



Fishermen engaged in netting hilsa in Ramnabad River in Galachipa upazila of Patuakhali district during the ongoing peak season. Inset, the wholesale fish market at Mohipur sees scanty supply of the popular fish as trawlers are bringing very small catches in the peak season this year.

PHOTO: STAR

Hilsa catches scanty in peak season

Lowest in 25 years, say fishermen

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Fishermen are frustrated as only small catches of popular fish hilsa are being netted in the coastal areas in the peak season. With the small amounts caught per trip in the deep sea, fishermen fail to realise even the cost that includes fuel, food and others. Consequently, families of fishermen are passing hard days. May to October is considered as the period for hilsa catching but fishermen from Patuakhali and Barguna districts, who went to the deep sea with trawlers, are not getting

hilsa fish as per their expectation this year. "We went to the deep sea with our fishing trawler with 15 fishermen and came back to the shore after 14 days. We were able to catch only four maunds of hilsa, which is not even sufficient to meet our expenditure. We got only Tk 40,000 by selling hilsa fish but we have to spend about Tk one lakh in a trip," said Rafiq Mia, 40, a fisherman of Char Moutaz in Galachipa upazila. "We are engaged in catching hilsa for about 25

years but we did not see such crisis of hilsa in this season. We are passing very hard days as poor amount of hilsa is being netted. May be the fish has changed its places in the sea due to food crisis and rise of sea bed with silt," Mofizur Rahman of Char Biswas said. Sohag and Enamul, fishermen of Char Anda, said they are now unable to repay the loan taken from mohajans (money-lenders) as they are not getting hilsa fish as per their expectation in the running season. "We had expected that large sized hilsa would be netted in this season. My experience says that huge

hilsa is netted if the sea is very rough. In last year in the same time at least 200 maunds of hilsa came to my warehouse daily but this year we are getting only 25 to 30 maunds a day," Anwar Hossain, a wholesaler of hilsa fish of Moudovi area under Galachipa upazila, said. "Fishermen are coming back with nearly empty trawlers as very small catches are being netted this season. Usually fishermen pass very busy time with hilsa catching during this time of the year," said Belayet Gazi, president of fishing trawler owners association in Moudovi.

Arrest of five 'JMB men' in Joypurhat raises questions

KONGKON KARMAKER, back from Panchbibi, Joypurhat

The five youths from capital Dhaka, who were arrested at Tajpur village of Panchbibi upazila in Joypurhat district on July 13 on 'suspicion' of involvement with banned Islamist militant organisation Jama'atul Mujahideen of Bangladesh (JMB), will be produced before a chief judicial magistrate's court today. Claiming the five youths as innocent, their family sources said they had gone to Tajpur village on July 12 to visit the area.

They stayed at the house of JMB activist Sirajul Islam, also a charge-sheeted accused, as his younger brothers Azizul and Emdadul Islam were known to them but Sirajul's involvement with JMB was not known to them, they said.

The five arrestees are Golam Mahub Shahriar Rial, 25, a freelance photographer and son of Abdur Rob of Narinda in Sutrapur, Tanveer Hossain Adnan, 28, a student and son of Afzal Hossain of the same area, Al Mamun Swapan, 27, a printing and packaging worker in the same area, Lutfur Rahman Apel, 29, owner of a CD/DVD shop and son of Salahuddin of Gendaria, and Md Riazuddin Riaz, 27, son of Mohiuzzuddin of Uchar Poddar Lane in the capital.

Panchbibi police station Officer-in-Charge Biman Karmaker said a police team led by him raided the house of charge-sheeted JMB man Sirajul Islam and arrested the five youths when they were holding a meeting inside the



PHOTO: STAR

Before any probe or verification, police hung papers inscribed with 'Active member of JMB' on the upper garments of five youths arrested 'on suspicion' at Tajpur village in Panchbibi upazila of Joypurhat district on July 13. The photo was taken at Panchbibi police station.

house on July 13.

Villagers, on the other hand, said police arrested the five youths from outside the house when they were going to Koria, a bordering village of the upazila, by an electric three-wheeler.

After taking the five arrestees to Panchbibi police station, police supplied to media the arrestees' photos marked with 'Active JMB members' although there was no probe or verification in this regard.

As the hapless youths repeatedly said that they do not have any link with banned Islamist outfit JMB or any militant organisations, police became angry and raised sticks to intimidate them into remaining silent, said a wit-

nessed at the police station seeking anonymity.

Police claimed that they recovered a laptop, CD, a camera and 10 bottles of phensidyl during the raid.

"The CD that police seized was brought by me from Iraq," said Sirajul Islam's younger brother Emdadul Islam, who returned home from Iraq on July 5.

"True JMB members never deny their involvement but these five youths were weeping and repeatedly denying their link with any militant organisation," seeking their anonymity, said a few policemen who have conducted quite a few operations to nab JMB members since the countrywide serial blasts on August 17 in 2005.

On Tuesday, Joypurhat acting Superintendent of Police Mashrur Rahman told the local reporters that although police arrested five people from a charge-sheeted JMB man's residence at Tajpur village of Panchbibi upazila their involvement with any militant organisation is yet to be certain.

When contacted, SI Mominul Islam, investigation officer (IO) of the case filed against the five arrested youths, said they have started gathering information from the area where the arrestees reside.

Everything will be cleared after receiving the enquiry report from Dhaka, said Panchbibi OC Biman Karmaker.

Mufti Hannan remanded in church bombing case

A CORRESPONDENT, Gopalganj

A Gopalganj court yesterday granted a three-day fresh remand for banned Harkatul Jihad al-Islami (Huji) chief Mufti Hannan in Baniar Char church bombing case.

Justice Mollah Saiful Islam of Senior Judicial Magistrate Court issued the remand order after CID Inspector, also investigating officer of the case, Akhtaruzzaman produced Mufti Hannan including five others before it seeking a 10-day remand.

Five other accused in the case are Maolana Obadur Rahman, Shipon, Kamruzzaman, Ahad and Amir Khan.

The court also set August 8 for the hearing of the case as witnesses were not present yesterday.

On June 3, 2001, ten people were killed and 50 others injured in a bomb attack on Baniar Char Church while the weekly prayer was going on.

Housewife stabbed to death

UNB, Barisal

A housewife was stabbed to death allegedly by her husband at Halta village in Bakerganj upazila early Saturday.

The victim was identified as Aklima Begum, 26, mother of four children.

Police quoting local people said Sohrab Hossain stabbed his wife Aklima indiscriminately late at night following a family feud, leaving her dead on the spot.

On information, police recovered the body and sent it to Barisal SBMCH morgue for autopsy.

Police arrested Sohrab. A case was filed.



PHOTO: STAR

Left without any repair for long, this potholed road at Jahaz Company Moar in Rangpur town sees waterlogging even after a moderate rainfall, thanks to the indifference of authorities.

Rangpur town roads in sorry state for 3 years

RAFIQUE SARKER, Rangpur

Traffic movement in the town has become extremely difficult due to deplorable road condition for the last three years.

About 25000 dwellers of Rangpur town are suffering badly as the municipality authorities are not taking any measure to repair at least 30 kilometre damaged roads in different areas.

The most badly damaged roads are: Two km from Guptapara Lions School point to Shapla point, about 3km from Zahaj Company point to Kamalkatchhna point, about 3 km from fire service & civil defence office point to Shalbon Mistripara point, about 2 km from Mulatol point to Pal Para point, about 4 km from Rangpur stadium to Kukrul point, about 5 km from Jummapara point to Amashu Kukrul point, about 4 km from Dhaka bus terminal to Rangpur central bus terminal, and about one km from Dhap RDRS point to Rangpur radio station point via Radhabollov.

With rains adding to the situation, plying of vehicles on these roads has now become almost impossible.

"We often move about two kilometer more to go to Rangpur municipality market to avoid half kilometre damaged road at Shapla point

during rainy season," said college teacher Nurul Hoque Bosunia of Guptapara.

The rickshaw pullers would not take passengers through these roads in the town because of their vulnerable condition.

"Taking advantage of these damaged roads, the rickshaw pullers charge double. Moreover, it's time consuming as they take a longer drive," said Shamim Ara Akhter, a housewife and resident of Senpara.

Contacted, Rangpur municipality mayor Abdur Rouf Manik said they did not have fund to repair the linkroads in different localities in the town.

He, however, added that the government and several donors recently sanctioned about Tk 25 crore for this year to repair the damaged roads.

We could not start repair of roads due to rainfall from early May, he said.

A ward commissioner of Rangpur municipality, however, disclosed that these roads could not be repaired due to a discord between the mayor and the ward commissioners over awarding work to the contractors.

He said the mayor wanted partial repair of about 20 km road while most commissioners stuck to their demand for full-fledged renovation. The mayor admitted it but expressed the hope to repair the roads as soon as possible.

7 including 5 teachers hurt as BCL factions clash

BM College expels 2 for life, suspends 3

A CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Seven people including five teachers were injured as BCL factions clashed over arrangement of a picnic yesterday at Barisal Government Brojo Mohon (BM) College.

The college authorities expelled five students and police detained two others in connection with the incident.

Witnesses said, third year students of social welfare department of the college arranged a picnic.

Mozammel Alam Rana, a BCL cadre of the department belonging to Moin Tushar group and Al Amin, a BCL cadre belonging to Rafik Serniabat group locked in altercation over finalising the picnic committee on Saturday.

As a sequel to the incident, associates of Rana attacked and chased Al Amin on the campus at about 12.00 noon yesterday and Al Amin took shelter in the teachers' room.

The Rana group entered the room ignoring request of the teachers and attacked Al Amin injuring him severely. They also damaged the furniture, window panes and door and ransacked papers and documents in the room.

During the incident, social welfare department chairman Bande Ali Mia, and teachers Ashish Kumar

Roy, Abdur Sabur Howlader, Jahangir Alam, and Ila Rani Saha, and student Sajib were injured while trying to save Al Amin.

Police rushed to the campus, detained injured Al Amin and attacker Mizan and deployed special force. Injured Sajib was admitted to Barisal SBMCH.

Protesting assault on teachers, general students of the college later brought out rally on the campus.

Prof. Dr. Nani Gopal Das,

principal of the college, said the college academic council in an emergency meeting yesterday decided to expel Al Amin and Rana for life and suspend Siddikul Hassan Miah, Bikash Indu Sardar of social welfare and Mahmudul Hasan of botany departments.

College teachers will wear black badges today to protest assault on them while social welfare department will file a case in this connection, the principal

said.

Sub-Inspector Kamalash Chandra Haldar, acting officer-in-charge of Barisal Kotwali police station, said no case was lodged in this connection till yesterday evening. The detained two students would be produced in the court, he added.

Rafik Serniabat and Moin Tushar, two rival joint conveners of the college BCL, were not available for comment.

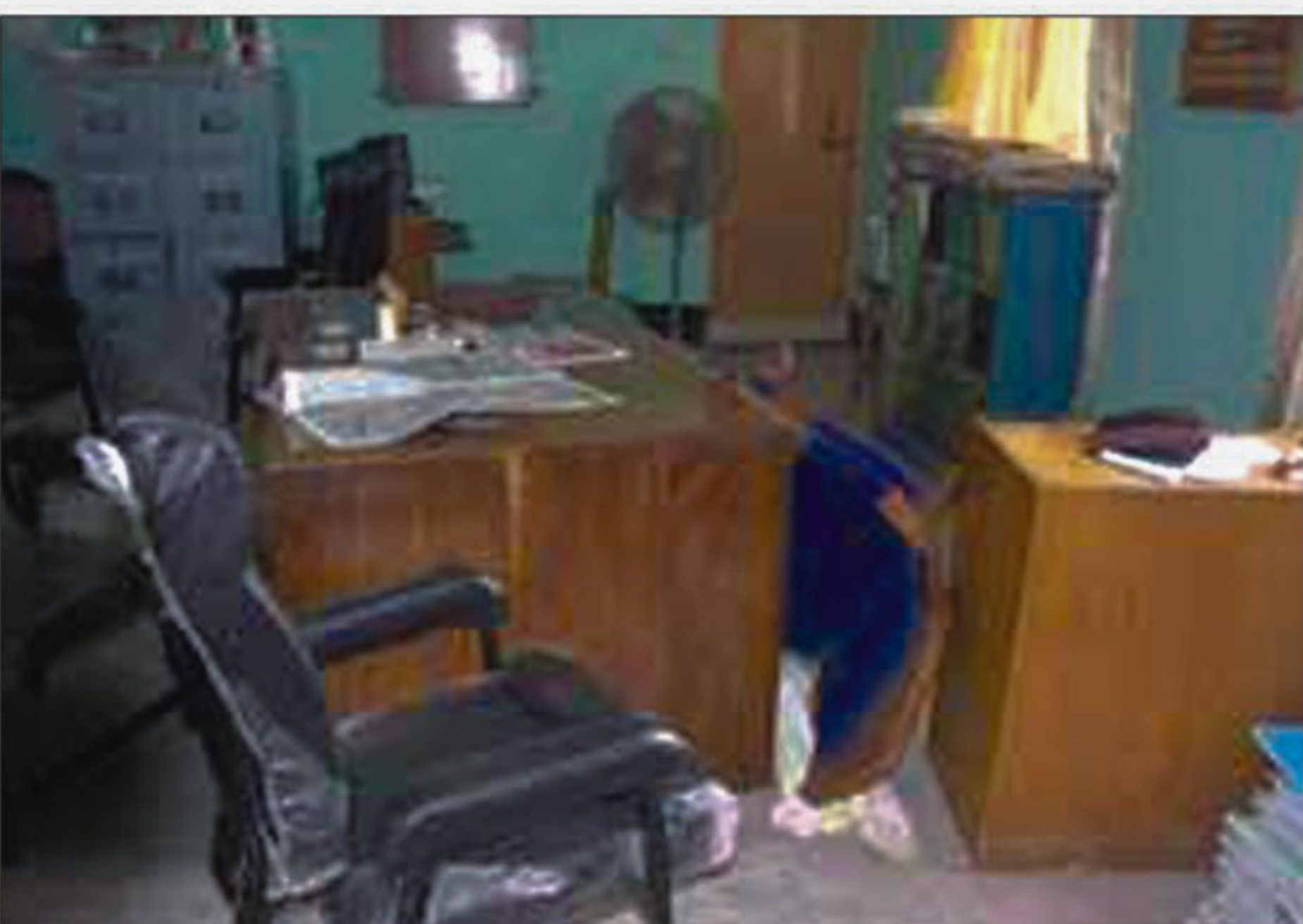


PHOTO: STAR

The teachers' room of the social welfare department of Government BM College in Barisal city lies ransacked after a group of Bangladesh Chhatra League activists ran amok during an intra-party clash at the institution yesterday.

8 sued on charges of war crimes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Eight people were yesterday sued on charges of killing two people and looting houses in Kalaroa upazila of the district during Liberation War in 1971.

As per directive of Satkhira Judicial Magistrate's Court, Kalaroa Police Station recorded the case after investigation, police sources said.

The complainant, Abdul Gafur, president of ward no 2 of Goalcharat Union Awam League, filed the case with the court on March 3 this year, accusing Anisur Rahman, son of Babar Ali Sardar of Baksa village under Kalaroa upazila, and seven other unnamed people of killing his two relatives on September 6, 1971.

The court took the petition case into cognisance and asked the officer-in-charge (OC) of Kalaroa Police Station to record the case after proper investigation.

In the case statement, Gafur stated that eight collaborators of Pakistani Occupation forces, led by Anisur Rahman, caught his two relatives-- Abdul Mazed and Abdul Gani--at Baksa village where they went to

attend the namaj-e-janaza of his father-in-law Kalam Gazi on September 2, 1971.

The accused took them to a camp in Kadamtala area of the upazila and killed them on September 6, the complainant alleged.

He further stated that the collaborators also looted several houses at Baksa village during the Liberation War.