

Mili murder sparks wave of protests in Rajshahi

Police station besieged: Hartal, procession, rally, human chain demanding trial of culprits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The city dwellers staged an angry demonstration and laid a siege to Boalia Police Station (PS) yesterday demanding proper investigation into the rape and murder of 11-year-old school girl Mili.

Several hundred men, women and children, students and teachers of different schools and colleges, human rights activists and NGOs including Bangladesh Mohila Parishad, Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association, Sammilito Sangskritik Jote, Barind Development Forum and professionals brought out a procession at 10 am and paraded the city streets.

They held a rally at Shaheb Bazar Zero point with local elite Sayed Md Mohsin in the chair demanding proper probe into the incident and speedy trial of the case.

Later they went to Boalia PS and laid a siege there for an hour to lodge their protests.

The neighbouring people of Sheikhpura, Ghoshpara and Sipaipara also observed a half-day hartal in their areas demanding punishment to the culprits.

In the meantime, the Committee to Resist Repression on Women and Children in the city have been observing a seven-day protest programmes since the murder of Mili on Wednesday.

Their programmes included wearing of black badges, signature campaign, holding human chain, rally and submitting memo to relevant authorities.

Mafoza Begum Mili, student of class V at PN Government High School was gangraped and later strangled at a house on May 3 morning.

Her father Mansur Rahman



Mafoza Begum Mili

Mollah, an instructor of Rajshahi Postal Academy filed a case accusing the house owner's son Fazle Rabbi Rion, his relative Saiduzzaman Minar and their neighbour Fazlur Rahman, an employee of the Bangladesh Power Development Board.

The police interrogated the three accused who were arrested and taken on a five-day remand the next day.

The accused were found inside the rented house when neighbours rescued Mili by breaking open the door, police said.

At the time of the incident, Mili was alone at home as her father was in the office and mother went out to bring her brother home from a coaching centre.

Meanwhile, a medical board headed by Dr Ashrafur Alam, chairman of forensic department of Rajshahi Medical College Hospital confirmed that Mili was raped by several people before being murdered.

Our RU Correspondent adds: Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal

(BSD) of Rajshahi unit Friday staged a demonstration at zero point demanding immediate arrest and trial of the killers.

The BSD leaders criticised the police administration for failing to nab the culprits and said the killers have links with the influentials in the administration.

They also threatened to launch a tougher agitation against the police administration if the culprits were not punished.

At least 25 organisations and NGOs of the district in a statement expressed deep concern over the Mili murder and said law and order has sharply deteriorated in Rajshahi city.

The oraganisations are Bangladesh Awami League Rajshahi unit, Mohila Awami League, Rajshahi Mohila Parishad, RU Mohila Parishad, Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association, Barind Development Forum, Prochesta, Trinamul, Sha Unnayan, Niskriti, Partner, Nutun Kuri, Women Development Association, Kollyani, Sabuj Sangha and DARK.

All the organisations demanded proper trial of Mili murder. They also demanded trial of rape and murder of four other girls in the district in last one month.

The four victims are—school girls Joly of Durgapur and Hasina of Bagha, teenager Rulifa of Charchat and Noor Banu, a domestic help at the house of a Rajshahi City Corporation engineer.

Earlier, on Wednesday, several hundred students of PN Government Girls High School formed a large human chain in the city. They wore black badges protesting the murder and chanted slogans demanding punishment to the culprits.



Hundreds of erosion victims of Fulchhari upazila in Gaibandha besieged the local BWDB office yesterday demanding immediate steps to halt the Brahmaputra erosion.

Erosion victims in Gaibandha besiege BWDB office

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Hundreds of people of Fulchhari upazila (UZ) yesterday besieged the office of the executive engineer of the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) here demanding immediate steps to halt the Brahmaputra erosion.

The River Erosion Resistance Committee, Fulchhari organised the programme.

Earlier, they paraded the main streets of the district town chanting various slogans in favour of their demands.

Later, they submitted a memorandum containing their five-point demand to the prime minister (PM) through the deputy commissioner (DC). They held a protest meeting on the premises of the DC office.

While narrating the plight of erosion victims, the speakers said at least 1,500 families became homeless while many schools, madrasas, mosques, government and non-government offices have been devoured during the last fortnight.

Standing boro crops on thousands of acres of land were also damaged as due to unabated erosion along the western bank of the Brahmaputra. The worst affected area stretches from Gideri union to Balashi ghat.

But the authorities concerned are yet to take measures to mitigate the sufferings of the victims, they alleged.

They expressed their alarm saying that the erosion area is only three and a half kilometre off the main town. They also threatened a greater agitation if their demands are not met immediately.

President of the resistance committee Jotish Chandra Modak, secretary Abu Al-Khair, Nirbalendu Barman Baiya and Nuruzzaman Razu addressed the meeting.

When contacted, Gaibandha BWDB executive engineer Moklesur Rahman told this correspondent they have contacted the higher authorities and hoping to take immediate measures to stop river erosion.

PSTU students begin indefinite class boycott

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Over 500 students of the agriculture faculty of Patuakhali Science and Technology University (PSTU) are boycotting their classes for an indefinite period from Saturday.

They were demanding of the authorities to arrange tour to various Saarc countries.

The agitating students earlier submitted a memorandum to the vice-chancellor (VC) on April 30.

On receipt of the memo, the VC formed a 5-member committee headed by Dean of Agriculture Faculty Sultan Ahmed. The committee submitted its report to the VC on Friday. The report was also in favour of the students. But the VC refused to accept the report.

Citing the example of Haji Danesh Science and Technology University, Dinajpur, the students justified their demand.

In absence of VC Dr Prof Wahid-uz-Zaman, his personal secretary said to this correspondent, 'We are trying to fulfill the students' demand but it all depends on the decision of the university's academic council'.

No trace yet of 2 'missing' Khoksa BNP leaders

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Police could not trace whereabouts of two leaders of Khoksa BNP who were missing for 18 days.

Abu Ahmed Arabia, president of Osmanpur union unit of BNP and Masud Ahmed, another party leader went missing on April 17, according to police.

Abu Ahmed is also a cousin of the local ruling party MP Syed Mehedi Ahmed Rumi.

The victim's family claimed a gang of criminals abducted them.

Masud Ahmed of village Azoil, a food dealer went to the chamber of Abu Ahmed at Khoksa bazaar at noon on the day.

Abu Ahmed's wife Mahbuba Lili told this correspondent both the victims left the chamber on a phone call which asked Abu to come to Somospur bazaar, 5 km off Khoksa upazila headquarters. Afterwards, they went missing.

However, police termed the incident 'mysterious.'

The family of Abu Ahmed, however, suspected that an outlaw leader of Khoksa was behind their abduction.

When contacted, the Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Khoksa Police Station said they were trying to ascertain where it was a case of missing or abduction. Earlier, a case was filed with Khoksa Police Station.



Students of PN Government Girls High School formed a human chain in Rajshahi city on Wednesday demanding punishment to the killers of Mili.

Shortage of medical staff hampers FP activities in Kishoreganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Family Planning (FP) activities are being hampered in Kishoreganj district because of shortage of medical officers in different upazila FP offices.

According to the assistant director of Family Planning Department here, eight posts of medical officers have been lying vacant for a long time in six upazila FP offices.

The upazilas are Kotiadi, Pakundia, Tarail, Austagram, Nikli and Hossenpur.

A medical officer in Bhairab upazila remained absent from her

place of posting for the last one year greatly hampering the Family Planing activities in the aforesaid upazilas.

An FP visitor of Kotiadi upazila said, in absence of medical officers, the visitors and field workers are also neglecting their duties. As a result, hundreds of people are being deprived of service, he alleged.

It is also alleged that most of the medical officers are reluctant to stay at their place of posting, rather they like to stay in Dhaka or Mymensingh. They allegedly come to their places of posting for one or two days a week.

As for example, a medical officer

joined the Bhairab FP office on March 25 in 2004. After staying at Bhairab for a day, he left for Dhaka and is staying there till now.

The employees of Bhairab FP office are not getting salaries for the last two months, it is alleged.

According to an official of Kishoreganj FP office, despite instruction to her to join office, she did not join it as yet.

Sources in the Deputy Commissioner's (DC) office told this correspondent, they sent a letter to the concerned authority to take necessary action in this regard.