



Locals confine for several hours a team of Rapid Action Battalion to a house at Nathuar Danga village in Shibpur union under Satkhira Sadar upazila yesterday morning protesting the law enforcers' alleged attempt to implicate local Awami League leader and businessman Shafiqul Islam of the village in a false arms case. (Story on Page 16)

PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

Lethal weapons seized from BL College halls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Police raided five dormitories of Government BL University College at Daulatpur in Khulna city and recovered lethal weapons on Friday night.

Led by Additional Police Commissioner Soheli Ferdous, six platoons of police searched different rooms of Kazi Nazrul Islam Hall, Zoha Hall, Titumir Hall, Mohsin Hall and Subodh Chandra Hall from 8:00pm to 11:30pm.

During the raids, the law

enforcers recovered nine machetes, eight hammers, two Burmese axes, 20 iron rods, 30 sticks and 2,000 marbles. None was arrested during the raid.

Assistant Police Commissioner Anisur Rahman said most of the lethal weapons were found on the roof of the mosque of Kazi Nazrul Islam Hall.

Police said they conducted the raids on information of a looming clash between two rival factions of Bangladesh Chhatra League on the college campus.

Alleged bid to grab land protested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

Bangladesh National Federation of the Deaf formed a human chain in front of Patuakhali press club yesterday protesting alleged attempt to grab land of a hearing impaired expatriate.

They also organised a press conference at the press club where Syeda Rashida Begum, stepmother of the victim Khabir Uddin read out a written statement.

"Khabir Uddin received citizenship of France after marrying another hearing impaired person there. They have two daughters. Khabir's mother passed away earlier," goes the written statement, adding that Rashida had financially helped Khabir to go abroad.

"Khabir several times sent money to his father Eusuf Howlader. With that money Eusuf bought a plot of land in his own name on Sadar Road in Patuakhali town where he built a shop and a house."

Later Khabir and his stepmother Rashida jointly bought half portion (0.01875 acres) of that land from Eusuf for Tk 6.50 lakh with kabla deed No 1550 (dated April 22 2009), goes the statement.

Recently Khabir returned home and tried to take possession of his land but his stepbrothers (sons of a late wife of Eusuf) declined to hand over the land and attacked Khabir on May 6 last, it adds.

The next day, one of Khabir's stepbrothers filed a harassment case with Patuakhali Sadar police station against Khabir and eight other deaf people, it says.

Khabir and his stepmother have demanded legal protection from the local administration to save them from Khabir's stepbrothers.

Erosion by rain-fed rivers makes 500 families homeless

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Erosion by the rivers flowing through Kurigram and Netrakona districts has taken a serious turn as water levels of the rivers marked a sharp rise due to torrential rain in the last two days and onrush

of water from hills across the borders.

Over 500 families in four upazilas of Kurigram and one upazila of Netrakona have lost their homesteads to the rivers and taken shelter in nearby villages.

In Netrakona, The River

Someshwari devoured at least 100 dwellings at Dakumara, Kamarkhali and Ranikong villages under Durgapur upazila, leaving over 600 people homeless. The erosion victims have taken shelter at nearby vil-

lages, according to our corre-

spondent.

Local people said they dumped sandbags, bamboos and logs along the riverbank to check erosion, but their attempt went in vain due to strong current in the river.

Our Kurigram correspondent reported that erosion by

the rivers Brahmaputra, Dharla, Teesta and Sonabhari has rendered about 300 families at 15 villages in four upazilas homeless in the last two days.

About 22 feet of an embankment has been eroded by the Brahmaputra at Astamir union under Chilmari upazila. Water gushing out through the eroded portion of the embankment has damaged Irri-boro crops on around 40 acres of land in the area.

Daikhawa camp of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) in Sadar upazila is also under threat of erosion.

According to sources, 20 families of Natakandi Natun Char in Astamir union and 45 families of Raniganj union under Chilmari upazila, 15 families of Madoner Char, and 185 families of Kodalkathi, Shazai and Natungram villages under Rajshahi upazila have lost their houses to the Brahmaputra and Sonabhari rivers.

Teesta and Dharla erosion have made ten families in Biddananda union under Rajahat upazila and 17 families in Mogalbashia union under Sadar upazila homeless during the period.

Sub-divisional Engineer of the Water Development Board (WDB) Md Jafar Ali said we have already informed the higher authorities to take immediate necessary steps to protect Daikhawa BDR camp from onslaught of the River Brahmaputra.

PHOTO: STAR



Fed by heavy downpour and onrush of water from the upstream hills, Someshwari River continues to devour areas at Dhakumara village in Durgapur upazila under Netrakona district.

Robbers loot six houses, 5 caught

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Robbers looted at least six houses while villagers and law enforcers caught five in separate incidents on Friday.

Robbers looted valuables worth Tk 10 lakh from four houses injuring two house owners at Govindapur village of Sreepur upazila in Magura on Friday, reports our correspondent.

Police and locals said a gang of robbers numbering 8/10 stormed into the houses of Palash Biswas, Pratima Biswas, Haripada Biswas and Nirapada Biswas one after another exploding bombs, leaving house owners Nirapada and Palash injured critically.

Later, the gang beat up the house members indiscriminately and looted cash money, gold ornaments and other valuables.

Hearing the hue and cry, local people rushed to the spot and after a hot chase caught two of the robbers identified as Yusuf, 22, of Madaripur district and Raqibul, 25, of Shariatpur district.

In Savar, armed robbers looted valuables from the house of a UK expatriate and his neighbour in Laltek Amer area early Friday, reports UNB.

Locals said a gang numbering 10/12 swooped on the house of UK expatriate Dr A K M Momin late at night and took the house members hostage at gunpoint.

Later, they looted 12 tolas of gold jewellery, Tk 1.15 lakh and other valuables.

brother of Momin and their brother-in-law Tarek were injured as the robbers stabbed them indiscriminately for trying to resist them.

The gang also beat up severely neighbour Khokon Majumdar as he informed police over mobile phone.

The robbers then entered the house of Khokon and took away valuables including cash Tk 65,000 and four tolas of gold ornaments.

In Bagerhat, at least six villagers were injured in an attack by robbers at Attaki village in Fakirhat upazila on Friday.

Police quoting family sources said a gang of masked robbers numbering 7/8 stormed into the house of Abul Kashem and took house members hostage at gunpoint early in the morning.

Hearing the hue and cry, villagers rushed in and chased the robbers. At one stage the fleeing gang stabbed the villagers and opened fire on them leaving six people injured, two with bullet.

The villagers, however, caught one of the fleeing robbers, Salam Mollah, 26, after a hot chase.

Our Staff Correspondent in Rajshahi reports: Rapid Action Battalion and the detective branch of police in a joint drive arrested two robbers with 13 bombs, a pipe gun and a machete from Seroil Colony area in the city on Friday night.

The arrestees are Shafiqul Islam, 30, son of Babuzan of Siroil Mollamil and Atikur Rahman, 28, son of Mujibur Rahman of Siroil Colony area under Boalia police station.

Stolen diesel seized in Bhola, 8 arrested

A CORRESPONDENT, *Bhola*

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) launched a special drive at Pangasha launch ghat in Bhola early yesterday and seized one lakh litres of stolen diesel and 12 oil tankers and arrested eight members of an oil pilferage gang.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Rab-8 launched the drive in Beduria area at around 4:30am and arrested the gang members while they were loading an oil tanker.

They then raided Pangasha launch ghat and seized 12 oil lorries, one jeep and about one lakh litres of diesel fuel.

The arrestees are Md Salahuddin, 26, and Md Sujon Nazir, 25 of Uttar Paschim Char Noabad, Md Hannan, 45, of Char Noabad, Omar Faruque alias Naid, 20, of Char Bapta, Md Billal Hossain, 24, of Char Sreepali, Md Siraj, 20, of Char Beduria, Md Anwar Hossain, 20, of Paschim Char Khali, and Md Bacchu, 21 of Tinkunibir under Char Fashion upazila.

During interrogation, the criminals told Rab members that they loaded one lakh litres of stolen diesel in a tanker owned by Kabir alias 'Tel' Kabir of Bhola onto a Khulna-bound ship from Chittagong on a river in Bhola.

They gave Tk 19 lakh bribe to the officers and employees of the ship on the night of May 21 and brought the oil to Pangasha launch ghat.



PHOTO: STAR

A bomb expert team of the army conducts explosion of an abandoned mortar shell, possibly used during the 1971 Liberation War, on the dried up portion of Karatoa River in Panchagarh district yesterday. Found while digging a pond at Loipara village in Panchagarh Sadar upazila on April 25, the 11-inch-long shell had inscription suggesting that it was made in India.

TALES OF DOWRY, TORTURE VICTIMS

Set on fire at her in-laws' house, Shapla dies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Rajshahi*

A woman who received severe burn injuries at the house of her in-laws in the city on Friday night died at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) yesterday morning.

Police arrested the husband and two in-laws following filing of a case in this connection.

Police said housewife Shapla Begum, 38, a mother of two lived in Kolabagan area in Rajshahi city. Shapla was shifted to DMCH minutes after she was rushed to Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital (RMCH) at around 9:30pm.

Sub-inspector Motiar Rahman of Boalia police station in the city said, somebody poured kerosene on her and set on fire while she was sleeping at her in-law's house.

Shapla's mother Rokeya Begum yesterday filed a case accusing three people Shapla's husband Shah Nurul Islam, mother-in-law Shamsun Nahar and brother-in-law Sohel Islam in this connection.

Police later arrested Nurul Islam, an employee of Rajshahi General Post Office from RMCH. Nurul said, he was admitted to RMCH as he fell sick witnessing the charred face of his wife. He also told newsmen that Shapla committed suicide.

Rokeya in her case said Shapla was married to Nurul 20 years ago. She said Shapla often complained that her husband and in-laws used to torture her over trivial issues. She alleged that Shapla was murdered in a planned way.

Our Correspondent in Kushtia reports: A housewife was beaten to death allegedly by her husband for dowry at Bholadanga village in

Sadar upazila in Meherpur on Tuesday.

After the incident her in-laws allegedly tried to portray the killing as a case of 'suicide' by pouring poison in the victim's mouth.

According to police, one Salam, son of Abdus Samad of Bholadanga married victim Champa, daughter of Sarfuddin of Mirpur in Kushtia seven months ago.

After the marriage, Salam demanded Tk 1 lakh dowry from Champa's parents. Salam often tortured Champa as her father declined to give the money.

On Tuesday morning, the couple locked in an altercation and at one stage, Salam hit Champa with a rod causing her death on the spot.

Meanwhile, a court in Satkhira on Thursday sentenced a man to death on charge of killing his wife for dowry.

The court also acquitted six other accused in the case.

Convict Abul Kashem Khan, 45, is son of Zaharul Islam Khan of village Subhasuni in Tala upazila.

According to the prosecution story, convict Abul Kashem Khan married victim Samsunnar Khatun, 30, daughter of Zamir Uddin of village Tersi in Tala upazila on September 9 in 1991.

During the marriage, he took Tk 20,000 as dowry. Later he demanded Tk 20,000 more. As the victim's father failed to pay the amount, Kashem often tortured his wife mercilessly, court sources said.

On September 6 in 2004 night, the convict chopped his wife with sharp weapon leaving her seriously injured. Shamsunnahar later succumbed to injuries at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital.

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