

## 4 'human traffickers' arrested

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Police arrested four alleged human traffickers in Dinajpur and Jessor districts on Monday and the day before.

Two people were held in Ghoraghat upazila of Dinajpur on Monday for allegedly trafficking a woman and her daughter, reports our correspondent.

The arrestees were identified as Sahida Akter Riya, 28, daughter of Md Abdul Mojid Sarker of Kasigari village under Ghoraghat upazila of Dinajpur and Sumi Akter Salma, 30, daughter of Samiul Islam of Phuldh village under Gobindaganj upazila of Gaibandha.

Ghoraghat upazila police said one Abdur Rashid, 48, of Kazipara village in Ghoraghat upazila filed a human trafficking case with the police station on March 4 this year accusing 13 including Sumi and Riya.

According to the case, the gang members lured Lal Banu, 35, wife of Abdur Rashid and his daughter Rupa, 13, with better job in Dhaka. Later, they trafficked them to India early this year. One month later, his wife and daughter contacted him over cell phone from Nadia district and Bombay and described their ordeal.

Hearing this, Rashid filed a case with Ghoraghat police station. Acting on a tip-off, a police team led by sub inspector Al Amin raided Azadmure area of Ghoraghat upazila on Monday midnight and arrested two people.

In Jessor, police with the help of locals on Sunday arrested two human traffickers from Jamalpur village in Baghpara upazila for trafficking a woman to India. The arrestees were identified as Parvin Akhtar, 35, wife of Ekram Molla and her brother-in-law Abu Bakkar, 30, son of Asor Ali of the village.

Police said a gang of five traffickers trafficked Rozina Akhtar, 20, of Kaligathi village in Chitalmari upazila of Bagerhat to Bombay, India on April 10, this year in the name of giving a good job there.

Later, Roka Molla, uncle of Rozina filed a case in this connection.

## Cattle trader abducted for ransom

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Two cattle traders were abducted by a pirate group from the Maithanga river area in the Sundarbans Monday evening.

The fishermen are now held hostage in the deep forest for a ransom of Tk. 2,00,000, police quoting the victims' relatives said.

Seven days have been set as the deadline for payment of the ransom failing which the fishermen will face 'dire consequences', police added quoting fishermen who managed to escape the pirates.

A group of cattle traders went to buy cattle on May 14. While they were returning with cattle by boats from Shamsenagar in India through the Sundarbans, the pirates swooped on them.

## Eight shops gutted in Habiganj

UNB, Habiganj

Eight shops were gutted in a fire, which broke out at Shujatpur Bazaar in Baniachong upazila early yesterday. Local sources said the fire started from the oven of a sweet shop, owned by Odir Modok, at 2am and it soon engulfed other adjoining shops.

The affected shop owners estimated the losses caused by the fire at about Tk 1.50 crore.

## FAST UNTO DEATH AT BHASANI UNIVERSITY CONTINUES

# Guardians form human chain, back students' demands

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Guardians of the students of Food Technology of Nutritional Science department at Maolana Bhasani University of Science and Technology (MBUST) here formed a human chain in the town yesterday demanding immediate steps to meet the demands of the agitating students.

They held the programme at Zila Sadar Road in the morning. Talking to newsmen they urged the authorities concerned including the Chancellor and education minister to take steps to remove the vice-chancellor (VC) of the university and confer BSc (Engineering) degree in place of BSc (Honours) degree on successful students of Food Technology of Nutritional Science department (FTNS).

Over 200 students of the department continued their fast unto death programme for the four days yesterday at Shaheed Smriti Pouro Udyan in the town to realise their two-point demand.

Twenty-one students fell sick in the last two days and



PHOTO: STAR

Guardians of the students of Food Technology of Nutritional Science (FTNS) department at Maolana Bhasani University of Science and Technology (MBUST) formed a human chain in Tangail town yesterday demanding immediate steps to meet the demands of the agitating students of the department.

they were admitted to the Tangail General Hospital. Of the students, condition of Rana, a third year student, is stated to be critical. He was under life support till filing of this report yesterday afternoon.

Dr Farhad Ali, medical officer of the four-member medical team deployed by the district health department there to treat the sick students, said the students were seriously falling sick because of long fasting,

dehydration, tension and lack of sleep for several nights.

Anwara Begum, mother of second year student Tahmina Akter, said: "The students are falling sick one after another, but the university authorities seem indifferent to it."

"The university administration, especially the VC, will be held responsible if the condition of any student goes beyond control," she added.

Abdur Rashid, father of third year student Akeruzzaman, said their innocent and meritorious children have been holding peaceful agitation for about one year to realise their logical demand.

But, the 'incompetent' university administration, turning a deaf ear to the issue, is continuing brutal torture and harassment on the students, he added.

The university authorities have filed three criminal

cases under Speedy Trial Act against over 200 students of the department bringing false allegations, expelled 45 of them and also declared all the students of the department 'unwanted' on the campus, he said.

Contacted, Prof Nurul Islam, VC of MBUST, told this correspondent yesterday that the FTNS students have little chance to get engineering degree as their syllabus does not equal the course of degree at all.

## BCL leader illegally occupies vacant railway quarter

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

A local leader of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) has illegally occupied a vacant quarter at Atiar railway colony in Saidpur town.

On Saturday afternoon, Dil Neoaz Khan, president of Saidpur upazila unit of BCL, accompanied by 14-15 party activists broke open the quarter and took its possession, eyewitnesses said, adding that they could not make any protest fearing reprisal by the pro-ruling partymen.

Earlier the railway estate

department sealed off the quarter as former railway security force staff Mokbul Hossen, who had lived for long in the quarter as an allottee, handed it over to the authorities after his retirement, colony residents said.

Visiting the area on Monday, this correspondent found that the family of BCL activist Jamil Hossain kept possession of the quarter comprising two spacious rooms, a kitchen and a veranda.

Admitting occupation of the railway quarter, Dil

Nawaz Khan said, "The quarter has been taken to rehabilitate my close friend Jamil's poor mother, who is also a widow. Their family will live in that house from now."

BCL leader Jamil could not be contacted despite repeated attempts by this correspondent.

When contacted, Ahsan Jabir, assistant executive engineer of the railway estate department in Saidpur, said, "I am aware of the illegal occupation of the railway quarter. Steps will be taken to free it."



PHOTO: STAR

Four shops beside a trench dug by contractors at DB Road in Gaibandha town collapsed during heavy rain yesterday. The contractors dug the hole to build a drain under a project of the municipal authorities to improve drainage at the district headquarters.

## All because of mindless act

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Four shops at DB Road in Gaibandha town collapsed during downpour yesterday as contractors dug a trench beside the shops to build a drain.

Fifteen other shops in the row remained on the verge of collapse since construction of the drain came to a halt two months ago.

Gaibandha municipality has taken up a Tk 2.59 crore project to build a 2.4-km-long drain from Gaibandha Zila Parishad to LGED building to improve drainage in the town under the Second Town Integrated Flood Protection Project.

Accordingly, contractors started digging a six feet deep trench along the road. But they stopped work as the authorities concerned did not remove 20 big trees and nine electric

poles from the drain site.

The work will resume after removal of the trees and electric poles from the site, said Salimuddin, assistant engineer of Gaibandha municipality.

The municipal authorities have already asked Gaibandha Zila Parishad and Power Development Board to remove the trees and electric poles from work site, but they are yet to take any initiative in this regard, he added.

The affected shop owners demanded compensation and threatened to sue the contractors and the municipal authorities if their demand was not met.

Contacted, Mayor Md Shamsul Alam said the shops collapsed due to downpour. "We will sit with the affected shop owners soon to settle the compensation issue," he said.

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## Husband, five others sued on charge of torture for dowry

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A woman sued her husband and five others of his family for torturing her for dowry at Goneshpara in Dinajpur town on Monday.

The victim, Zeba Masum, filed the case with Dinajpur Sadar Police Station the same day accusing her husband Md Badruddoha, father-in-law advocate Abul Kashem, also a local Jamaat leader, mother-in-law Bilkis Begum, brother-in-law Marful Islam and sisters-in-law Rahenur Begum and Musfika Begum, police said.

In the case statement, Zeba alleged that her husband and in-laws have been putting pressure on her to bring Tk 8 lakh in dowry from her parents for long.

Following an altercation with them over the issue on Monday morning, they

physically assaulted her, she stated in the statement.

Police said Zeba's father-in-law advocate Abdul Kashem is a leader of Jamaat-Islami Dinajpur district unit.

Hasan Shamim Iqbal, officer-in-charge of Dinajpur Sadar Police Station, said the woman filed a case against her husband and in-laws Monday afternoon, accusing them of torturing her for dowry.

The complainant came to the police station with injury marks in different parts of her body and took treatment at Dinajpur Medical College and Hospital under police protection, the OC added.

Later, police sent Zeba Masum to her parents' house in the town. None of the accused was arrested as of 6:00pm yesterday. Police said they will go for action after investigation.

## Mobile courts punish 3 youths for stalking

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Mobile courts in Satkhira and Netrakona on Monday sentenced three youths for stalking.

A mobile court in Satkhira fined two youths for stalking a schoolgirl at Daserati village in Assasuni upazila.

The stalkers were Babu, 20, son of Hanif Gazi and Khokon, 25, son of Jalal Uddin Gazi of Sriula village in the upazila.

Police quoting local sources said, the two youths used to tease Bishakha Sarkar, 15, daughter of Soshan Chandra Sarkar of the upazila.

On Monday morning, the stalkers waylaid Bishakha at Sriula Chowdhury Crossing and hurled abusive at her while she was going to school with her grandfather.

Being angered by the incident, local people caught them and handed them over to local police.

Later, upazila nirbahi officer Gias Uddin fined Khokon Tk 3,000, in default, to suffer seven days imprisonment and Babu Tk 2,000,

in default, to suffer five days imprisonment.

In Netrakona, a mobile court in Kendua upazila sentenced a youth to six months imprisonment for stalking a schoolgirl.

Convict Rubel Hasan Joy, 18, is son of Abdul Wadud of village Chilimpur under the upazila, reports our correspondent.

Police and local people said, Rubel used to stalk Rima Akther, 14, daughter of Riton Mia of village Digidair under the same upazila on her way to school. Rima is a student of class eight at Sabarunnisa Girls High School in Kendua upazila town.

On Monday morning, the stalkers waylaid Rima at school and assaulted Rima and dragged her to a nearby paddy field.

Hearing her screams, local people rushed to the spot and rescued Rima. But Rubel managed to flee the scene.

Later, Riton Mia, father of Rima, filed a complaint with Kendua police station and police led by OC Mosharaf Hossen barricaded the house of Rubel and arrested him.

## SNAPS AND SNIPPETS

### Hartal passes off in Hatiya

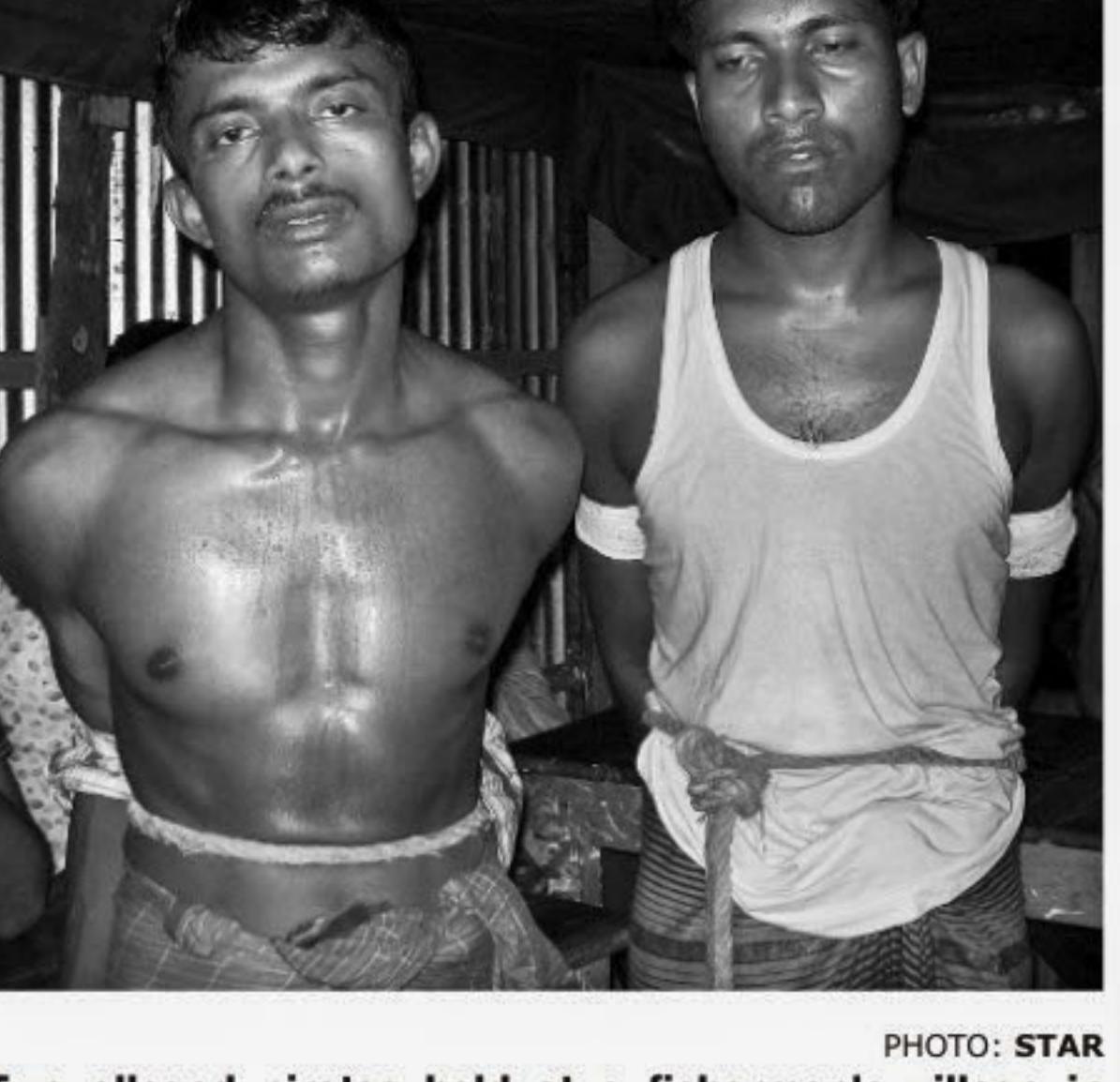
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

The first day of a 48-hour hartal called by a faction of ruling party in Hatiya upazila passed off yesterday. Supporters of former Awami League (AL) lawmaker of Noakhali-6 constituency Mohammad Ali enforced the hartal protesting an attack allegedly by the people of Fazlul Azim, an independent member of the constituency. Mohammad Ali is AL vice president of Noakhali district unit. Section 144 was imposed after the hartal call. Despite the restriction, the pro-hartal activists brought out processions at different places in Hatiya upazila headquarters, including Sthaniya MP pool, Saudia Bazar and Khaser Hat. All modes of transports but a few rickshaws were off the roads since morning. Most of the shops remained closed following the hartal. On Monday, at least 25 people were injured in a clash as supporters of Mohammad Ali allegedly vandalised the house of Fazlul Azim.

### UPDF office gutted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

The office of the United Peoples' Democratic Front (UPDF) and three shops were gutted in Mastarpura area under Dighinala upazila on Monday night. Locals said, the incident happened at about 11:00pm and property worth about Tk 3 lakh was gutted but the cause of the fire could not be known. Officer-in-charge of Dighinala police station Md Kader said, police are investigating the incident and added that it might be a case of arson by the Parbatya Chittagong Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) backed Pahari Chhatria Parishad (PCP) cadres to retaliate Sunday's incident.



Two alleged pirates held at a fishermen's village in Galachipa upazila of Patuakhali yesterday.

### 2 pirates held in Galachipa

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Two alleged pirates were held in Galachipa upazila when they were distributing leaflets at a fishermen's village at about 8:00 pm on Monday. Locals caught them with the leaflets from Badnali area and handed over to police. The two were identified as Anwar Khan, 30, and Nurul Haque, 32, both hailing from Charanda of Char Montaz union parishad under the upazila. Police sources said, Anwar and Nurul Haque were distributing leaflets having messages regarding toll collection from the fishermen of Badnali area. Ziaul Haque, OC of Galachipa police station said, they recovered four leaflets from the pirates. "We are interrogating them to find out more information regarding piracy," he said.

### Lightning kills 2 in Habiganj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Two people were killed as lightning struck them in Habiganj district yesterday. Four others injured in the incident have been admitted to hospitals. The deceased were identified as Ahad Ali, 14 and Sarwar Miah, 16. Ahad Ali was killed at his village Ikortali of Chunarrughat upazila while his brothers -- Shahin and Liton sustained injuries. In another incident yesterday afternoon, Sarwar Miah, 16, was killed by lightning while working at Amirkhani Haor near his village home Amirkhani in Baniachang upazila. Delwar and Sabuj sustained injuries and were admitted to the upazila health complex.