

## Two youths to die in rape, murder case

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
C/nuabganj

A Chapainawabganj court yesterday sentenced two youths to death in the sensational Sheuly rape and murder case.

Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-2 judge Anup Kumar Goswami pronounced the verdict in a crowded courtroom.

The convicts are Kaium Reza, 18, son of Israil and Shafiqul Islam, 20, son of Ayesuddin of Moyamari village under Bholahat upazila in Chapainawabganj. They were also fined Tk 1 lakh each.

According to the prosecution story, Sheuly, 14, years came out of home to respond to nature's call in the evening on April 14, 2000. The gang abducted the girl from behind her house and took her to a nearby lonely cropland and gang-raped. Later, they hung the body in a tree with the help of a rope.

## Cancel JS seat for Momtaz

Protesters demand

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Manikganj

Manikganj district unit of Mohila Awami League yesterday held a rally in the town demanding cancellation of AL nomination to folk singer Momtaz Begum for one of the reserved seats for women in parliament.

Chaired by Mohila Awami League district unit President Nina Rahman, the rally was addressed, among others, by district unit leaders Laxmi Chatterjee, Morshed Sakawat and Hosne Ara.

They urged Awami League President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to reconsider the matter and nominate a dedicated leader for the reserved seat.

The Mohila AL leaders alleged that Momtaz served the purpose of the four-party alliance government during its rule and rendered songs at different functions of the alliance.

## LAND GRABBING

### 9 including 3 cops sued in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Nine people including three police officials have been sued on charge of land grabbing through intimidation.

Iman Ali Sana of Madinabad village under Koira upazila filed the case yesterday with the court of Judicial Magistrate Abu Zafar Mohammad Kamruzzaman.

The accused are Koira Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Ali Azam Khan, sub inspectors Sheikh Shajahan and Al Mamun, Jahanara Khatun, her husband Anisur Rahman, Zahara Khatun, Sultan Sana, Rafiqul Islam Sana and Rezaul Sana.

According to the complaint, Iman Ali's step sister Jahanara Khatun grabbed 51 decimals of his land with the help of the eight other accused. Iman Ali said he was in possession of the land for the last 30 years.

## 8 RAJSHAHI INSTITUTIONS REMAIN SHUT

# Deadlock may drag on as AL, Jamaat stick to stances

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

No sign is yet in sight to end of the deadlock at higher educational institutions in Rajshahi city following their closure since March 13 student violence as opponent groups belonging to ruling Awami League (AL) and Jamaat-e-Islami are rigid on their stances.

As eight institutions including RU, Rajshahi Medical College, Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology, Rajshahi College and Rajshahi New Government Degree College have remained closed, around 50,000 students are facing problems including an impending session jam.

Terming Jamaat-Shibir as a 'violence-based party', local AL leaders ruled out any consensus with it while local Jamaat leaders demanded justice for the killing of RU unit Islami Chhtra Shibir general

secretary Sharifuzzaman Noman before sitting for any dialogue.

"Reopening the institutions is not possible without a reshuffle in the local police administration. They nakedly sided with Shibir men to beat up the BCL activists at Rajshahi Medical College and the incident aggravated the situation," said Rajshahi Mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, also an AL leader.

"I talked with government high-ups about replacing a few police officials with efficient ones," he said.

"Jamaat-Shibir is a violence-based party. Yet we reached a consensus with them for the sake of education. But they breached it. They beat up our student leaders mercilessly. Now, no more consensus with them," said Shafiqur Rahman Badsha, acting general secretary of Rajshahi city AL.

When contacted, Rajshahi

city Jamaat Amir Ataur Rahman said, "Jamaat will not sit for negotiation until the killers of Noman are arrested and punished. We had a consensus for peace, but Awami League and its student front engaged in bloodshed for capturing halls."

City BCL General Secretary Zedu Sarker, on the other hand, said, "It was Shibir that took the lead in violence. They held processions and meetings at halls and campuses and did provocative acts despite consensus to postpone such activities."

Talking to The Daily Star, RU Vice Chancellor Prof Abdus Sobhan said, "The situation is out of our control. We are now in wait for political leaders to act."

Several teachers said Jamaat and Shibir activists, who have been maintaining supremacy on different campuses in Rajshahi for over one and a half decades, set their

men at different levels including administration and halls.

After the present government assumed power, BCL activists, who were almost cornered on the campuses, tried to restore their position, they said.

In absence of elections in students' unions for long, violence has become a means for establishing supremacy among student groups, said Prof ANM Saleh.

Hafizur Rahman, additional commissioner of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police, denied allegations against the police about the recent violence.

Meanwhile, a large number of small traders in the city are suffering losses as thousands of students, who comprise a major portion of their customers, left the city following closure of the institutions.

The rickshaw pullers are one of the worst sufferers as number of their passengers declined.



Demonstrators block Dhaka-Uttaranchal highway at Konabari yesterday demanding punishment to the officials of a swindler NGO in Kamarkhanda upazila in Sirajganj district.

## Fake NGO men vanish

### defrauding thousands

### Villagers block highway in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Hundreds of agitating people from different villages put up a barricade yesterday disrupting traffic on the Dhaka-North Bengal highway in Kamarkhanda upazila demanding arrest and punishment to the so-called officials of a 'fake' NGO.

Earlier, they demonstrated at Bordhul Bazar, brought out a procession there and held a rally on Tuesday.

Sources said, a group of swindlers collected about Tk 6 crore from thousands of poor and illiterate people of different villages in the name of an NGO. Later, they vanished with the money.

The alleged swindlers introduced themselves as the officials of PDP and collected Tk 4,000 from each villager in Kamarkhanda, Raiganj, Ullapara, Shahzadpur, Belkuchi and Sirajganj Sadar upazila promising to give each of them a cow in exchange for the amount.

Sometimes they also said they work for National Service Development Programme (NSDP), a project of PDP and took Tk 2,000 from each person promising them to provide a tube-well. Thus the swindlers realised about Tk

6 crore defrauding about 10,000 people in last two years, villagers said.

Shahidul Islam of Bordhul village told this correspondent that he paid Tk 4,000 to one Rashed as he promised to give him a cow. "But I never got the cow," he said.

Sarower Hossain, who was cheated in the same way said, he also gave the same amount to one Abdus Samad, a colleague of Rashed. Many people of Charia Uzir village in Ullapara upazila said, they paid at least Tk 2 lakh to the fraud gang for cow and tube-well.

Villagers of Dadpur in Raiganj upazila said that the swindlers took away at least Tk 4 lakh from them.

An official of a local NGO told The Daily Star that the leader of the gang earlier worked at an NGO. But he was dismissed for his illegal activities.

Contacted, A K M Aminur Rahman, UNO of Kamarkhanda upazila said, he had heard the matter and talked with many victims. I have already asked the law enforcers to take necessary steps, he said.

Police said, they got the information but are yet to get any written complaint. So we are unable to take any action now, they said.



Although plucking in most tea gardens in greater Sylhet region is yet to start due to scanty rainfall, a few tea gardens in Sylhet Sadar upazila are lucky enough to see start of the work with a bit better rainfall there at the onset of the plucking season.

## Tea plucking delayed for poor rainfall in Sylhet

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

Tea cultivation in greater Sylhet region comprising 138 of the country's 160 tea gardens is suffering due to lack of rainfall.

Plucking in tea gardens usually starts early March every year but it is being delayed due to the drought-like situation this year, said officials at different tea estates in Sylhet region.

"Tea is a very sensitive crop that needs adequate rainfall and sunshine during March to October. A minimum rainfall is also required during November-December and February-March," an official of Bangladesh Tea Board said.

"Although we got 30mm rainfall till the first week of March last year, only 0.8mm rainfall has been recorded during the period this year. We could not even start irrigation as the natural water sources have dried up," said Mohammad Shajahan Akand, manager of Sombonbhag Tea Estate.

Besides delay in plucking, there are fear of attack by insects like Red Spider on the tea plants as fertilisation will also be delayed.

Normally fertilisation requires a minimum of 20mm to 30mm rainfall, said Shahjahan, who is also the circle chairman of Juri Valley.

The 160 tea gardens in greater Sylhet region are under six 'valleys' or zones.

Plucking has started in Hobibnagar Tea Estate in Sylhet where the situation is relatively better with 50mm rainfall in two and a half months this year.

Still the amount is much less than requirement in the area where 102mm rainfall was recorded during the corresponding period last year, said Humayun Kabir, manager of Hobibnagar Tea Estate.

An important cash crop of Bangladesh, tea is also one of the largest agro-based industries in the country. In addition to newly established seven small tea holdings, there are 162 tea gardens having a total annual production of about 55 to 60 million kg. About two-thirds of the production is consumed at home while export of the rest earns a good amount of foreign exchange.

This year the country's tea production target has been fixed at 60 million kg.

## Rivals beat student dead

CU CORRESPONDENT

A textile engineering college student was beaten to death by rival students at Joraganj under Mirsarai upazila in the district early yesterday.

Victim Rezwan Shamim, 22, a student of 8th part in Joraganj Textile Engineering College, hailed from Jamalpur district.

Sources said a group of 20-25 students entered the room of Rezwan in Fantasy Residential Area near the college at around 11.00pm. They beat up Rezwan mercilessly and injured him critically.

He was rushed to a local hospital and then taken to Feni Sadar Hospital. Later, Rezwan died on the way to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) while being shifted at around 4.30am.

Mirsarai police told The Daily Star that Rezwan had a dispute with some students of the college centring theft of a mobile phone and his candidature in the students' union election.

## Rally at Ruet

RU CORRESPONDENT

Pro-Awami League teachers, officers and employees of Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology (Ruet) yesterday held a rally on the campus protesting pro-BNP-Jamaat teachers' move to hold 'one sided' election to Ruet Teachers Association.

At the rally held at central cafeteria auditorium in the morning, they formed a teachers, officers and employees Oikya Parishad' to resist the 'one sided' election slated for March 22 and alleged repression by BNP-Jamaat teachers on the campus.

Meanwhile, BNP-Jamaat teachers also met the VC at his office yesterday and withdrew work abstention programme.

They also demanded punishment to the employees responsible for 'assaulting' Sheikh Nizamuddowla and Prof Abdul Mafiz on Tuesday.

## 4 sued for killing FF in '71

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,  
Khulna

Bagerhat Sadar Police Station on Tuesday night recorded a case against four 'rajakars' for killing a freedom fighter during Liberation War in 1971.

Tanju Sheikh, brother of martyred freedom fighter Tayeb Ali Sheikh of Beshargati village, filed the case with the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court, Bagerhat, on March 5 accusing Sirajul Islam, Basharat Halder, Nabir Halder and Mostafa Halder of killing

his brother.

The accused hail from Gotapara and Kandapa' villages under Sadar Police Station.

Tanju stated in the case that that the accused picked up his brother Tayeb Ali Sheikh from his house on June 16, 1971 and killed him at Kandapara Bazar Sadar upazila.

Chief Judicial Magistrate Gazi Abdur Rahman referred the case to Bagerhat Sadar Police Station for recording after investigation.

After investigation, police

found the allegation true and recorded the case. Sub-Inspector Abdul Aziz of Bagerhat Sadar Police Station is investigation officer (IO) of the case.

Mostafa Halder, one of the four accused, is now chairman of Gotapara Union Parishad under Bagerhat Sadar upazila.

All the accused have been absconding since the filing of the case with the magistrate's court on March 5, said OC Humayun Kabir of Sadar Police Station.

## Youth killed in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Kushtia

Criminals have murdered a unidentified young man, 30, at village Nalbata in Kumarkhali upazila in the district. Police recovered the bullet-riddled body from a roadside ditch Tuesday.

Police said local people informed them after finding the body lying in a T-shirt and lungi. Two bullets pierced his chest, police said.

Police sent the body to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy. They suspect the slain young man was member of an outlawed party and killed by rivals.

## Protesters besiege Dimla Upazila Health Complex

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Nilphamari

Several hundred agitated people in Dimla brought out a procession and besieged the Dimla Upazila Health Complex yesterday alleging ill behavior of the doctors, negligence of duty and stealing of medicine from the complex.

Ashraful Islam Jewel, a lecturer of Dimla Women's College and protestor informed that most of the doctors spend little time at the office. He also complained that many doctors visit patients privately at office hours. If anybody protests, the doctors misbehave with him.

Locals alleged that last Monday night a poor man of Notabari village came to the health complex with his wife for delivery. But he did not find any doctor in the emergency ward. The ward was locked and there was no doctor, assistant, sister or aya.

On the same night locals

detained five rickshaw vans loaded with government medicine near the health complex. Those were coming from Nilphamari civil surgeon office for Dimla Upazila Health Complex. Examining the delivery receipt in presence of upazila health and family planning officer (UHFPO), it was found that some medicines were missing.

The UHFPO assured the local people of issuing show cause notice against the persons responsible for the matter.

Local people burst into protest yesterday as no action was taken. Several hundred people brought out a procession and besieged the upazila health complex. Later the protestors came to the UNO office to lodge complaint.

UHFPO Dr Deen Mohammad, however, said he had issued show cause against the doctor who was on duty Monday night. He said another show cause has been issued against the storekeeper for misappropriation of medicine.



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