

Extortionists in Chuadanga, Kushtia kidnap 2 traders

School boy buys freedom: 104 abducted in 2 districts this year

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushtia*

Two more businessmen were abducted in Kushtia and Chuadanga for ransom in the early hours of yesterday.

In another incident in Kushtia town, father of a school boy bought his sons freedom on the same night.

A gang stormed into the house of cosmetics shop owner Bishu Mollah, 38, at Natnapara village in Daulatpur upazila in Kushtia district in the early hours of yesterday, confined inmates at gunpoint and demanded Tk one lakh toll. As Bishu declined to pay, the gang picked up Bishu and asked the family to pay Tk 3 lakh within two days for his release. They also threatened them not to go to police. The family yesterday filed a case with Daulatpur thana.

When contacted Daulatpur

police told this correspondent over phone that they were trying to rescue the trader.

In Chuadanga, criminals entered the house of Shamsuddin Biswas at Shreerampur village in Alamdanga upazila and kidnapped him at gunpoint as he had earlier refused to pay Tk 50,000 toll. But he did not inform police out of reprisal from the criminals, family sources told this correspondent yesterday.

After the kidnapping, the criminals demanded Tk two lakh for his release, they said. A case was filed with Alamdanga police.

In Kushtia town, five criminals kidnapped Sadman Saklayn Shuvo, 13, son of Golam Saklayn, from near his Aruapara house when he was returning home Friday evening after enjoying a football match. He is a student of class eight at Kushtia Zila School.

The captors demanded Tk 9 lakh ransom.

Sources said Shuvo's family bought his freedom at Tk 1.50 lakh after negotiations.

"We did not seek police help as the captors threatened to kill my son," said Golam Saklayn, Deputy Director, Public Relations at Kushtia Islamic University.

Police said they were informed but did not move, as requested by the victim's family.

The family sources said after negotiations through a 'media', the criminals left Shuvo on the Dhaka-Kushtia highway Sunday night and phoned his father. They family brought him home.

Kushtia Deputy Commissioner Jamal A Naser Choudhury, Additional Deputy Commissioner MA Ahad visited the victim's house on the same night.

As many as 56 people, mostly school students and businessmen, were abducted in Kushtia and another 48 in Chuadanga so far this year.

Eleven of them were killed in Kushtia and 15 in Chuadanga. Ten of those kidnapped are still missing and the rest bought their freedom. Some organised criminals and outlaws were involved in the incidents, police and victims families said.

But there are allegations that police often ask the victims' families to buy freedom.

A police high official in Kushtia seeking anonymity told this correspondent that the criminals even threaten us to kill victims if we launch tougher action against them. At times victim's family also asks us not to move, he added.



A child placing a wreath at the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the residence of Abdur Rab Serniabat in Barisal city marking nationwide mourning yesterday.



The Golachipa Ashrayan Project in Patuakhali is inundated during every full moon and new moon only for lack of a 100-metre dam on the Golachipa river.

They suffer just for lack of a 100-metre dam

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, *Patuakhali*

Over 500 people of Golchipa Ashrayan Project are suffering for lack of a 100-metre flood control embankment on the Golachipa river in the district.

One hundred landless families were rehabilitated three months ago at the project set up on three acres of land in launch terminal area in Golachipa upazila headquarters.

The river is on the north of the project, which goes under water

when there is high tide during new moon and full moon due to lack of only a 100-metre embankment.

Houses in the project are inundated by two to three feet water in every full moon and new moon in the rainy season, Abdul Mannan, a resident told this correspondent during a recent visit.

The project area remains under water eight to ten days a month, he said.

"We can not even cook (food) as our houses are inundated. We are

thinking to leave this place", Mannan's wife Amena Begum said.

When contacted, Golachipa Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Mezbah Uddin said the Water Development Board (WDB) has been officially requested to construct an embankment.

"They have assured us", he said. The problem should have been addressed during implementation of the project, he added.

Satkhira hotels, sweetmeat shops fined for selling stale food

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Two mobile courts realised Tk 28,400 as fine from the owners of hotels, restaurants, bakeries and sweetmeat shops for selling adulterated food in separate drives conducted here on Sunday and Saturday.

A mobile court led by magistrate Dipankar Biswas on Sunday raided 12 restaurants, bakeries and sweetmeat shops and collected Tk 11,400 from the owners for selling date-expired food. The bakeries are Shahin Bakery and New Picnic Bakery while the hotels, restaurants and sweetmeat shops are Sonargaon Hotel, Zafar Restaurant, Radhuni Restaurant, Uttam Restaurant, Mawa Chinese Restaurant, Apan Sweets, Chamak Restaurant, Thikana Restaurant, Dey Sweets and a restaurant without any sign board.

Another mobile court jointly led by magistrates Ibrahim Khan, Saidur Rahman and Sajedul Islam on Saturday collected Tk 17,000 as fine from the owners of 14 sweetmeat shops, hotels, restaurants and two bakeries.

These are Tapas Mistanno Bhandar, Shahidul's hotel, Abdullah stores, Eagle hotel, Mamun Bakery, Arafat Hotel, Al-Amin Hotel, Madina Hotel, Hotel Corner, Sagar Sweets and Restaurant, Hotel Raj, Shahin Bakery and Fakir Mistanno Bhandar.

While contacted, Satkhira Deputy Commissioner Md Elias said the drives would continue in near future.

Reinstate sacked newsmen

Human chain, rally in Barisal protest attacks

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

Journalists in Barisal held a rally and formed a human chain in front of Barisal Aswani Kumar Hall demanding reinstatement of the two journalists in Bhola and Bauful to their jobs.

Speakers at the rally also condemned the recent attacks on the two journalists allegedly by ruling party men.

The rally was presided over by Meherunnessa Babul, president of Barisal Press Club and Editor of regional daily Akjer Barta.

It was addressed by Arup Talukdar, Towfiq Maruf, Mintu Bose, Giasuddin Mia, S M Iqbal, Ashish Das Gupta, Yunus Talukdar, Hiron Das Mithu, Saidur Rahman M a d h u . The speakers said incidents of attack on journalists in southern districts by ruling party activists increased in recent days but newspaper authorities failed to stand by them.

The authorities of Ajker Barta published from Borhanuddin in Bhola district sacked its Staff

Reporter Shimul Chowdhury after he was tortured by BNP activists for a report on their alleged looting of fishes from fishermen's boat for not giving toll.

Manjur Morshed, correspondent of national daily Jugantor in Bauful in Patuakhali district was also tortured allegedly by some ruling party men.

The speakers alleged that the authorities of the two newspapers sided with the ruling party men and took action against the journalists. This is regrettable, they said.



Journalists, joined by people, formed a human chain in front of Barisal Aswani Kumar Hall in Barisal city yesterday protesting attack on two journalists in southern districts.

PLABON MURDER

Bail prayer of 7 rejected

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Gaibandha*

The District and Sessions Judge Court here on Sunday rejected the bail prayer of seven accused in Rejbul Huq Plabon murder case.

Seven out of 14 accused in the FIR surrendered before the court and their lawyers pleaded for bail but the judge sent them to jail hazat.

They are Ziaul Huq Jewel, General Secretary, Palashbari Upazila BNP, Faridul Huq Rubel, Organising Secretary, Palashbari BNP, Mushfiqur Rahman Ripon, General Secretary, Palashbari Jubo Dal, Khalilur Rahman Mithu, BNP activist, Saiful Islam Liton and Belal.

Seven other accused are at large since filing of the case by the victim's father Azadul Huq Sarker, a former army personnel, with Palashbari Police Station.

Plabon, a meritorious student of SM Pilot High School, Palashbari got GPA-5 in this year's SSC examination.

Hartal observed to protest land 'grabbing'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

A half-day hartal was observed at Dhamura river port in Uzirpur upazila in Barisal district protesting alleged illegal occupation of property of local post office by an employee at the Prime Minister's Office.

A procession was brought out and a rally was held demanding restoration of the property and action against the occupant.

The speakers alleged that the occupant, a native of Dhamura and an employee at the PMO, recently occupied three shops and part of the property of Dhamura post office by abusing power.

7X3

7X2

7X3