



Grave of Prof Mir Abdul Quayyum, one of the 17 martyrs who were buried in a mass grave at Babla Bon in Rajshahi city, right, Liberation War Museum preserves soil of Babla Bon mass grave in the capital to give the message of massacre by Pakistani occupation forces and their local collaborators.

Babla Bon mass grave in Rajshahi lies uncared for

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Family members of several Liberation War martyrs have demanded steps for protection and proper maintenance of Babla Bon mass grave site in Rajshahi city so that people can pay homage to the great sons of the soil, who were buried there.

The Pakistani army with the help of their local collaborators picked up 17 people including intellectuals and politicians from their houses on the night of November 25 in 1971.

Their bodies were found after local people discovered the mass grave near Boalia Club in the city on

December 30.

Bodies of the 17 martyrs including Prof Mir Abdul Quayyum of Rajshahi University, Nawrose-ud-Doula Khan, Taslim Uddin, Abul Hossain, Alauddin, Taiyab Ali, Mirja Sultan, Azizul Haque Chowdhury and Aminul Haque Chowdhury were dumped at the site.

"I can still remember the day well when I went to the grave site riding a bicycle in the morning of December 30, 1971. I could identify my father's body by seeing the ring on his finger," said Asaf-ud-Doula Khan Gulzar, son of Nawrose-ud-Doula

Khan who developed a transistor amplifier and supplied it to freedom fighters for use during the war.

Towfiqur Rahman Lavlu, nephew of martyred businessman Altaf Hossain, said he identified his uncle's body after seeing his sweater.

Thirteen of the bodies were tied up with a rope.

Family members of the martyrs and local people gathered at the gravesite on November 25 marking their abduction on this day in 1971.

Talking to The Daily Star on the occasion, they demanded protection of the site and trial of war criminals.

BSF picks up 3 from Chuadanga border

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushiya

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) picked up three Bangladeshi nationals from Thakurpur border point in Damurhuda upazila in Chuadanga on Sunday afternoon.

The locals are Matiur Rahman, 26, son of Gulzar, Dinar Ali, 30, son of Abul Hossain of Pirpurkullah and Asadul Haq, 32, son of Jalal Uddin of Thakurpur in Damurhuda upazila.

Sources in 35 Battalion of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) quoting families of the victim said a BSF team from Rangiarpot camp in Chapra police station in Nadia district of West Bengal picked up the three from the border point at about 4:30 pm.

Contacted by BDR, the Indian

forces claimed that they rounded up the Bangladeshis on charge of illegal intrusion into Indian territory.

BDR sent a protest note to BSF and called for a flag meeting at night.

BSF, however, did not reply to the letter till filing of this report in the evening.

Sources said, the three Bangladeshis are now at Chapra police station.

Earlier, on December 6, BSF abducted a Bangladeshi farmer from Jibonnagar border point of the district.

A Correspondent in Benapole reports: A Bangladeshi cattle trader was shot and injured by BSF along Daulatpur border in Benapole early Sunday.

The injured was identified as Arif Hossain, 28, son of Khorshed Ali of Daulatpur frontier village.

BDR sources said, BSF opened fire when Arif along with other cattle traders were returning to Bangladesh from India at about 5:00am.

Seriously injured Arif was admitted to a local hospital.

In Dinajpur, one person was wounded in BSF firing on Saturday morning at Uchhna border point under Hakimpur upzila.

The injured was identified as Moyem Uddin, 28, son of Kayem Uddin of village Uchhna. He was admitted to Panchbi Upazila Health Complex in a critical condition, reports our correspondent.

BDR sources in Joypurhat 3 Battalion said, BSF at Mothurapur camp in India fired at least 5 rounds of bullets when Moyem reached the border area.

Joypurhat BDR sent a strong protest note to BSF over the incident.



The chartered chopper that flew in Rajarbagh Sharif pir Syed Dillur Rahman from Dhaka to Mahiganj in Rangpur yesterday. Photo shows followers of pir guard the chopper at Mahiganj.

Chopper chartered for pir Milad held amid tight security

RAFIQUE SARKER, Rangpur

A chartered helicopter flew in Rajarbagh Sharif pir Syed Dillur Rahman from the capital to Mahiganj in Rangpur district where he conducted a milad mahfil amid strong guard by law enforcers yesterday afternoon.

To keep away curious eyes, followers of the pir and a large number of police personnel cordoned the field where he disembarked from the helicopter of South Asian Airways at about 1:45pm, eyewitnesses said.

General people were also barred from entering the milad mahfil conducted by the pir at the business centre of Kousar Zaman Babla, a member of district BNP convening committee.

After the milad, Dillur Rahman had an 'exclusive' meeting with his followers, sources said.

Babla, owner of a jute mill in Khulna, has a jute depot in Mahiganj.

"Police force went there upon request of the host," said Rangpur Kotwali Police Station Officer-in-Charge

Abdur Rashid.

When contacted, the Dillur's aide Muhammad Mahub Alam Arif, also editor of fortnightly 'Al-Baiyinaat', said, "The pir went there to conduct a milad mahfil. As he was sick, he took the helicopter journey."

"I usually begin jute purchase in December every year with a milad mahfil. As I am a follower of Rajarbagh Sharif pir, he conducted the mahfil," Babla said.

The pir started for Dhaka at about 4:50pm by the same helicopter.

Robbers kill one, injure 4 in Ctg

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Robbers killed a man and injured four others in Chittagong yesterday while police rounded up five robbers in Gaibandha and Rangpur on Sunday and the day before.

A UNB report says, a gang shot dead a house owner and injured four inmates during a robbery at Chowdhury Para in Boalkhali upazila of Chittagong early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Siddik Ahmed, 52, an officer of mechanical section of local WASA.

Police said, a gang of 20/25 swooped on the house of Siddik and started looting goods at about 2:30am.

As the inmates resisted them, the criminals opened fire killing Siddik on the spot.

The robbers also attacked four inmates with sharp weapons leaving them seriously injured. They then decamped with the booties worth about Tk5 lakh, house inmates said.

Our Correspondent in Gaibandha reports: Police in joint drives on Sunday night and the day before arrested five highway robbers from Sunderganj upazila in Gaibandha and Pirganj upazila in Rangpur.

The drives followed a robbery on Naogaon-Mohadevpur road a few days ago.

Mohadevpur upazila police and Sunderganj upazila police conducted the joint drives.

On Saturday, police first arrested Abul Kashem Kabiraj, 62, from Gaibandha railway station and as per his confession launched a separate drive and nabbed Taleb, 26, of village Emampur under Pirganj upazila from Bamondanga railway station.

The forces later in another drive arrested Hasan Ali, 35, of village Mirzapur, Lalu Shahajahan, 42, and Abu Solaiman, 33, of village Rahamatpur under Pirganj upazila.



With dense fog for the last few days ahead of the start of the season, prospect for a good yield of mustard this year seems bleak.

Mustard prospects look bleak

Dense fog, cold weather worry farmers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Farmers in Tangail are worried that dense fog and severe cold may dampen the prospect of mustard yield this season.

They said, favourable weather condition like sunlight at the beginning of cultivation season is a must for a better yield.

Sources in the District Agriculture Extension Department (AED) said, they

have set a target of mustard cultivation on 38,453 hectares of land in 12 upazilas of the district expecting production of 38,453 tonnes this year.

Amjad Hossain of Darun village in Sadar upazila said, he cultivated mustard on 40 decimals of land this year, but dense fog, severe cold and inadequate sunlight are hampering the cultivation.

"Various diseases have attacked the plants while the grain cannot grow prop-

erly in the gloomy weather," he added.

Nikhil Chandra Pal, deputy director, Tangail Agriculture Extension Department (AED), said he along with other officials have already visited different areas where mustard is being cultivated.

"We expect the weather will be favourable within the next few days and the mustard growers in the district will achieve a good yield this season," he added.

Vessels get stuck in mid-river, vehicles at ferry points

A CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Dense fog for the last few days continued to hamper plying of passenger launches, steamers and ferries on the Meghna at Chandpur.

Fifteen launches and steamers remained stranded in mid-river due to fog yesterday. The river vessels reached Chandpur launch ghat 7 to 8 hours behind schedule, officials said.

Steamer Ostrich coming from Khulna got stuck due to dense fog in Harinaghat area in Chandpur for quite a some time.

Besides, passenger and goods laden vehicles on Chittagong and Khulna routes suffered much, as the ferry movement on Chandpur-Shariatpur route remained suspended at night.

Vehicles plying on Chandpur-Comilla route had to use headlights at dawn, witnesses said.

An official of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) at Chandpur said, at least 15 launches reached Chandpur ghat behind schedule due to dense fog on the Meghna. Though the launches were scheduled to reach

Chandpur ferry ghat at midnight and dawn they were about 7 to 8 hours late.

Chandpur steamer ghat manager said, steamer Ostrich that left Khulna had to stop running at Harinaghat at Chandpur at 2:00 am. It reached Chandpur steamer ghat at 11:00 am yesterday and left for Dhaka at 11:30 am.

Harinaghat ferry manager said, ferry movement at night remained suspended for at least 3 to 4 days due to dense fog. At midnight, the passengers undergo untold sufferings as the vehicles carrying them get stranded on both the ferry points.



IN OBSERVANCE OF MARTYRED INTELLECTUALS' DAY: People from different professions join a human chain in front of Pabna DC's office to press the demand for naming Pabna Medical College after martyred intellectual Dr Fazole Rabbi, middle, Shishu Academy of Panchagarh brings out a mourning procession in the town marking the day, right, Sector Commanders Forum forms a human chain at Thakurgaon intersection demanding trial of the war criminals.