

Alarming rise in murders, other crimes in Khulna

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

Alarming rise in the number of murders and other serious crimes, mostly involving extortion and drug trafficking, has become a matter of concern for people in Khulna city and district.

Thirteen people were murdered in Khulna city and other places in the district in last two months while the number of murder victims in the district during the 12 months from January to December last year was 14.

Incidents of robbery, rape, theft and even teasing have also risen in Khulna city recently.

Chhatra Dal activist Raihamul Islam Rabbi was killed on January 4, mason Shahidul Islam was killed by slitting throat on January 11, housewife Hosne Ara was strangled in her Khulna house on January 30, fish vendor Omar Ali of Bagmara under Rupsha upazila was killed the same day, schoolgirl Munira was killed after gang rape at Labonchora and day labourer Yasin Rahman Shuvo was beaten to death at Mujgunni in Khulna city on February 2.

Feroza Begum of Tootpara in Khulna city was beaten to death by her husband on February 16, Abu Musa of Baniakhmar of Khulna city was gunned down by his son and fish exporter Azad Gazi of Phultala upazila of Khulna district was killed in a bomb attack on February 26, Haider Ali and his brother-in-law Tarikul Islam Piku of Banargati in Khulna

city were stabbed to death on February 28, Jalil Sheikh and his younger brother Kabir Sheikh of Adampur village under Terokheda upazila were hacked to death at the same time on March 2.

Journalist Khalilur Sumon of local Dainik Probaho, Joint Secretary of Khulna city Chhatra Dal Abdullah-el-Kafi, leader of Khulna CSD Godown Workers Union Md Babul Khan and Chhatra Shibir activist and student of Daulatpur Government BL College Kamrul Islam were seriously injured in separate attacks by rivals since February 23.

The injured are not yet out of danger, said sources at Khulna Medical College Hospital.

Asked about the increasing number of murders and other crimes, Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP) Commissioner Helaluddin Badri said, "We cannot stop any targeted murder, especially the ones committed due to family feud and interest over financial matters. My forces are working hard to arrest the accused."

Khulna Police Superintendent Tanvir Haider Chowdhury said, "Law and order in the district has not yet gone beyond control. Police is actively working to control crimes. I have no information from any source that outlaws who had gone into hiding during the emergency rule have reappeared anywhere in Khulna district."

Official information, however,

shows that law and order situation in the city and district has worsened during last two months in comparison with crimes, particularly murders committed last year.

According to official records of Special Branch of KMP and Khulna district police, 14 murders, including nine in Khulna city and five others elsewhere in the district, were committed from January to December last year.

Murder victims in Khulna city in last year are -- Jubo League activist Parvez Howlader and college girl Shuparna Saha (on January 4), vegetable vendor Shajahan Fakir (February 21), rickshaw puller Jahangir Alam (May 19), drug addict Shujon Karmakar (July 9), KCC ward councillor Shahid Iqbal Bithar (July 11), cold storage employee Noor Islam (August 2), van driver Helal (September 6), ice cream factory worker Ujjal Sheikh (September 19).

Besides, grocer Golum Rasul Mridha of Phultala was murdered on February 21, farmer Joynal Sheikh of Terokheda upazila was killed on May 22, businessman Jahangir Fakir was shot dead in Phultala upazila on June 17, Sharfuddin Biswas and his younger brother Rabiul Biswas of Terokheda upazila were shot dead at the same time on September 22.

Failure to arrest real accused and properly investigate the cases by police is seen by many as the main cause for behind the deterioration of law and order situation in the area.



Local Awami League men vandalise the house of Rafiqul Islam Taj, an activist of Kazipur upazila Chhatra League yesterday, following dispute over sharing of money from extortion and tender manipulation.

AL men attack BCL leaders' houses for share of 'booty'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

At least 10 people including two Chhatra League (BCL) leaders were injured as Awami League (AL) men attacked their houses at Alampur-Biara village in Kazipur upazila on Monday night following an altercation over share of money from extortion and tender manipulation.

The attackers also damaged and ransacked four houses.

The injured have been admitted to Kazipur upazila health complex and local clinics in the area.

Police and locals said a bitter dispute over share of the money from extortion and tender manipulation was prevailing between Kazipur upazila Awami

League's organising secretary Khalilur Rahman Sirajee and upazila Chhatra League organising secretary Mostafizur Rahman Fizar for the last few days.

At one stage of altercation on Monday, Sirajee's group numbering around 15 to 20 equipped with lethal weapons attacked four houses owned by Mostafizur Rahman Fizar, Upazila Chhatra League President Mohammad Hitlar, Chhatra League activists Rafiqul Islam Taj and Jahid Hassan at around 11:00 at night.

Witnesses said, the attackers assaulted them and their family members.

They also damaged and ransacked furniture of the houses and took away cash, gold ornaments and other valu-

ables worth Tk 3 lakh, the victims alleged.

On informed, police rushed to the spot but by that time the attackers had left the scene.

Contacted, Monoj Kumar Roy, OC of Kazipur police station admitted the incident of attack saying additional police had been deployed there to avert further violence. The matter is being investigated, he added.

Talked over cell phone, Kazipur upazila AL secretary Jahangir Alam said he was aware of the allegation that a section of AL men engaged in extortion and tender manipulation.

He said his party would look into the charges and take steps against the culprits.



Students of Kathaltali Government Primary School in Dighinala upazila of Khagrachhari district receiving treatment at the upazila health complex as they felt severe stomach ache after taking breakfast at the residential school yesterday.

60 children fall sick due to food poisoning

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

At least 60 students of Kathaltali Residential School in Dighinala upazila of the district fell sick due to food poisoning yesterday.

Of them, 32 were admitted to Dighinala Upazila Health Complex, administration sources said.

School Superintendent Ajit Boron Chakma admitted the incident saying, after having breakfast the students started vomiting and also complained of abdominal pain.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mohammad Moniruzzaman Mia said the students fell sick after they had their breakfast at around 9:00am.

It might be an incident of food poisoning, he also added.

Meanwhile, the parents of the students demanded punishment of the food supplier. Food Supplier Chayon Chakma also admitted the incident denying the possibility of supplying contaminated food.

The food might become poisonous, he also said.

Upazila Health Complex on duty doctor Miton Chakma said the students are under special care and will be all right by the night.

The students might have been suffering from abdominal pain due to food poisoning, he added.

Khagrachhari Hill District Council Chairman Ruhity Karbary said an investigation committee will be formed to find out the reason of the incident and action will be taken if the food supplier was found guilty.

Office of former Netrakona MP attacked

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Armed criminals attacked the business office of three times elected ex-MP in Netrakona-1 constituency Jalaluddin Talukder on Monday night.

They also damaged and looted the residence of his managers.

Police and locals said, at about 9:30 pm a gang numbering 30 to 35 including Lalim, Shipon, Ashis, Lotus, Shiku, Ashad, Mamun, Saiful, Shimul and Jony of Durgapur attacked the business chamber of Jalaluddin Talukder with lethal weapons. The attackers vandalised the chamber and looted valuables.

Later at about 10:30 pm the gang also attacked the residence of Talukder's manager Anjan Sarker at Southpara in Durgapur poura area. They ransacked the rooms and also looted valuables.

An hour later the criminals attacked the house of Jalal's another manager Rintu Sarker at Bagichapara of Durgapur poura area and looted valuables.

A general dairy was filed accusing 35 people.

Extortionists loot shop

A CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Agang claiming themselves as Chhatra League workers has attacked and ransacked the sweetmeat shop of a councillor of Matlab South municipality in Chandpur as the owner refused to pay the toll.

Police arrested Jalal Uddin, 18, of Basihpur area in the municipality on charges of his involvement in the attack.

Councillor Kishore Kumar Ghosh of Ward no 3 said, he was supervising the work at his shop "Laxmi Narayan Mistanna Bhandar" at Ghosh Patti in the municipal area last Wednesday night. Jalal and some other youths claiming themselves as BCL workers entered the shop, beat up manager Saiful, 26, and threw boiled oil on an employee Kalu, 28. Kishore said the gang looted Tk 2.80 lakh from the cash box and ransacked the shop.

Farmers worried as urea dealers continue agitation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

The farmers of Nilphamari, a major boro producing district, are in great worry as fertiliser dealers in the district have continued their agitation programme for the second day yesterday, postponing fertiliser drawing from the buffer stock at Parbotipur in Dinajpur district.

The district unit of Bangladesh Fertiliser Association (BFA) called the agitation programme for an indefinite period from Monday afternoon to realise their five-point demand.

The demand includes setting up a buffer stock in Nilphamari, stopping supply of low quality fertiliser to the dealers of the district from the buffer stock, allowing them to take delivery of 40% of urea of locally made Jamuna variety from the factory gate under district's quota, giving them 60% urea of granula variety from buffer stock and end to harassment while drawing fertiliser from buffer stock.

Abdul Wahed Sarker, president of the district unit of Bangladesh Fertiliser Association (BFA), alleged

that recently the authority concerned has imported low quality urea (nitrogenated fertiliser) from China.

"The buffer stock authorities compel us to receive that fertiliser although farmers are reluctant to use it. As a result we have to incur losses. Besides, drawing fertiliser from the buffer stock at Parbotipur causes us wastage of time as we have to wait for a long time there for the purpose," he said.

As the buffer stock at Parbotipur is in Dinajpur district, fertiliser dealers from the district get priority whenever they come to take delivery and this causes delay in delivery to the dealers from Nilphamari, said the dealers.

BFA sources in Nilphamari said earlier they had made a complaint to the concern authority of Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) with an ultimatum to meet their five-point demand by March 7.

As time expired without solution to their problem, all the 73 fertiliser dealers of the district stopped withdrawing fertiliser from the buffer stock for indefinite period from Monday afternoon.

"We will continue our agitation programme until the demand is met," said Abdul Wahed Sarker.

When the farmers are busy planting boro seedlings in the ongoing boro season, the protest programme taken by the fertiliser dealers may cause setback in boro cultivation, said local farmers.

Many anxious farmers were seen crowding at the fertiliser shops of the dealers and retailers in different markets of the district yesterday as they are eager to purchase fertiliser in advance, fearing crisis in near future.

The district unit president of BFA, however, said there is nothing to be worried as they have a good stock of urea of 3500 tonnes in hands. In the present boro season, the government has allocated 59 thousand tonnes of urea. The quota for the month of February, which is 7.5 thousand tonnes, is yet to be withdrawn fully.

Nilphamari Deputy Commissioner (DC) Farhad Alam has talked to the BCIC authorities in this connection and proper steps has been taken to solve the problem very soon, he said.

DEATH OF COLLEGE GIRL IN CHUADANGA Father terms it a planned murder, sues eight

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Father of killed college girl Nasima has filed a case with Chuadanga Judicial Magistrate's Court against eight people on charge of killing her daughter.

Body of Nasima, 19, a first year student of Birshrestha Hamidur Rahman College in Khalishpur in Jhenidah, was recovered from a field at Nishikundu village in Jibon Nagar upazila of Chuadanga on Thursday. The girl stayed at her aunt's house at Nishikundufor study.

In the case filed with Chuadanga Judicial Magistrate's Court on Monday, the victim's father Abul Kashem, a poor farmer of village Marufdah of Jibon Nagar upazila, alleged that one Hasan, son of Nazrul Islam Khan of Nishikundu, was the main culprit behind Nasima's killing.

Other accused are Hasan's parents Nazrul Islam and Renu Begum, younger brother Milon Khan, uncle Nasir Uddin and his son Sharif Uddin, daughter Kajoli, and friend Bulbul.



Nasima

Aminul Islam ordered police to submit the post mortem report and arrest the accused.

The complainant also prayed for changing IO (investigation officer) of the case for his alleged partiality.

According to the case, Nasima and Hasan loved each other. Recently, Nasima's father Kashem planned to arrange marriage of his daughter. Nasima informed Hasan of the matter and asked him to marry her. But Hasan's family did not agree to it and asked Hasan to 'remove the girl from his way'.

Afterwards Hasan told Nasima to come to his house. When Nasima was return-

ing to her aunt's house from college on Wednesday, two friends of Hasan (still not identified) stopped Nasima at Hasdah Bazar at about 3:30pm. Saying that Hasan was waiting for her, they took Nasima to an unknown place and since then the girl remained missing.

On Thursday afternoon, locals found Nasima's body at Nishikundu field and a police team led by Sub-Inspector Sazzad Hossain from Sahapur police camp recovered the body. Police also seized an empty bottle of poison, a college bag, a veil, cash Tk 17 and a 'suicide note' saying that the girl was going to commit suicide and no one was responsible for it.

Police sent the body to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital and returned it to Nasima's family after post mortem.

In the case, it was alleged that several marks of hitting were found on Nasima's body but police did not record it.

"It was a planned murder. Despite repeated request, neither police nor doctors of the Sadar hospital provided us any information about the post mortem," Sirajul Islam, maternal uncle of the victim, said.



Different human rights and voluntary organisations observe token hunger strike on the premises of Bagerhat Press Club yesterday demanding early completion of the trial of the case filed by Nasima, who became a victim of acid attack at Komorpur in the district in 2002.

Hunger strike for quick trial of acid throwers

A CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Human rights and NGO activists yesterday staged a hunger strike in front of the local press club demanding quick trial of the culprits who threw acid on housewife Nasima Begum at Komorpur village under Bagerhat Sadar upazila in 2002.

They also demanded an end to harassment of the victim allegedly by the accused. Nasima came under acid attack on the night of August 21, 2002. She filed a case with Bagerhat Sadar Police Station on August 23 the same year, accusing Chhoto Sheikh, Musa Sheikh and Hafizur Rahman of the village of hurling acid at her. After investigation, police pressed charges against the three.

The case is now under trial at Bagerhat District and Sessions Judge's Court while the accused are on bail.

The victim, Nasima, was also present at the venue. She claimed the accused are putting too much pressure on her to withdraw the case.

"I along with my husband and children have been staying at my parents' house at Rajapur village under Bagerhat Sadar upazila for two months, fearing further attack by the accused, she said.

The HR and NGO activists called off their programme after Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Nazim Khan assured them of taking steps to end harassment of Nasima.