

LAX IN PROBE ALLEGED Trial of August 17 serial blasts case in Magura uncertain

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Magura*

Trial of the sensational August 17 serial bomb blast case has become uncertain here due to alleged lax in probe by police.

Submission of the charge sheet of the case is also lingering here while trials of most of the similar cases have been completed across the country, according to newspaper reports.

After change of four investigation officers (IOs), the case is now under investigation of the Detective Branch (DB) of police here, official sources said.

Trial of the case has also been completed in the adjoining Jhenidah district where the court awarded death

penalty to 21 militants in a verdict pronounced in February this year.

Investigators here, however, said they came to know that Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) Surা member Khalid, an inhabitant of Meherpur, had been in charge of the bomb blast operations at different spots in Magura town on August 17, 2005. So, they felt the necessity to arrest absconding Khalid before submission of the charge sheet. Submission of the charge sheet is being delayed as Khalid he is yet to be arrested, official sources said.

Official sources said, four bombs went off different spots in the district town including the judge court premises, the deputy commissioner's

(DC) office gate and near sadar police station at Islampurpura.

Police, arrested two alleged members of Ahle Hadit Andolon Bangladesh (Ahab) Moshiur Rahman Molla of Parmandali village and Abul Kashem Molla of Benga-Beril in Sadar upazila.

Later, police arrested a top cadre of Harkat-ul-Jihad (Huji) Abu Sufian from Khamarpura village in Sreepur upazila and JMB cadre Shawkat of Bil-Akchhi village in Sadar upazila. But they are freed on bail.

When contacted, the IO of the case, Nawsher Ali expressed his optimism to submit the charge sheet within the shortest possible time.

Ex-BNP lawmaker Habib faces another extortion case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Former BNP lawmaker Habibul Islam Habib has been facing another extortion case.



PHOTO: STAR

Habibul Islam Habib.

Abu Naser Md Abu Sayeed, son of Abdus Sabur of Itagachha area in the town lodged the case with Sadar Police Station Wednesday night accusing the former BNP lawmaker for extorting about Tk 2 crore. The complainant is also an editor of the Jugbarita, a local daily published from Satkhira town.

Earlier, Abdur Rahman Biswas of Sreepatipur village in Kalaroa upazila also lodged an extortion case with Kalaroa Police Station accusing Habib and five others on charge of extortion on July 19.

Satkhira district BNP president Habibul Islam Habib was elected a lawmaker from Satkhira-1 (Tala-Kalaroa) constituency during the 2001 election with BNP led 4-party Alliance ticket.

The plaintiff said Messrs Joint Traders owned by his father Abdus Sabur got construction work of Keragachhi sluice gate in Kalaroa upazila from the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) Satkhira division-2 at an estimated cost of Tk 1,86,99,908 on September 2, 2003.

Being informed, Habib called him at his house at Kalaroa on September 3 and expressed his willingness to do the construction work and asked him to give up it in his favour, the complainant said.

As he refused the proposal, he demanded Tk 2 crore from him as illegal toll and threatened him to harass

of the dire consequences, he alleged.

Finding no other alternative, he agreed to his proposal and he paid him Tk 1,88,06,000 through National Bank in several cheques during a period from January 19, 2004 to October 4, 2005, he said.

At that time, he did not file any case against him fearing reprisal as he was a ruling party lawmaker, the complainant said. Now he filed the case because the situation improved much better after take over of the army backed caretaker government, he said.

On contact with Sadar Police Station officer-in-charge (OC) Saifur Rahman, he confirmed the report.

However, Habibul Islam Habib denied the allegations saying the case 'false, baseless and motivated'.

'A vested quarter is hatching a conspiracy against me. The vested quarter has filed the case to tarnish my image before people', he said.

This correspondent contacted the former BNP lawmaker through cell phone who talked to him from an undisclosed destination.

Habib is now on the run to evade arrest as he is in the list of 'corrupt suspects'. Joint forces raided his house at Kalaroa to arrest him on July 4.

Freedom fighter passes away

RU CORRESPONDENT

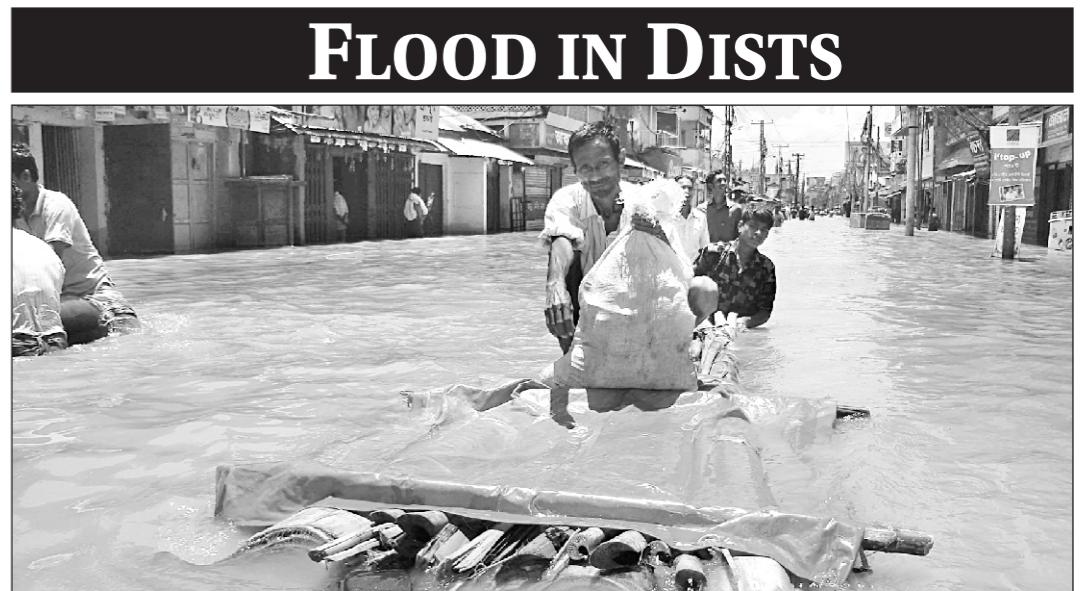
A freedom fighter belonging to the indigenous community passed away at Mohammadpur village in Pachandor union in Tanor upazila in Rajshahi on Thursday.

Freedom fighter Motin Kisku died of old age ailment at the age of 55, family sources said.

Later, he was buried with state honour at Pachandor Union Parishad playground, family sources said.

Locals said, Motin Kisku was a commander of freedom fighters in Pachandor union during the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971.

Following his death, the freedom fighters of Tanor and Rajshahi expressed their deep condolence and sympathy to the family members of the brave son of the country.



FLOOD IN DISTS

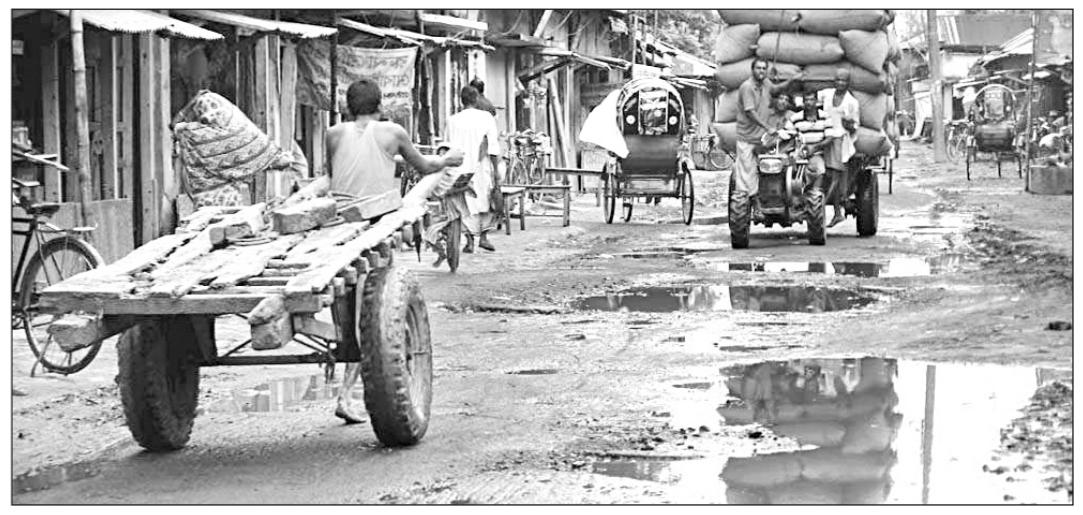


PHOTO: STAR

(Top-down) Town dwellers using raft instead of rickshaw and other vehicles to go from place to place in flood-hit Sirajganj town; a flood shelter at Mourer Char in Sharikandi upazila in Bogra where flood affected people living with domestic animals; and ditches and potholes developed on the main road of Hatia upazila town causing sufferings to local people.

10,000 deprived of basic amenities in 3 Moulvibazar villages

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Moulvibazar*

About 10,000 people are living a sub-human life in three remote villages in Juri upazila because of their detachment from the main upazila town due to bad communication system.

The villagers of Matinpur, Chungabari and Boruakandi, situated on a hilly region, 30 kilometre off Juri upazila headquarters are now being deprived of basic amenities like pure drinking water, health and education.

Located near the Indian border, people of the villages had easy accessibility to the nearby markets in the India. Previously, they used to collect drinking water from the Indian villages.

But, the Indian authorities constructed barbed wire fence across the border a few years ago. Since then, the miseries of thousands of people in the three villages multiplied manifold.

About 95 percent people of the villages are poor as there is no scope of employment in the remote areas. As a hilly region, there is no scope for cultivation of any crop or vegetable. People who have land, they produce only seasonal fruits like pineapple and orange. But the producers cannot market their produce due to transport problem.

People of the villages have to depend on a footpath of the local Razki Tea Garden to go to elsewhere including the upazila headquarters. The villagers must have to take approval of the tea garden authorities for shifting any patient to any hospital by rickshaw. When the manager of the tea garden remains out of station, the shifting of patient becomes uncertain.

This correspondent came to know this during a visit to the three villages recently. He talked to several villagers at Chungabari village. Some of them are Gopendra Biswas, Saleh Ahmed, Ajit Munda, Bijli Munda, Saidul Islam and Pakhi Miah.

While narrating their woes, elderly villagers named Shefali Munda, Rahim Uddin, Abdul Karim, Durga Moni Biswas, Rafiq Miah, Abdul Kader, Sultan Ahmed and Kira Moni Munda of Matinpur village said, they are isolated from the mainland. Public

representative including lawmaker or Union Parishad (UP) chairman seldom visited them previously except during election period. During polls period, the voter seeking political leaders promised them to make arrangement for development of their areas. As soon as the election concluded, the candidates forgot their promises and never turned back to their villages, they said.

'Our main problem is scarcity of pure drinking water as there is no tube-well or pond in the villages,' they said in one voice.

As the villages are situated on a hilly region, shallow tube-well comes to no help to them. Previously, people installed a shallow tube-well in front of a local mosque by collecting money from local people, but the tube-well remained inoperative as the water layer is far below the tube-well's pipe.

Now, the villagers are forced to drink polluted water of Ragnachara, a hilly stream flowing through the villages. Because of poverty, the rural people are not able to install deep tube-well in their villages. Even, Fultala UP authorities could not install any deep tube-well for the villagers.

Dholai-Chungabari Government Primary School, the lone primary school in the three villages. The school is being run by only two teachers. There are about 200 students in the primary school. After crossing the primary stage, students have to go Fultola or Botuly high schools, about 11 kilometre off the villages. Students of these high schools start their journey to school from these three villages at 7 am everyday to reach the school on time.

They return home at night. On completion of primary education, female students usually stop their education.

On contact with a few more villagers named Muhib Ali, Badshah Miah, Kajol Miah, Montaj Ali Fazal Ali at Matinpur, Chungabari and Boruakandi villages, they said a primary school building, a community clinic and few culverts over the hilly canal were constructed during the previous Awami League (AL) regime, a few years ago but the buildings and

6X3

10X2

4X4