under Teesta Irrigation Project in Chiribandar upazila was due to "sabotage" and has filed a case accusing 10 people.

This has created a hue and cry in the area as local people say the cases are "false", filed to hide WDB officials' "misdeeds".

The accused are fleeing homes to evade arrest.

Talking to this correspondent yesterday, the locals alleged that the embankment renovation was faulty and so it gave in to the pressure when irrigation water was released through the canal on Tuesday.

The renovation work was done at a cost of Tk 2.5 lakh recently. They said the embankment was renovated twice in previous two years also but it gave in to water pressure as the repair work was faulty.

WDB Sub Assistant Engineer at Saidpur Md Abdul Jalil filed the case with Chiribandar thana in Dinajpur district Thursday.

In his complaint he alleged that a vested quarter out of ill motive cut the embankment on Tuesday. IRRi-Boro crops on at least 1000 acres were damaged as the canal breached at Deviganj.

The local people claimed that several thousand acres of Iri-Boro land were affected last year also as the embankment breached at the same place.

They said sand was used instead of soil to repair the embankment this year. This year, the case was filed as they protested the "irregularities" and demanded inquiry into the matter, the locals claimed

Meanwhile, the Teesta Irrigation Project authorities have suspended water supply through the canal, which is affecting IRRi-Boro crops on at least 12,000 acres, it was gathered.



Rangpur Reporters Club brought out procession in the town yesterday protesting the bomb attack at Khulna Press Club.

PHOTO: STAR

Newsmen protest bomb attack at Khulna Press Club

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Journalists in Rangpur and Gaibandha yesterday condemned the incident of Saturday's bomb blast on the Khulna Press Club premises.

Our Rangpur Correspondent reports: Rangpur Reporters' Club members brought out a procession and held a meeting in the town yesterday.

The procession started from the Reporters' Club office and ended at the court square.

While addressing the meeting, the club leaders expressed their great concern over unabated attack on newsmen across the country.

They said that newsmen are now totally insecure. They demanded their security and exemplary punishment to the culprits.

Among others, Sarker Mazharul Mannan, Halim Ansari, Merina Loveli, Lithu, Bablu Nag, Pial and Golzar Hossain and Ador addressed the meeting.

Our Gaibandha Correspondent reports: The working journalists here vehemently condemned the incident of bomb attack on Khulna newsmen on Saturday.

They protested the attack by holding a meeting in Gaibandha Press Club which was presided over by club president Gobinda Lal Das. Speakers demanded immediate

arrest and punishment to the culprits who were involved in the incident.

Among others, KM Rezaul Haque, Abu Zafar, Sayed Nurul Alam, Dipok Kumar Pal, Nuruzzaman Proshan, Abedur

Rahman, Siddique Alam, Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Sahabul Shaheen, Amitabha Das, Uttam Sarker, Jhangir Alam, Azad Hossain Sarker and Quddus Alam addressed the meeting.

Housewife earns Tk 4,000 a month by making fish feed

MD. SOHRAB HOSSAU, Patuakhali

Housewife Nazma Begum has changed her life and her family condition by making fish feed, a new venture in the district.

"I needed to do something to supplement my family income for education of my children but many in the area had opposed", Nazma, 30, of Sharikkhali village in the Sadar upajila told this correspondent during a visit. The village is about five kilometers from the district town. Nazma, who crossed only primary level education, earns Tk 3000 to Tk 4000 a month by selling fish feed. She adds this to the income of her day labour husband Khalil Sikder. They are a happy family with two daughters and a son--Hawa, 10, Helal, 8, and Habiba, 5.

"I was inspired by an elderly man--Sapan--, Field Supervisor of Patuakhali-Barguna Aquaculture Extension Project, (PBAEP), assisted by DANIDA.

"He advised me to set up a mini fish feed factory to fulfill my dream of higher education for my children", she said. She bought a manually driven fish feed making machine at Tk1500, borrowed from a relative.

She prepares fish feed from oil cake, dry fish and other ingredients, bought from local market.

She can produce at least 40 kg feed per day and sells it at Tk 20 per kg.

Owners of hatchery and fish farmers buy fish feed from her.

There are about 20 fish farmers in her village and all of them collect fish feed from her, Nazma said.



PHOTO: STAR

Nazma Begum making fish feed on the court yard.

6x3

4x3