

A same old tale of acid throwing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kustia

Dream of an honours student has been shattered as criminals threw acid on her a day before the arrangement of her marriage.

Her elder sister and a nephew were also injured in the acid attack at remote Kamalapur village in Khoksa upaila under the district on Wednesday night.

Shila Khatun, an honours second year student of economics in Pangsha University College in Rajbari, her elder sister Shimul and the latter's two-year-old daughter Jyoti were sleeping in a room when criminals threw acid through a window, said family sources and police.

Shila and Shimul received serious burn injuries to throat and other parts of their bodies. Jyoti's left leg and right hand were also burnt. Shila's gay halud was fixed for Thursday and the wedding ceremony for Friday.

The family first tried to keep the matter secret fearing 'social dishonour'.

On information, Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) in Kustia CA Halim rushed to

the spot and took the victims to Khoksa Upazila Health Complex at about 12:30pm the following day. Later they were shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital as their condition deteriorated.

"The day before, an unknown person called me over mobile phone and warned not to marry off my sister. Later in another message, the caller threatened to change the 'entire scene' within a short time," Shila's elder brother Farid Uddin told the journalists.

Locals said a youth of the same area often proposed love to Shila but was turned down. However, detailed information could not be collected in this regard.

After the tragic incident, Shila's father Idris Ali lost his sense and he had to undergo treatment at Khoksa Upazila Health Complex.

Idris, a government employee, filed a case with Khoksa Police Station on Friday but none could be arrested in this connection.

"We have got the mobile number and other pieces of evidence. Stern action will be taken against the culprit," ASP Halim said.



Truck workers led by ruling party lawmaker MA Latif block the road at Fakirhat near Chittagong port yesterday protesting alleged realisation of extra charges for parking trucks at the port terminal. The blockade programme created tailback on both sides of the road, much to the suffering of commuters. PHOTO: STAR

CHILAHATI LAND CUSTOMS STATION

Flag hoisted every morning although shut for 7 years

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

Chilahati land customs station in Nilphamari district has been lying inoperative for over seven years following closure of Holdibari land customs station by India, much to the sufferings of both Indian and Bangladeshi travellers and businessmen.

The Chilahati-Holdibari route between Bangladesh and India was closed down after Indian authorities decided to shut the Holdibari land customs station in Cooch Behar district of West Bengal in June 2002.

Following repeated requests from the people in Nilphamari and adjoining areas, the authority of Chilahati land customs station situated at Bhogdaburi of Domar upazila in Nilphamari formally requested the Indian land port customs authority to take necessary steps to reopen the station considering its utility to the travellers of both the countries.

But the Indian authorities are yet to make any positive response in this regard, station sources said.

The people of Nilphamari and other adjoining districts have been demanding reopening of the route through bilateral talks. A large number of Bangladeshi citizens from the district and adjacent areas go to India to meet their relatives and for business, treatment and other purposes every day.

Besides, about one lakh Urdu-speaking people now living in Syedpur town in Nilphamari, mostly descendants of the refugees who came to the then East Pakistan from Bihar in India, travel to India frequently to meet their relatives.

But after closure of the Holdibari customs station,

these people need to detour a long way to use Burimari checkpoint in Lalmonirhat, opposite to Indian Chengrabanda checkpoint, to go to India, adding to their travel cost.

"During my visit to India last year, the business community of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal requested me to persuade Bangladesh government for negotiating with India to reopen the Chilahati-Holdibari transit route," said Mostofa Azad Chowdhury Babu, president of Rangpur Chamber of Commerce and Industries.

Re-opening of this route will help a large number of people

of Panchagarh, Thakurgaon along with Nilphamari district who make frequent visits to India for business and other purposes, said Abdul Wahed Sarker, president of Nilphamari Chamber of Commerce and Industries.

At present a customs inspector, a female MLSS, two guards and a peon are posted at Chilahati checkpoint.

Peon Farid, who is a resident of the area, told newsmen that now his duty is to hoist the national flag daily while the four other staffs stay at Syedpur and Nilphamari offices as they have practically no work at Chilahati.

Life would return to Chilahati-Holdibari transit route, which had been in use since partition of the sub-continent in 1947, if India resume operation in Holdibari land customs station, said locals.

During their visit to West Bengal for business and personal purposes in September, a group of businessmen and travellers from the district met the business community and elites of Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar districts and Shilguri subdivision, Nilphamari Chamber president Abdul Wahed Sarker said.

The Bangladeshi people requested the Indian business-

men to talk to their concerned authorities for reopening the Chilahati-Holdibari route.

Motaleb Hossain, the inspector of customs posted at Chilahati land customs station, said the Holdibari land customs authority in West Bengal did not officially inform their counterpart at Chilahati whether they had permanently stopped its activities on this route.

Earlier on several occasions, his office at Chilahati sent messages to its counterpart in Cooch Behar and Holdibari for restoring the land customs activities but they are yet to respond, he added.



PHOTO: STAR

Chilahati land customs station has remained virtually shut for the last seven years although a national flag is hoisted there every day.

ALLEGED CORRUPTION BY PRESIDENT, SECY 11 Rajshahi Bar members resign in protest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Eleven executives of Rajshahi Bar Association yesterday resigned protesting alleged corruption by association's president and general secretary.

They are vice-president AKM Mizanur Rahman, third joint secretary Habibur Rahman, audit secretary Shamsul Haque, library secretary Mahmudur Rahman, press and information secretary Masud Sarder, accounts secretary Nazmul Haque Mintu, magazine and cultural secretary Rajab Ali and members Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Parvez Towfik Zahedi, Aftabur Rahman and SMM Mofazzal Haque.

The announcement of en masse resignation came from a press conference at Rajshahi Metropolitan Press Club at noon.

Some 50 other senior lawyers under the banner of 'Rajshahi Ainjibi Oikya Parishad' were present at the press conference.

The lawyers alleged that Bar Association President Muhammad Yahiya and General Secretary Lokman Ali were engaged in distributing forged vokalatnama (power of attorney) among the lawyers and in this way they misappropriated around Tk 26 lakh between

November 23, 2008 and September 6, 2009.

They said forged stickers of Bangladesh Bar Council and forged signature of relevant officials were used in the vokalatnama.

The bar association did not take any action against the staff found involved in forgery through an investigation, they alleged.

Public Prosecutor of Speedy Trial Tribunal Entajul Haque Babu said he filed a case with Rajpara Police Station against the association's administrative officer Nurul Islam and form seller Umme Kulsum for vokalatnama forgery on September 8.

Ignoring the case, he alleged, the association's general secretary lodged another suit with a Rajshahi court to weaken the previous case on legal point.

Babu demanded proper investigation into the allegations and exemplary punishment to the persons involved.

Contacted, Muhammad Yahiya said, "How can the lawyers (who brought the allegations) point finger to anyone when the investigation is yet to be complete," he said referring to the cases lodged in this regard.

Yahiya said he is unaware of any probe report on vokalatnama forgery.

4 villagers abducted in Ramgarh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Four villagers were abducted yesterday allegedly by a group of tribal youths from two separate villages under Ramgarh upazila.

They were identified as Norendra Tripura, 35, of Nakata village and Hoshirum Tripura, 50, Antiram Tripura, 22, and Monindra Tripura, 45, of Belchhari village.

Quoting villagers Ramgarh police said, a group of 10-12 tribal youths first raided Nakata village and abducted one person and later raided Belchhari village and picked up three more villagers.

No case was filed till filing of this report yesterday afternoon.

SNIPPETS

Tiger kills fisherman

UNB, Bagerhat

A fisherman was killed by a tiger in the Sundarbans under Sharankhola upazila on Friday night. The deceased was identified as Mozammel Talukder, son of Hatem Ali Talukder of Dakshin Chalitabunia village in Sharankhola upazila. Forest department sources said a tiger attacked Mozammel on Friday evening while he was fishing in Talgachhia canal. Later, his body was recovered from deep forest at midnight.

Youth killed in Noakhali

UNB, Noakhali

A young man was killed over theft of green coconut at Uttar Sharif village in Sadar upazila on Thursday night. Victim Yunus, 26, was son of Azizul Huq of the village. Sources said, Jamal, son of Sayedul Huq, along with his accomplices stole some green coconuts from the house of one Niranjana at noon. Village watchman Nabi later informed the matter to the landlord. This angered Jamal most and he along with his aide Zahiruddin Babar swooped on Nabi. Hearing Nabi's cry for help, locals rushed to the spot to save him. But Jamal stabbed Yunus indiscriminately, leaving him critically injured. Yunus was rushed to Noakhali General Hospital where he succumbed to his injury at about 11pm.

Death threat to JP man

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna city president of Jatiya Party (Ershad) and ex-lawmaker Abdul Gaffar Biswas allegedly received death threats twice on Wednesday evening from extremists over cell phone. They threatened him as he refused to pay Tk 1,50,000 illegal toll as demanded by the callers. Biswas said, the callers identified themselves as armed cadres of Janajuddho faction of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP). The JP leader filed a general diary (GD) with Khalishpur police station in this connection at 10 pm on the same day seeking security of his life. According to the GD, the callers who gave him death threats demanded the money for medical treatment and bail expenses of their cadres.

Forty shops gutted

A CORRESPONDENT, Madaripur

At least 40 shops were gutted in a fire at Kalagachhia Bazar under Kendua union of Madaripur Sadar upazila early Thursday. Locals said, the fire originated from an electric short circuit at a cosmetics shop. The damaged shops include cosmetics, jewellery, drug store, digital studio, computer shop, grocery, sweetmeat shop, cloth store and library. Fire fighters and locals brought the fire under control after a struggle of about four hours. The shop owners and police estimated damage of property at Tk one crore.

Injured carpenter dies

UNB, Sylhet

A carpenter, injured seriously by an associate at Gobindaganj traffic crossing in Chhatak upazila of Sunamganj district on Tuesday, died at Sylhet Osmani Medical College and Hospital (SOMCH) Friday morning. Victim Abdul Majir, 20, was son of Morom Ali of Radhanagar village. Sources said, Majir and his associate Selim of Nurullahpur village locked in an altercation as the latter refused to pay the borrowed money. At one stage, Selim hacked Majir indiscriminately by a sharp weapon, leaving him critically injured.

Dissolve Gournadi BNP convening committees

Agitating rivals demand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Rival factions of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Gournadi upazila and municipal units staged demonstrations at upazila headquarters on Friday demanding dissolution of the newly formed convening committees of the two units.

Supporters of former lawmaker Zahiruddin Swapan, also the information and research secretary of BNP central committee, brought out a procession and held a rally in front of local press club at noon.

Rival municipal faction, led by central Jubo Dal leader Abdul Kuddus Akon, staged a rally near Highway Police Station in the afternoon.

Activists of upazila and municipal factions, carrying banners and placards and wearing black badges, chanted slogans demanding cancellation of the convening

committees.

The staged agitation hearing a rumour that BNP Joint Secretary General Selima Rahman will soon visit Gournadi to officially introduce the upazila convening body headed by Engineer Abdus Sobhan and municipal body headed by M Maniruzzaman Manir.

At the rallies, the speakers said new convening bodies of the two units have been formed ignoring the opinion of grassroots BNP leaders and workers.

They warned of en masse resignation if the new convening committees formed with 'reformists' are not cancelled as early as possible.

Refuting the accusation, Engineer Abdus Sobhan and M Maniruzzaman Manir, conveners of upazila and municipal units, said the central committee has formed the new bodies with dedicated leaders.

3 ruling party men, a trader behind Bithar murder

Buruj discloses to police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Two senior Awami League leaders, a Jubo League leader and a businessman had a hand in the killing of KCC ward councillor Shahid Iqbal Bithar.

Central Jubo League leader Mesbah Hossain Buruj, arrested in the capital in connection with Bithar murder on October 26, disclosed this to the law enforcers during interrogation on remand.

Police produced Buruj in the Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court on Thursday, seeking fresh remand. Magistrate Abu Shamim Azad granted four days' remand that expires today.

Four of the six professional killers hired to execute the plan are now in jail. They are Akash, Raju, Shab-e-Kadir and Hiru. The remaining two--Arman and AL

Amin--are still at large.

According to investigation officer (IO) Inspector Mamun Khan, major headway in the investigation has been achieved with statements made by Buruj and all other murder suspects arrested recently.

"We will nab some other murder suspects soon to complete our investigation into the case," said AC Abu Sayem of KMP's Detective Branch (DB).

Investigation officer Mamun Khan said statements of Buruj and all other arrestees were recorded under Section 161 of CrPC.

Ferdous Hossain Hiru and Rajiv alias Tony, arrested in Natore recently, would be brought face-to-face with Buruj to get confirmation about involvement of two senior AL leaders in the killing plan, the IO said.

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