

12 sued for looting, arson in Joypurhat during '71 war

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

Twelve people have been sued on charges of looting and setting fire to the houses of freedom fighters at Rasulpur and Mahmudpur villages in Khetlal upazila of Joypurhat district during Liberation War in 1971.

Haji Akhter Fakir of Shakharranj village under the upazila filed a petition case with Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court, Joypurhat, on January 20.

The accused are Md Abdur Rahim, Abu Sayed Mondol of Mamudpur village, Shukur, Abdul Majid Mondol, Kummat Mondol, Sheta Mohshin, Hashem Miah, Shamsuddin Mondol, Mafshin Mondol,

Jaber Shardar, Asim Sardar, Robia Prodhan of Rasulpur village under Khetlal upazila.

The judicial magistrate took the case into cognisance and asked the officer-in-charge (OC) of Khetlal Police Station to record it as first information report (FIR) and take necessary legal steps.

Following the court order, Khetlal Police Station recorded the case on Monday as first information report (FIR).

In the case statement, the complainant stated that the accused, led by Md Abdur Rahim, looted valuables from the houses of the freedom fighters of the two villages and later set the houses afire.

'Robber' held with arms in Gopalganj

A CORRESPONDENT, *Gopalganj*

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested an alleged robber and recovered arms from his possession at Noldanga village under Muksudpur upazila in Gopalganj early yesterday.

Arrestee Siraj Khalasi, 45, is son of late Nalu Khalasi of Moharajpur village under the upazila.

Police also recovered from his possession a US-made pistol, magazine and three bullets.

Rab-8 Madaripur office, in a press release said, there are several cases of robbery, mugging, killing and theft pending with different police stations against Siraj Khalasi.

A team led by Lt Commander Noor Hasan of Rab Madaripur camp arrested him as he was taking preparation to commit a robbery, Rab said. The arrestee also tried to escape from Rab custody by jumping into the Kumar River.

UNB from Savar adds: Armed robbers looted cash, gold ornaments and other valuables from a house at Dogarmora here on Sunday night.

Locals said a gang of 5/6 robbers entered the house of Monir Hossain in guise of guests at about 10:30pm.

Later, they held the family members hostage at gunpoint and looted Tk 25,000, thirty tolas of gold ornaments and other valuables worth about Tk 5 lakh.

A case has been filed with Savar police station.

Criminals stab 2 traders to death in Cox's Bazar, Narsingdi

Three arrested

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Two traders were stabbed to death by criminals in Cox's Bazar and Narsingdi yesterday. Police arrested three people in connection with the murders.

A correspondent from Cox's Bazar reports: Criminals yesterday morning stabbed to death a trader at Jahazpura Bazaar under Baharchhara union of Teknaf upazila.

Police recovered the body of Hossain Ahmed, 45, at noon from the spot and sent it to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Hossain Ahmed is son of Ashraf Zaman of Shamlapur village in the upazila. Police arrested Muslim Miah and Md Abdullah on charges of their involvement in the killing.

Police and witnesses said, Muslim Miah went to Hossain Ahmed's restaurant at Jahazpura Bazaar at 9:00 am yesterday for breakfast. When Ahmed asked Muslim

Miah to clear the arrears, he became enraged and started beating the restaurant owner. Later, Md Abdullah joined Muslim and both stabbed Ahmed indiscriminately killing him on the spot.

People present at the bazaar caught the two and gave them a good beating.

Teknaf police came to the spot at 12:00 noon and arrested the two criminals.

In Narsingdi, meat trader Afzal Hossain, 45, was stabbed to death in Sultanpur village under Palash upazila yesterday morning, reports a correspondent.

Palash police station OC Badrul Alam said, a gang of criminals called Afzal out of home in the morning, took him to a nearby field and stabbed him repeatedly. He died on the spot. The criminals then fled the scene.

A case was filed with Palash police station.

Police later arrested Zakir Hossain on suspicion of his involvement in the killing.



PHOTO: STAR

A safe haven for migratory birds only a couple of years ago, Nilsagor in Nilphamari district now sees fewer birds as the picturesque place has lost attraction to the beautiful creatures due mainly to replacing of large indigenous trees by foreign varieties.

Birds change their stopover with changes in feature

Fewer migratory birds now visit Nilsagor 'sanctuary'

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, *Nilphamari*

Nilsagor, a large man-made water body in Nilphamari district, remained abuzz with chirping and fluttering of thousands of migratory birds in winter only a few years ago.

But the picturesque place surrounded by green lands including marshes gradually sees fewer and fewer number of birds as century-old indigenous trees have been replaced by foreign varieties.

Besides, construction of a rest house adjacent to the water body and arrival of vehicles on metalled roads around makes the place a crowded and noisy one.

All these started a decade ago as authorities declared it a 'bird sanctuary' but ignored ornithologists' warnings while implementing the plan.

Nilsagor is situated at Dhobadanga village in Grogram union under Nilphamari Sadar upazila, 16 kilometres north-west of the district town.

"I do not know when Binna Dighi (earlier name of Nilsagor) was dug. But I saw thousands of migratory birds of 8-10 species here during the

winter even a few years ago," said octogenarian Hachhen Ali of Dhobadanga village while talking to this correspondent on January 9.

"There were numerous banyan, black berry, kadam, mango, jackfruit, fig and other trees, all over hundred years old. Winter birds ate fruits of those trees and took shelter on them at night. Now there are fewer birds as there is no big trees," he said.

The birds started arriving in early November and stayed till March-April, locals said.

Following visit by the then state minister for land Rashed Mosharef in December 1999, a project was taken to develop Nilsagor into a birds sanctuary and about one crore taka was granted for this purpose.

"The project led to ecological problems. Century-old indigenous trees were felled down to make metalled roads around Nilsagor. A rest house was also built at its bank, making the place always crowded," said Alamgir Sarkar, a former chairman of Grogram union.

Ignoring warning by ornithologists, the authorities planted saplings of foreign trees including 'shishu',

'mahogany' and 'eucalyptus'. These trees neither grow big and bushy branches to provide shelter for birds nor produce food for them.

There were also newspaper reports saying that large-scale felling of old big trees would damage the safe haven for birds and cause harm to the ecology in the area.

Rafiqul Islam, who was the chairman of Grogram union parishad when the trees were felled at the directive of the district administration during 2001-2002, however, claimed then that only dead trees were felled.

"A good number of migratory birds in Nilsagor prefer fruit bearing trees including jackfruit, black berry, kadam and fig. Migratory birds even do not sit or rest on trees that are not familiar to them," said Prof Abdul Latif, head of the zoology department of Nilphamari Government College.

Prof Latif, also a prominent bird watcher in the region, regularly visits Nilsagor to watch migratory birds and their way of life.

Alarming decline in the number of migratory birds speaks in favour of

his observation.

During a recent visit to Nilsagor, this correspondent saw that there would be hardly around a thousand birds floating on and flying over the large water body.

"Migratory birds do not take shelter on the new trees at night. Some birds fly to Nilsagor in the morning, probably from trees in neighbouring villages," said a night guard cum gardener keeping anonymity.

"Realising the disastrous effect of felling trees, I arranged planting fruit trees a couple of years ago but those are still small," said Momtazul Islam, chairman of Grogram union parishad.

Nirmal Chakrobarty, the caretaker of Nilsagor sanctuary, said shrinking of marshy lands around Nilsagor is a cause for decrease in the number of migratory birds. He suggested arranging food for birds in floated pots on the water body to attract migratory birds.

A recent survey also revealed that use of insecticide in croplands around has reduced insects that are eaten by birds. This may be another cause for the decrease of birds.



PHOTO: STAR

Defying a restriction by the authorities, Rajshahi University unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League brings out a procession on the campus yesterday on the eve of their today's council.

BCL again defies ban ahead of today's council at RU

A RU CORRESPONDENT

Ahead of its today's scheduled council, Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) Rajshahi University (RU) unit again took out a procession on the campus yesterday defying authorities' restrictions.

The BCL men along with outsiders brought out the procession at around 11:30am and paraded the campus on the occasion of their council. They later held a rally in front of the central library.

Leaders and activists of the left-leaning student organisations criticised the university authorities for not taking any action against the BCL men for violating restrictions on rallies and processions on the cam-

pus. On Sunday, the BCL staged procession on the campus in presence of the law enforcers.

They also blamed the law enforcers for not arresting the BCL activists responsible for killing Rajshahi Polytechnic Institute Chhatra Moitree leader Rezanul Islam Sunny on January 7.

The university authorities imposed restrictions on the activities of the student bodies on May 12, 2009 for an indefinite period following a clash between Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) on the campus on March 13, 2009. Shibir leader Shariuzzaman Noman was killed in the clash.

Outgoing RU BCL president Ibrahimi Hossain Moon said they are holding council on the campus, taking permission of the authorities.

AL presidium member Obaidul Quader will attend the conference as chief guest while Rajshahi City Mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, AL Organising Secretary Abu Sayeed Al Mahmud Swapan, Khaled Mahmud Chowdhury MP as special guests.

RU BCL sources said nine candidates have submitted their CVs for the post of president while 24 candidates for the post of secretary. Candidates for other executive posts have also submitted their CVs, sources added.

BSF allegedly beat dead Bangladeshi

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Police yesterday recovered body of a Bangladeshi cattle trader who was allegedly beaten to death by Indian Border Security Force (BSF) from the Ichhamati River.

Victim Humayun Kabir, 26, was son of Abdul Wahab of village Nangla in Debhata upazila.

Family sources said, Humayun left for India to buy cattle four days ago and since then he had been missing.

Locals found the body floating in the river at Sreepur in Debhata. Being informed, police rushed to the spot and recovered the body with marks of injuries on his person.

Victim's father Abdul Wahab claimed that BSF men caught his son and tortured him to death and later threw the body into the river.

Another report says, BSF of Goborda camp in Swarnnagar in India fired three shots at the BDR of Baikari camp in Sadar upazila at about 4:30 am yesterday.

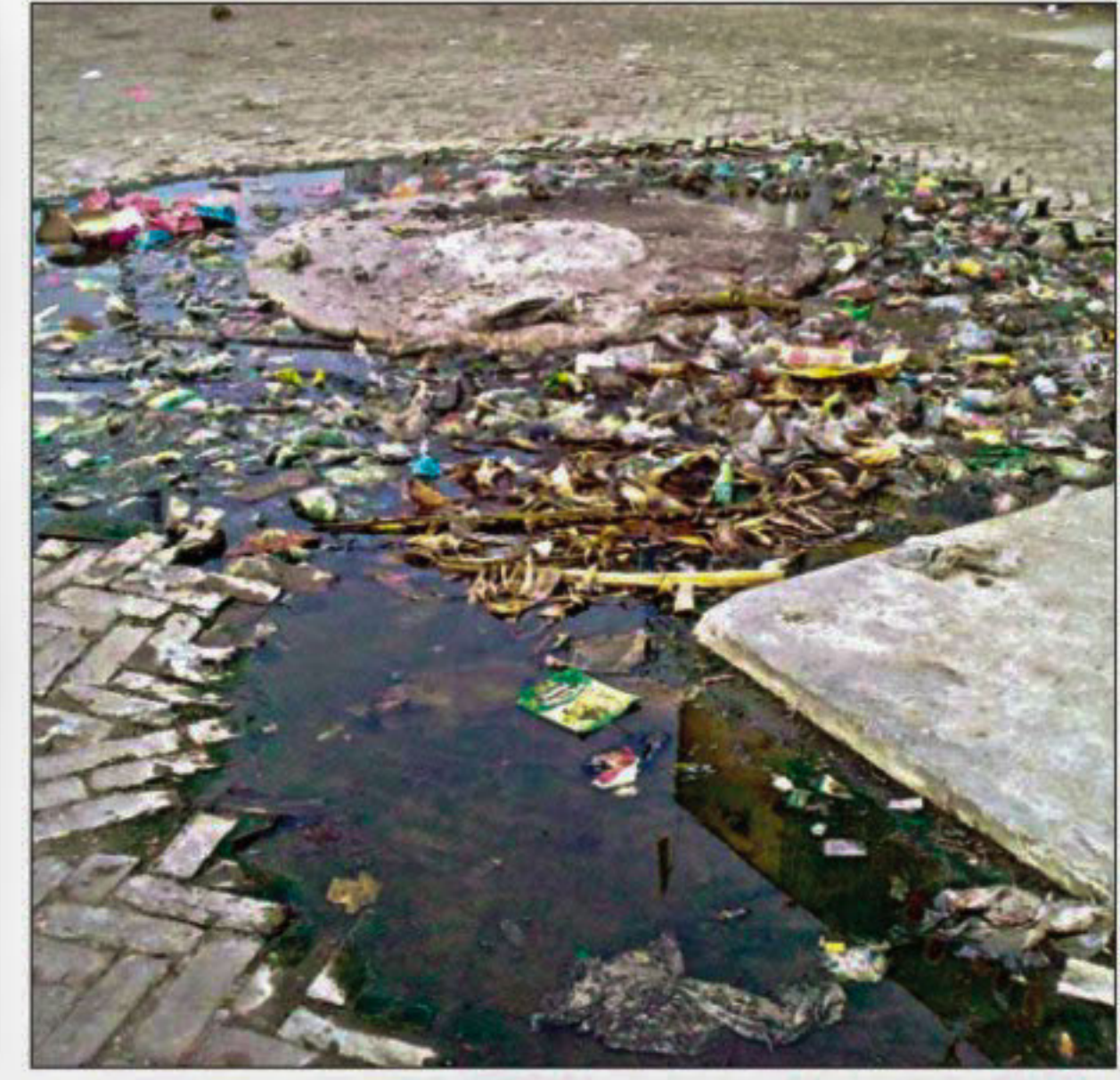
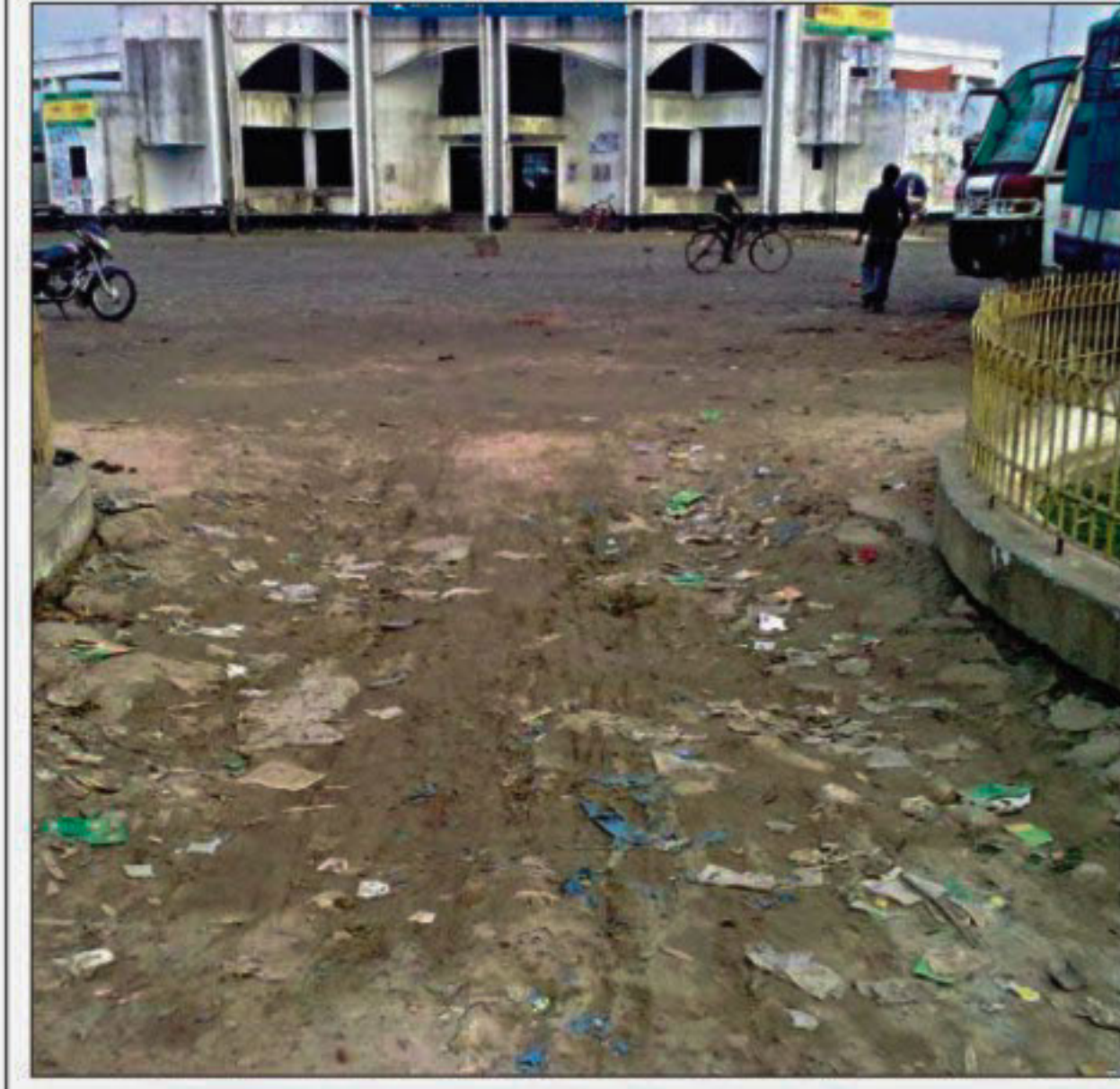
Meanwhile, a company level flag meeting between Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and BSF was held at Madra border in Kalara upazila yesterday.

Officials of both the border guards agreed to resolve a number of disputes through discussion and necessary measures.

Subedar Abdul Quddus of Madra company under 41 Rifles Battalion Satkhira and inspector Dev Ram of Daharkanda BSF company in India led their respective teams.

Trans-border issues including terrorism, smuggling, drug peddling, women trafficking and other issues were discussed at the meeting.

PATUAKHALI BUS TERMINAL AWFULLY DIRTY



This is Patuakhali bus terminal. Although it gives a gorgeous look, its nooks and corners are covered with dirt and filth. Photos, from below left, show the entrance to the terminal and overflowing septic tank.

PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA