

EARLY MARRIAGE IN SATKHIRA

Court orders arrest of notary public, marriage registrar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A court in Satkhira has issued arrest warrants against a notary public and a marriage registrar for registering an early marriage by showing a minor girl as an adult.

The court also ordered police to include two others in the list of accused, earlier dropped from the charge sheet submitted by the Investigation Officer (IO) of the case, court sources said.

Judge Motazidur Rahaman of Women and Children Repression Preventive Court passed the orders Thursday after hearing a 'naraji' petition filed by the plaintiff, father of the minor girl.

The court issued arrest warrants against notary public advo-

cate ZM Abdullah and marriage registrar Maulana Ibrahim Khalil in Sadar union in Assassuni upazila. The two others ordered to be listed in the list of accused are Abdus Samad and his son Yarul Islam of Panchhol village in Kalaroa upazila.

According to court sources, the accused Azharul Islam son of Abdus Samad of Panchhol village and his younger brother Yarul Islam abducted a 13 year-old madrasa student Asia Khutun, daughter of Shawkat Ali of the same village, on August 28 last year.

They took her to Assassuni upazila head quarters. There she was married to Azharul. Marriage registrar Maulana Ibrahim Khalil registered the marriage by ignor-

ing her minor age.

Later, the accused managed a marriage declaration by showing her age 19 years through an affidavit done by notary public ZM Abdullah, sources said.

Victim's father Shawkat Ali filed a case with Kalaroa thana under the Women and Children Repression Preventive Act, accusing Azharul and Yarul Islam and their father Abdus Samad.

After investigation, police submitted charge sheet against Azharul Islam and dropped two other accused -Yarul Islam and his father Abdus Samad.

Plaintiff Shawkat Ali filed a 'naraji' petition before the court.

While issuing arrest warrants, the court observed, "It is illegal and

motivated and they (notary public and marriage registrar) collaborated with the accused to perform such illegal activities".

The court also included Abdus Samad and his two sons Azharul Islam and Yarul Islam in the list of accused.

The court granted bail to Abdus Samad but rejected the bail prayer of the main accused Azharul Islam and sent him to jail.

The other accused Yarul Islam is absconding since the incident, court sources said.

The plaintiff submitted a prayer to take his pregnant daughter Asia Khutun under his custody but the court sent her to 'safe custody' in jail as she refused to go with her father.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Army on patrol in front of Sinha Garments in Kanchpur in Narayanganj yesterday due to alleged labour unrest at the factory.

Three laid-off Khulna jute mills reopen tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

State owned Crescent Jute Mill, Star Jute Mill and Platinum Jute Mill, laid-off on last April 19, will go into partial production from next Sunday.

There is no possibility to reopening of another laid-off mill -Peoples Jute Mill, said a source at Khulna zonal office of Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) office.

BJMC Zonal Coordinator Shamim Ahmed told this correspondent yesterday that only sack-cleaning department of the three jute mills would be reopened. As a result, one-third of the 17,000 jobless workers of these three jute mills will be able to join work.

Shamim Ahmed admitted that Tk 40 crore has fallen arrear against wages of 17,000 workers of Crescent, Platinum and Star jute mills. Payment of arrear wages will be made in phases after the mills go into full production and funds allocated by the government, he said.

These three jute mills have raw material in stock to continue production for a week, he said.

The government earlier laid-off the four jute mills as its employees and workers staged demonstrations for payment of arrear salary and wages, resulting in clashes with law enforcers. Several workers were arrested.

Last week the BJMC chairman and high officials visited the four mills and held lengthy meetings with their managements on scope to reopen the mills.

**TIB SURVEY ON PRIMARY SCHOOLS
Teachers gobble up Tk 33 lakh students' stipend in Jhenidah**

HOSSAIN SERAJ AND AZIBOR RAHMAN from Jhenidah

Primary school teachers in Jhenidah Sadar upazila allegedly misappropriated around Tk 33 lakh of students' 'sub-stipend' in the last financial year (FY 2005-6), according to a survey by Transparency International, Bangladesh (TIB).

Due to alleged dishonesty of teachers, each of the 77 per cent sub-stipend receivers, on an average, got Tk 52 less than the amounts they were suppose to get, the report stated.

The report said, a student, on an average, had to pay Tk 16 for entitlement for the 'sub-stipend'.

The TIB in its survey report also said that apart from 'grabbing' stipend money, teachers also regularly realised extra money on 17 heads from all students. These include inflated monthly tuition fees, fine for absence, class promotion fees, fees for transfer certificate, entertainment fees, session charge and fees for cultural and religion functions.

Jhenidah district unit of Primary Teachers Association (PTA), however refuted the report and alleged that it was not authentic as TIB men did not talk to teachers during their investigation.

Talking to The Daily Star on Thursday, president of Jhenidah District Primary Teachers

Association (PTA) AM Babur rejecting the report said, "Teachers are just engaged in preparing lists of sub-stipend receivers while inquiry officers (IO) of banks distributed the money among students".

"So far as I know our innocent teachers are not involved in realising any money from students. The report is not authentic", he said.

In reply to questions, Babur, however, said that in some schools, teachers might realise money from students. He assured that PTA would look into the matter.

The report was made public at a recent press conference organised by TIB and Sachetor Nagorik Committee (SNC) in Jhenidah at SNC office.

The report also stated that students were harassed in various ways by a section of teachers during the period.

The report claimed that 50 per cent students were "deprived of due marks" while the rest were "misbehaved" by teachers as they did not attend private coaching by teachers.

The press conference was presided over by convener of Jhenidah district SNC Sheikh Selim while he report was presented by TIB executive member TIB Prof ANN Shahjahan.

TIB officials Dipu Roy and Uzzal Bhattacharya also spoke at the press conference.

Nazrul birthday celebrations begin in Trishal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A three-day celebration started at Darirampir in Trishal upazila yesterday marking the 108th birth anniversary of national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam.

Mymensingh district administration has organised the elaborate programme that will continue till tomorrow.

Dhaka Divisional Commissioner Ekram Ahmed inaugurated the programme at Nazrul Manch as chief guest with Mymensingh Deputy Commissioner Md. Shamsul Alam was in the chair.

Among others, Vice-Chancellor of Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam Biswabidhalya Prof Dr Shamsur Rahman, Prof Afzal Rahman Bhuiyan, Principal Sharif Uddin, Mymensingh Police Superintendent Md. Rafiqul Islam and poet Shamsul Fayeze spoke on the occasion.

A discussion was held on the life and works of the great poet. The speakers said that Nazrul raised his voice against all kinds of injustice, repression and prejudices prevailing in the society.

Earlier a colorful rally was brought in Mymensingh town out marking the occasion. As of every year, a Nazrul Mela is being held there. The fair was also inaugurated by the chief guest beside the Nazrul Manch.

The three-day celebrations include cultural programmes to be presented by different cultural organisations in Mymensingh.

**JCD ATTACK ON MINORITY COMMUNITY
OC stand-released, high police officials visit Agoijhara**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

The officer-in-charge of Agoijhara police station, Yunus Ali Howlader, was suspended and stand-released on Thursday for his failure to take action against the attacks on minority community people at Askor-Dusmi village and playing a biased role in their favor.

The OC was replaced by ASP and Circle Inspector Aktaruzzaman, official sources said yesterday.

The actions were taken after human rights activists and high police officials including Barisal range additional deputy inspector general of police, Barisal additional police superintendent, circle inspector of Manabbadhikar Aingata Sahayata Kendro and AIN O Shalish Kendro visited the spot on Thursday.

Police also arrested 19 people including some members of notorious Qaium Bahiri led by JCD cadre Quaium Molla.

The arrestees are Rubel Tuku, Karim Molla, Humaun Kabir, Kabir Hossain, Fazlul Karim, Amir Hossain, Lutfur Howlader, Sultan Molla, Rubel Bakhtiar, Monir Bepari, Asaduzzaman, Al-Amin Howlader, Nazmul Islam, Alaudin Molla, Majid Bepari, Sohel Molla, Zakir Shah and Solaiman.

Gang leader Qaium Molla was sent to jail on Tuesday when he surrendered to the upazila magistrate court.

Agroijhara Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Abdul Latif and OC Yunus Howlader declined to make any comment after the action.

Sources said, a gang of musclemen allegedly led by JCD cadre Qaium tried to abduct teenage daughter Namita of Upen Bavallav on the night of May 5.

Local people caught Qaium but he was snatched by his associates. Several people including the teenage girl's uncles Gobinda Ballav and Amol Ballav were injured in the incident.

The victims' relatives went to the police station but police declined to accept a case. On the contrary, police recorded a case filed by the attackers and arrested one Gobinda.

On May 19, the musclemen led by Qaium again attacked the village and the house of Upen Ballav.

This time, when local people went to Agroijhara police station to lodge case, on-duty constable Abdur Razzak allegedly misbehaved and drove them out from the compound.

Protesting the incidents, hundreds of people brought out a procession on Sunday demanding security and arrest of the attackers.

The circle inspector of police then visited the spot. On his order, Agroijhara police accepted the case filed by the victims Sunday night.

8X3

PHOTO: STAR
Mymensingh district administration, joined by cultural activists, brought out a colourful procession in the town yesterday as part of programmes to celebrate the 108th birth anniversary of poet Nazrul.

5x3

15X2