

Agyan Party activities on rise in port city

DWAIPAYAN BARUA

Activities of Agyan Party, a gang of criminals who drug people before mugging them, marked an alarming rise in the port city despite tight security measures by the law enforcement agencies during the last few months.

The muggers have continued to carry out their activities under the nose of the members of the law enforcement agencies to target the innocent people, particularly the passengers, in the port city.

With a view to bringing the law and order situation under control, Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) beefed up security ahead of Eid-ul-Azha. Ten incidents of mugging took place last week by the members of Agyan Party.

Eleven people fell victim to the Agyan Party members and were hospitalised in critical condition in different areas of the city on

Tuesday and Wednesday when they were going home to celebrate the Eid.

Six people were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) on Tuesday while five others the following day (Wednesday), the day before Eid, CMCH sources said.

Mohammad Fazal, 35, and Rezaul Karim, 30, two friends, were found unconscious in an inter-district bus from Hathazari at around 11:30 am on Wednesday.

Chotan Rudra, 28, fell victim to the miscreants the same day while he was going to the GEC area from Olankar intersection in a city service bus and lost his cellphone set and money in cash, said the sources.

Other passengers rushed Chotan to the CMCH at around 3:00pm in an unconscious state.

Locals recovered Khorshedul Alam, 50, from the New Market area at 2:30pm and took him to

CMCH. Khorshed was returning to his residence after shopping at New Market. The miscreants looted his valuables, said the nurses at the hospital.

Locals found an unidentified person aged about 55 lying unconscious on the road in the busy Patherghata area at around 4:00pm.

Dr Faiz Ahmad Khandaker, assistant registrar of the medicine ward No 14 at CMCH, said most of the victims took foods like juice, coconut juice or biscuits with sedatives in them given by the unknown persons.

He said elderly persons having different physical complaints like diabetes can die after taking such drugs.

Staffs of a Chittagong-bound inter-city bus caught one Suman, a member of Agyan Party, at Nurjahan Hotel at Comilla on December 15 while he was trying to loot valuables of a passenger named Kumaraddin after mak-

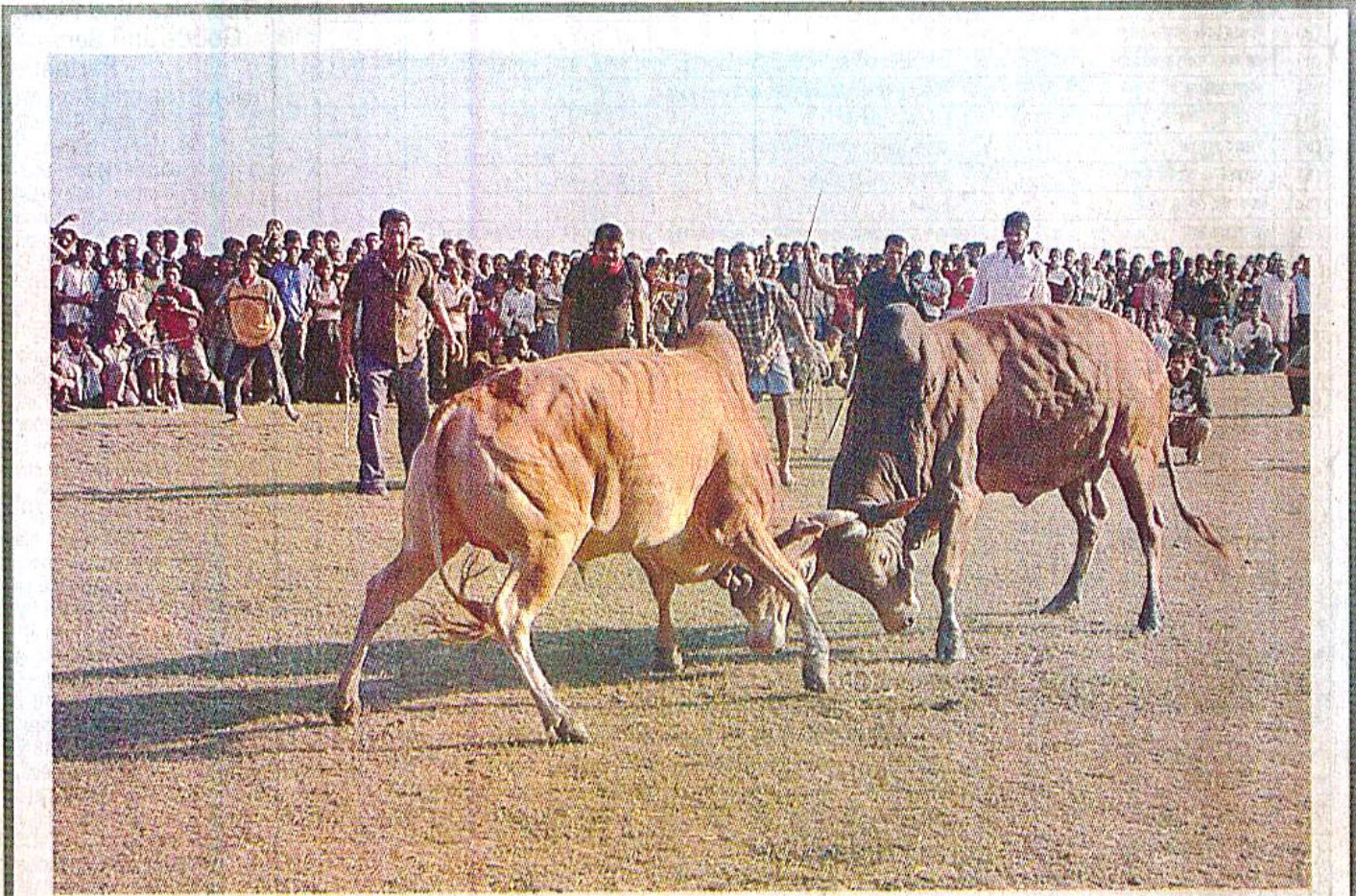
ing him unconscious. They handed him over to Pahartali police.

According to his confessional statement, police arrested one Shahjahan from a residential hotel in the Sayedabad area of the capital on December 19, police said.

Ilutimish, assistant commissioner (AC) of Pahartali Police, said Shahjahan's men usually mix one kind of sedative imported from Pakistan, having no taste or smell, with different kinds of tasty foods like sandwich or juice to feed their targets.

Stressing the need for creating mass awareness against taking foods from unknown persons while travelling, Ilutimish said police are on alert and trying best to check such incidents in the busterminals.

He said several gangs of muggers might be involved in such activities as the drugs are available in local markets at cheaper rates.



People watch a fight between two bulls during a traditional festival at Bakalia Balir Hat on the bank of river Karnaphuli on Thursday. Locals have been organising the festival for about one hundred years on the day before Eid-ul-Azha.

Mobile blood bank to fight anaemia, malaria

Over 14,000 attacked with malaria, 2002 with anaemia in 10 months in Matiranga

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD

The army organised a programme titled "Mobile blood bank programme" at Matiranga Degree College to fight anaemia and malaria that frequently take lives at Matiranga upazila in Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Over 14,000 people were reportedly attacked with malaria and 2002 with anaemia in the last 10 months since January in the upazila having a population of 1,34,000, sources said.

Of them, 576 were attacked with cerebral malaria that killed eight people in three months until October while two died due to anaemia. Attack and death of many due to malaria and anaemia in remote areas of Matiranga, the most populated upazila, remain unreported or uncounted for, they said.

The people, including tribal and non-tribal, are getting their names registered in eight groups



Army organises a mobile blood bank at Matiranga Degree College recently.

according to blood groups and RH factors.

They launched programme at Matiranga, a remote upazila in the malaria-prone hilly district of Khagrachhari, on December 15.

As against the scheduled number of 1000 as many as 1396 people got their blood grouping and registration done on the day at the college, some 90km off the port city.

While visiting the area on the day, a group of journalists from Chittagong saw several thousand people, including kids and old-aged ones, who are rather supposed to be scared of needles and hardly aware of blood grouping, thronged the college campus amid enthusiasm and festivity.

They queued each of the 10 tents where the lab technicians and representatives, one each from Bangalee, Murang, Tirpura and Chakma tribes, were giving voluntary service for blood col-

lection, grouping and registration.

After the blood grouping, everyone got an identity card with blood group (along with RH factor) to receive or donate blood.

"The campaign helped us become quite aware of the importance of grouping, matching and transfusion of blood to fight anaemia and malaria," said Aneul Chowdhury Nayan, headman and commissioner of Matiranga Sadar.

"To tackle the huge rush each of the headmen and Karbaris was assigned to bring only 20 to 30 people from their respective village or Mohalla for blood grouping," said Md Nurul Afsar a teacher of Matiranga Degree College.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Afzalur Rahman said the campaign and the mobile blood bank programme are phenomenal events.

With anaemia and malaria taking a huge toll on invaluable lives here every year, the programme has got tremendous response and spontaneous support, said Matiranga College Principal Md Abul Hossain.

Local health officer Nurul Karim recalled the tragic death of Masuda Begum, 25, brought to them from Alutilla for blood transfusion at night few months ago.

"With all the labs already closed we fetched a lab assistant only to know that the lady patient carried blood of B group when the Rh factor remained unidentified," he said.

"Being a person of B positive group I myself donated blood that she rejected indicating her blood group as B negative," he said.

"Unfortunately, no donor of that group could be found even at the Zone (army zone headquarters) at that moment and

Masuda died before the dawn," he added.

The representatives of Matiranga army zone said they have come up with the mobile blood bank concept as they have failed to donate blood and witnessed people dying for blood many a time.

Commanding Officer (CO) of Matiranga Army Zone said local pharmacies, Grameen Shakti, BDR, VDP, local administrations and the teachers and students of different educational institutions made the programme a success providing volunteers.

He said they are planning to offer blood grouping free of cost to 5000 people in several phase and make list on the basis of Para, Mohalla and Village.

Local health complex or centres, ward commissioners, headmen and Karbaris will preserve copies of the lists to approach the mobile blood bank for blood if needed.

the week that was

Women's SME Expo concludes

The month-long Women's SME Expo concluded here on Wednesday with a call for involving the women in the development process for strengthening the economy further.

Speakers at the concluding ceremony said development of the country is not possible keeping the women away from the mainstream development.

First Women's SME Expo Bangladesh 07 was jointly organised by the Small and Medium Exposition Foundation and Chittagong Women Chamber of Commerce and Industries (CWCCI) at Railway Polo Ground.

Food and Disaster Management Ministry Secretary and SME Foundation Managing Director Dr Mohammad Ayub Mian was the chief guest with the CWCCI President Monowara Hakim Ali in the chair.

Dr Ayub in his speech said Asian Development Bank kept Tk 210 crore reserved for small and medium entrepreneurs of Bangladesh with 10 per cent for the women SMEs.

He said help-lines have been established in 25 districts to accelerate the business while rest of the districts will be brought under the network within next three months.

Indonesian Ambassador in Bangladesh Warmas Hasan Saputra was the guest of honour at the ceremony where Commerce Ministry Deputy Secretary Dr Yamin Akbari,

Chittagong Additional Deputy Commissioner Mahiuddin Ahmed Khan, Sylhet Chamber of Commerce and Industries former director Dr Mainul Islam Mahmud, Centre for Disabled Concern (CDC) Chief Executive Selim Nazrul and the Exposition Chairman Kohinur Kamal also spoke at the function.

Uninterrupted power supply demanded

Electricity consumers of Patiya placed a six-point demand, including uninterrupted supply of power in the upazila.

Under the banner of Patiya Biddoyt

Grahok Sangram Samity, they submitted separate memoranda to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and Chittagong Rural Electrification Association-1 General Manager (GM) on Wednesday.

In the memoranda, the Samity leaders urged authorities concerned to ensure uninterrupted power supply during the current IRRI monsoon to overcome the losses of Aman paddy, caused by the recent flood and cyclone.

Other demands include an end to frequent loadshedding, harassment to the consumers, cancellation of minimum charge and immediate replacement of damaged transformers and restoration of stolen electric wires.

UNO Mohammad Shahidul Alam and GM Shakhawat Ullah assured the Parishad leaders of necessary steps in this regard.

The Samity President Horisadhan Dev Barman, Central Krishak Samity leader Mohammad Shah Alam, Abdul Nabi, former chairman Tajur Mulluk, Abdus Salam, Shyamal Day, Olok Das and Mohiuddin Bakul were present during the submission of the memoranda.

Abdul Kader, Social Welfare Officer AKM Syed, Jasim Uddin, Nurul Islam Siddiqi, Mosaddek Hossain Rajon, Mahmudur Rahman and Joy Dev spoke.

Elephant kills three of a family

Three of a family were killed and a minor boy was injured when a wild elephant stampede their homestead at Ahmachhia Guchchhagram (cluster village) under Boalkhali upazila in the district on Wednesday night.

The victims were identified as Abdul Motaleb, 70, son of late Abdul Rahim, his wife Jarina Begum, 60, and daughter Nurzahan Begum, 25, while the injured was his grandson Salfur Rahman, 4.

Sources said the wild elephant came down from a nearby hill at around 10:30pm and damaged the house of Motaleb, leaving three dead on the spot and the boy injured. The victims were inside the house during the incident.

Rangs Electronics service Centre opens

The 61st Service Centre of Rangs Electronics Limited was inaugurated at Bandartilla in the port city on Wednesday.

The Company General Manager (Service) S Iqbal Khan inaugurated the centre as the chief guest.

Deputy General Manager (Commercial) Musa Kamal Mahmud, Assistant Manager Sontes Kumar Das and Area Service In-charge Sheikh Ali Ansar were present at the inaugural ceremony.

The centre is the fifth one in



Members of Sammilita Abritti Jote pay their last respect to Language Movement veteran and poet Mabub ul Alam Chowdhury by placing wreaths at his portrait at the Chittagong Central Shaheed Minar in the port city on Monday.

Chittagong. Earlier, Rangs Electronics Limited opened its service centres at Chittagong Waza Intersection, Mehedi Bag, Agrabad Commercial Area and Rifles Club.

Relief distributed among Sidr victims

Bangladesh Hindu Foundation distributed relief among the family members of 26 people killed in the Sidr in the country's southern areas.

The foundation leaders handed over the relief materials to them at Banskhali in the district at a simple ceremony on Ramkrishna Sebashram

premise on Saturday.

They distributed 10kgs of rice, a saree, a lungi, one sack of used-cloth and Tk 300 in cash to each family.

The Foundation Chairman Purnendu Bikash Chowdhury, Secretary General Dulai Kanti Majumder, Relief Secretary Narayan Krishna Gupta, Banskhali Police Station Officer in-Charge (OC) Mohammad Harun-Ur-Rashid were present during the distribution of relief.

Meanwhile, Allama Fazlullah Foundation, a non-government welfare organisation, also distributed relief among around 1500 Sidr-victims in Moralganj, Sharankhola, Amtali and Bagerhat Press Club.

The Foundation leaders also promised to reconstruct houses 100 affected families there.

They distributed relief on December

12 and 13.

The relief materials worth Tk 12 lakh included rice, pulse, oil and warm clothes.

R Rahman Charity Society and Sharjah Charity House, donor organisations from United Arab Emirates, will finance for the rehabilitation programme.

Mokhesur Rahman, chairman of the Foundation and Secretary General of Sharia Boards of Islamic banks in Bangladesh, Farid Ahmed Chowdhury, Principal of Cox's Bazar Women Kamil Madrasa, Sharankhola Police Station Officer in-Charge (OC) Abdur Rahman, Bagerhat Press Club President Mohammad Ali and Foundation members Mahmudul Hasan and Abu Taher Torabi were present on the occasion.



Chittagong City Corporation Acting Mayor M Manjur Alam speaks at the prize giving ceremony of the Chittagong Press Club-NCC Bank Annual Sports competition on Wednesday.