

KHAN JAHAN ALI SHRINE IN BAGERHAT

# Hungry crocs turn violent as khadems eat up their food

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

Crocodiles in the 600-year-old dighi (a lake-like tank) beside Khan Jahan Ali shrine in Shatgambuj union under Bagerhat Sadar upazila killed a visitor and injured two others in a span of three weeks.

The marsh crocodiles, once peaceful and tame, are now turning more and more violent towards the devotees coming to have a dip in the water body as the large creatures often remain hungry allegedly due to misappropriation of their food by a section of khadems (caretakers).

Amid panic of attack by the carnivorous reptiles, the number of devotees taking the 'holy bath' sees decline, said a caretaker.

Two crocodiles attacked Mariam Begum, 40, of Nonadanga village under Bagerhat Sadar upazila when she went to the dighi to have a bath in the morning on June 26, eyewitnesses said. The crocodiles ate away flesh from her legs, leaving her dead.

Two other devotees Aasia Begum and Rezaul Islam were seriously injured in attacks by crocodiles in the morning and evening of July 18. Both of them are now undergoing treatment at Khulna Medical College Hospital.

Perhaps the hungry crocodiles cannot resist the temptation when they get anyone within easy reach, said Moazzem Hossain, officer-in-charge of Bagerhat Model Police station.

"Although ferocious by nature, these crocodiles earlier did not show any hostility towards visitors as they got enough to eat. But now they are changing behaviour due to



PHOTO: STAR

Like this one, a few marsh crocodiles in the dighi (a lake-like tank) adjacent to Khan Jahan Ali shrine in Bagerhat district once behaved like tame creatures as they were well taken care of and fed sufficiently. However, they are now turning violent as a section of dishonest khadems (caretakers) sell off a large portion of the food brought by visiting devotees for the giant reptiles.

shortage of food," he said.

Visitors to the shrine bring over a hundred cocks and hens on an average daily to feed the four crocodiles in the 200-acre dighi but a section of dishonest khadems secretly sell out 70 to 80 percent of it, making the large reptiles often starve, a source linked to the shrine said.

Three of the crocodiles were brought from the Indian state of Madras on June 24 in 2005. They often turn violent towards visi-

tors. The other crocodile generally remains calm as it is old.

Asked about the matter, Humayun Fakir, leader of a group of khadems, said, "The three marsh crocodiles brought from India are aggressive by nature. They attack not only visitors but also khadems."

He submitted a petition 'on behalf of' khadems of the shrine to Bagerhat Deputy Commissioner (DC) Md Akram Hossain for shifting the three 'frightening' crocodiles.

An opponent group of khadems led by Shahadat Fakir submitted another petition to the DC, requesting him not to send the crocodiles elsewhere. The creatures are suffering from food crisis due to random misappropriation of foods brought by devotees, they alleged.

On July 14, the district administration at a meeting in presence of the representatives of the two rival groups decided that the crocodiles will remain at the dighi.

## Extortionists stab PP

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Extortionists stabbed a public prosecutor (PP) in the town yesterday as he refused to accede to their demand.

The victim, Special Public Prosecutor advocate Delwar Hossain, came under attack in front of the Women and Children Repression Prevention Court at around 12:30pm

A gang of five stabbed Delwar, also the president of Jubo League Dinajpur district unit, as he refused to bow to their demand for Tk10, 000, Akramul Amin, general secretary of Dinajpur Lawyers' Association, quoted Delwar as saying.

Hearing screams, other lawyers and locals rushed to the spot, chased the extortionists and caught one of the gang members named Russel Munshi while the rest managed to flee.

## GRENADATE ATTACK ON SYLHET AL MP'S HOUSE

# Charges pressed against Huji chief, five others

Names of seven accused dropped

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Six and a half years into the incident, the CID yesterday afternoon filed charge sheet in the case for grenade attack on the house of Sylhet district Mohila AL president Syeda Zebunnesa Haque, also lawmaker from Sylhet-Sunamganj district.

Inspector Shamim Ur-Rashid of the CID, Sylhet zone submitted the charge sheet with the court of Chief Judicial Magistrate of Sylhet Abu Syed Diljar Hossain accusing six people including the outlawed Huji chief Mufti Abdul Hannan.

Five of the six Huji leaders and operatives are now in jail in connection with other cases.

However, the Investigation Officer (IO) dropped names of seven other accused from the charge sheet.

The IO said in his charge sheet that the Huji men carried out the grenade attack with a motive to kill the Mohila AL leaders when they were at a meeting of the district committee at Mohila AL president's house in

Sylhet city's Tantipara area on 24 December of 2004. The accused managed to flee the scene immediately after the attack, he said.

Eight leaders and activists, including the Sylhet City Corporation's female commissioner Shahana Begum, SCC mayor's wife Asma Kamran and others were injured.

Syeda Zebunnesa Haque's husband Enamul Haque, also a leader of the district AL, filed a case with the Sylhet Kotwali PS the same night.

The charge sheeted accused are, Mufti Abdul Hannan, his brother Mufti Mohibur Rahman alias Muhibullah, Mufti Main Uddin Sheikh alias Mufti Abu Zandal, Sharif Shahedul Alam Bipul, Delwar Hossain Ripon and Humayun Kabir Himu (absconding).

Charges were dropped against Luthfur Rahman Talukder, ZM Ilyas Kanchan, Huji's Badrul Alam Mizan (charge sheeted in Kibria killing case), Syed Nayeem Ahmed Arif (charge sheeted in Kibria killing case), Ahsan Ullah Ahsan alias Hasan, Fokhrul Islam Fahim and Sayeed.

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q.	Microbiology	F C P S / M D/ M. Phil/ M C P S
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c.	Biochemistry	M B B S with at least 01 (one) year experienced
d.	Community Medicine	M B B S with at least 01 (one) year experienced
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or contact@crp-bangladesh.org Website: www.crp-bangladesh.org

## Prisoner dies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

A district jail prisoner died at Adhunik Sadar Hospital yesterday morning.

Jailer Didarul Alam said, Enamul Haque, 45, an accused in a case under Women and Children Repression Prevention Act was gossiping with inmates. Suddenly he fell sick at around 7:00am. He was rushed to Chapainawabganj Adhunik Sadar Hospital where he died of cardiac arrest at around 7:30am.

# ICONIA TAB

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