

Jaintapur findings unique among megalithic culture

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

An archaeological excavation team of Jahangirnagar University on Sunday completed their eight-day research work, the first part of the programme at Jaintapur megalithic site in Sylhet, revealing valuable instances that would reflect on the lifestyle of the then people.

"As we have observed, this megalithic assemblage is outstanding and bears uniqueness among the Asian megalithic culture. In the context of India and Asian region, this culture comprises a great variety of styles," Syed Rezaul Kabir Rana, the deputy chief of the programme, said yesterday. "The megalithic instances with stylistic features found in Jainta, close to the Khasia Hills, are among the richest regional varieties. Here we find unique types of stands, dolmen and

menhir that are rare in other megalithic findings in Turkey, Ireland, Portugal, Germany, Netherlands and Denmark," he said.

"The date of Jaintapur megalithic cultural assemblage has not been determined. But we are hopeful that we can easily deduce the time and cultural practices mainly the burial and sacrificing attitude of the then people through study of artefacts yielded from the excavation. The megalithic cultures earlier recorded in India and other Asian sites go back to 1500BC to 100AD.

"The pictures of megalithic era bear testimony to the heritage and glory of Bangladesh. Our ongoing excavation yielded a profuse amount of different types of fragmentary pottery objects, organic objects, stratigraphic positions which are important sources for better understanding the whole site. The

pottery making process and their functional uses are also helpful to recast their burial practices. Their lifestyle, faiths and beliefs and the structural designs of the megalithic contains may be clearly spelt out by using scientific methods.

"This excavation team introduces a methodology styled 'Triangular Cross Matching Method' which is easier to detect, locate and analyse the accurate record of the excavated materials. To ascertain the accurate date of the megalithic assemblage of Jaintapur, we will testify the recorded organic objects using C-14 dating," said Rezaul.

Professor Dr Mostafizur Rahman Khan leads the research sponsored by the Ministry of Education.

The second part of the excavation will start two or three weeks later, officials said.



PHOTO: STAR

An archaeological team of Jahangirnagar University excavate a site at Jaintapur in Syhet district as part of their research work on instances of megalithic period.



PHOTO: STAR

The memorial at Gallamari in Khulna district is not likely to open for people to pay homage to the Liberation War martyrs on March 26 (Independence Day) this year as the construction has remained suspended in the halfway due to non-payment of dues to the contractor.

Khulna people to miss the memorial this year, too

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

People of Khulna will not be able to lay wreaths at the new memorial at Gallamari to pay their homage to Liberation War martyrs on March 26 (Independence Day) this year as the memorial has remained incomplete.

Only 20 percent of the construction work has remained undone since November last year allegedly due to negligence of persons concerned with the technical sub-committee.

The decision to construct the memorial was taken at a meeting held on May 22 in 2008 at the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives and Khulna Zila Parishad was directed to perform responsibilities required to construct the memorial on three acres of land at Gallamari.

Amirul Islam of LGED head office in Dhaka is the main designer of the memorial.

A fund of Tk 2 crore was allocated by the then caretaker government for construction of the memorial and tenders were invited on October 21 in 2008.

Khulna Zila Parishad sought approval of the ministry for appointing contractor. But approval was not given as engineers of Khulna Zila Parishad allegedly played foul game from behind the screen. Later in June of 2009, tenders were invited for the second time and Azad Elora Joint Venture got work order to construct the memorial as the lowest bidder at an estimated cost of Tk 2 crore 16 lakh and 27 thousand.

A five-member technical committee was formed with the deputy commissioner of Khulna as convenor to monitor implemen-

tation of the Gallamari Memorial Project.

Four other members of the technical committee are chief executive officer of Khulna Zila Parishad, executive engineer of Public Works Department, executive engineer of LGED and an assistant engineer of Khulna Zila Parishad.

Azad Elora Joint Venture got work order on November 15 in 2009 from Khulna Zila Parishad for implementation of the project. But the construction firm did not complete the remaining 20 percent works of the project as the technical committee refused to pay the remaining bill amounting to Tk 87 lakh and 24 thousand despite submission of the bill on November 30 last year.

Instead of approving the bill, the technical committee formed another three-member sub-committee with the executive engineer of LGED as convenor to investigate progress of works and submit a report on findings.

Members of the technical sub-committee are yet to submit report on findings although they visited the construction site twice for investigation about progress and quality of works, sources said.

When asked, proprietor of the construction firm Touhidul Islam Azad said that it would not be possible for him to do the remaining 20 percent work for giving the finishing touch of the memorial unless the last bill of Tk 87.24 lakh is fully paid.

On the other hand, the Chief Executive Officer of Khulna Zila Parishad AN Ahmad Ali said payment would be made after getting final clearance from Amirul Islam, the main designer of Gallamari memorial.

Another rice laden truck hijacked in Tangail

UNB, Naogaon

An armed gang hijacked a rice laden truck from Nagaon at Karotia in Tangail district on Monday night.

With this, at least eight rice trucks from the rice trading centres of Naogaon towards Dhaka were hijacked from the highway between Tangail and Joydevpur during the last two months, causing heavy loss and worries to the traders.

Following the incident, truckers yesterday threatened to stop carrying rice to Dhaka and adjoining districts if security is not ensured immediately.

Naogaon District Truck Owners' Association secre-

tary Salahuddin Khan Tipu said a truck containing 280 sacks of rice from M/s Satata Rice Agency left Monday evening for Rajanigandha Super Market of Kachukhet in Dhaka City.

Hijackers barricaded the truck with two minibuses at Karotia. They pulled the driver and helper out of the truck at gunpoint, blindfolded them and took them to unknown destination by a microbus. Another group of hijackers took away rice laden truck.

Driver Abdur Rahman and helper Firoz Mia were rescued blindfolded, hands and legs tied with rope from a secluded roadside place in Tangail town yesterday. But the rice and

truck could not be traced till evening.

Rice owner Dipak Kundu filed a case with Sadar model police station.

Lamenting for the loss, he said additional IGP AKM Shahidul Haq had called the rice dealers of Naogaon to a meeting in Dhaka last month. The police officials at the meeting held out categorical assurance of security to rice carriers on the highway.

The rice dealers pointed out that hijacking of all the rice trucks took place on the highway in between Tangail and Joydevpur. They suspected connivance of a section of the police with the hijackers.

Shop owner beats up RU student

RU CORRESPONDENT

A shop owner beat-up a student of Rajshahi University (RU) over a trifling matter on Sunday evening.

Sources said Khalid Mosarraf, owner of a shop in front of Madar Bux Hall, severely beat up Suvomoy Haque, a master's student of Social Work Department and also a resident of the hall, with iron rods and bamboo sticks.

Earlier Suvomoy locked in an altercation with the shop owner over the price a shaving razor.

At one stage, the shop owner along with a group of locals beat him up for the unreasonable price, sources said.

Hearing the screaming of Suvomoy, some students of the hall rescued him and rushed him to the university medical centre.

31 shops, 7 houses gutted in 3 districts

STAR NATIONAL DESK

At least 31 shops and seven houses were gutted in separate fire incidents in Munshiganj, Gopalganj and Gaibandha districts yesterday and the day before.

Fire service sources in Munshiganj said, at around 2:00am, a fire broke out at a tea stall of Paikpara Bazar under Tongibari upazila and soon engulfed another 20 adjacent shops, reports our correspondent.

The shop owners put the loss of wealth and goods at Tk 1.5 crore.

Meanwhile, at least 10 shops were gutted when a fire broke out at Gopinathpur Bazar under Sadar upazila of Gopalganj early yesterday, writes our correspondent.

Polash Sharif, a businessman of the area said, the fire originated from an electric short circuit at Dr Arun Mondal's pharmacy and

soon engulfed the nine adjacent shops.

The fire victims claimed that they lost goods and valuables worth Tk 30 lakh.

In Gaibandha, seven dwelling houses were burnt to ashes in a fire incident at village Purbo Gobindapur under Sadar upazila on Monday morning.

Fire fighters said that the fire originated from a cowshed of one Abdur Rahman of the village and soon engulfed seven adjacent dwelling houses.

Victims said that the fire damaged their properties worth Tk 9 lakh, reports our correspondent.

A devastating fire in Pabna destroyed a warehouse of waste cloth at Char Shadhupara under the municipality area on Monday.

The fire damaged goods worth Tk. 5 lakh, owners of the warehouse claimed.

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS

Muggers rob businessman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Muggers looted Tk 3.45 lakh from a trader at Kanaikhal in the town yesterday. Victim Abdul Kader Selim, 38, is owner of a brick kiln. Locals said Selim withdrew Tk 3.45 lakh from a branch of Islami Bank and then returning to his office by a rickshaw at about 12:15pm. As he reached Banga Masjid area, a microbus carrying a gang of 6-7 waylaid him identifying themselves as law enforcers and picked him up in the microbus. They also beat him during the incident. The gang then snatched away the money and his cell phone set and left him at a road point at Senbag in Puthia upazila of Rajshahi. Locals found him in an unconscious state and sent him to Sadar Hospital.

Abducted girl rescued, 2 held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Netrakona Sadar police rescued an abducted SSC examinee from Mukterpara area in the district town yesterday. The rescued school girl Himu Akther is a student of Jangalbari High School and daughter of Shahjahan Mia of village Muslim Para under Karimganj upazila in Kishorganj district. Police sources said when Himu was going to school by a rickshaw, Sujon, Mohor and Mishor of adjoining Shimultola village picked her up on a microbus. After getting information, Netrakona police barricaded the microbus at Mukterpara and rescued Himu. Police arrested Mohor and Mishor but Sujon managed to flee.



Hilsa fry seized in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Coastguards seized a huge quantity of hilsa fry known as 'jatka', from a passenger launch on Monday night. A five-member team of coastguards led by Captain Avir raided Dhaka bound MV Juboraj-2 launch from Muladi at Hizla point of the River Meghna and seized 31 barrels weighing around 50 maunds of 'jatka' worth over Tk 2 lakh. Later the coastguards distributed six maunds of 'jatka' among the poor people of Kaliganj ghat area under Mehendiganj upazila of Barisal and sold rest 44 maunds to the local fish traders through auction.

Villagers beat up policemen

UNB, Dinajpur

Patrol policemen suspected by villagers as a band of robbers, were beaten up yesterday leaving four of them wounded in remote Khojapur village of Birol upazila. Of the injured, sub-inspector Haider was admitted to Dinajpur Medical College and Hospital. Police said armed robbers tried in vain to loot the house of Suresh Muhuri in the same village on the previous night. So, a team was sent to keep watch at the village. At about 1:00 am, several hundred villagers attacked the policemen suspecting them as robbers and beat them up.

UPDF, JSS trade fire

UNB, Khagrachhari

United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) and rival Jana Sanghati Samiti (JSS), yesterday exchanged heavy gunfire at Narachhari in Dighinala upazila. Local sources said the exchange of gunfire allegedly for establishing supremacy in the area began at 7:45 am and continued till 9:15 am. A BGB patrol team rushed to spot hearing the incident. A BGB man was reportedly injured during the exchange of fire.

Nephew stabs uncle

UNB, Madaripur

A man was stabbed allegedly by his nephew at Molladi village in Rajoir upzila on Monday. Police said Siddiq Hawlader had longstanding enmity with his nephew Ashraf Hawlader. As a sequel to the enmity, Ashraf stabbed his uncle Siddiq Hawlader with the help of Shiria Begum and Abu Taleb, leaving him seriously injured. Siddiq was admitted to Sadar Hospital. Police arrested four people including Ashraf Hawlader, Shiria Begum and Abu Taleb in this connection.

Rajshahi-C'nawabganj buses on strike

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Bus communications between Rajshahi and Chapainawabganj came to a halt yesterday morning as transport owners went on an indefinite strike demanding stoppage of plying locally made motor vehicles nasimon and bhutbhuti on the highway.

Transport owners of Rajshahi and Chapainawabganj jointly enforced the strike.

In Chapainawabganj, Bus Owners Association and District Truck and Motor Workers Union called the strike, reports our correspondent.

Yahiya Biswas, general secretary of Chapainawabganj Bus Owners Association and Shahidul Islam Shahid, president of District Truck and Motor Workers union said, they went on strike following attack on

drivers and helpers of buses at Kadom Haji intersection and Godagari by Nasimon, Bhutbhuti drivers and owners.

The attackers also damaged two buses of Rajshahi and Chapainawabganj owners, they said.

According to our staff correspondent in Rajshahi, four people were killed when a passenger bus hit a nasimon on Chapainawabganj- Rajshahi highway at Fultala under Godagari upazila in Rajshahi on Monday.

After the accident, agitated people attacked and damaged the bus while police seized it. Another bus hit a bhutbhuti on Chapainawabganj- Gomostapur Road at Kadam Hajir intersection on the same day injuring the passengers of the bhutbhuti.

This triggered agitation and people ransacked the bus.



PHOTO: STAR

Buses did not come out of terminal in Chapainawabganj as the transport owners called an indefinite strike yesterday.