

Three to die for killing Magura schoolgirl

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A Khulna court yesterday sentenced three people to death for killing a schoolgirl in Sripur upazila of Magura district in 2010.

They are Yusuf Joarder, Zillur Rahman and Akkas Sheikh. Judge Md Sekander Ali of Khulna Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal delivered the judgement at 1:15pm.

According to the prosecution, Yusuf, Zillur and Akkas abducted Purnima Samaddar, 14, a student of Char Mashishpur High School at Ghoshial village in the upazila, while she was returning home from the school at around 1:30pm on August 4 in 2010.

They took Purnima, daughter of Manojit Samaddar of the village, to a jute field and tried to violate her. As Purnima cried for help, the three strangled the schoolgirl.

Following a case filed by the victim's father with Sripur police station the same day, police arrested Yusuf, Zillur and Akkas who later made confessional statement before a court.

Sub-Inspector Gazi Elias

Hossain of Sripur Police station investigated the case and submitted a charge sheet to the court on September 27 last year, accusing the three of killing Purnima. The case was transferred to Khulna Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal on February 2 this year.

The tribunal recorded statements of 15 out of 29 prosecution witnesses during trial of this case. The same court sentenced the three to life imprisonment in a case for abduction of the girl and fined them Tk 25,000 each, in default they are to suffer another two years of rigorous imprisonment under Section 7 of the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act of 2000.

In an attempted rape case, the court also awarded ten years of rigorous imprisonment to each of them and fined them Tk 10,000, in default they are to suffer one year more in jail under Section 9(4) (B) of the same act.

It (court) asked police to hand over admit card, two question papers, one pair of sandal, frock, trouser, blood-stained scarf seized by police as evidence to the parents of the deceased, Purnima Samaddar.



Devotees worship Goddess Durga at Chelopara Mandir in Bogra town, right, Ranibazar Tiger Mandop in Rajshahi city yesterday during Mahasaptami on the second day of the five-day Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the Bangalee Hindus.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA/STAR

Pest attack on aman plants worries Patuakhali farmers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Stem borer, locally known as *majra poka*, has attacked recently planted aman fields in different areas of Patuakhali district, much to the worry of farmers.

The pest has continued wreaking havoc on the plants, foiling farmers' attempt to prevent it by spraying insecticides.

"I planted aman paddy on four acres of land in last month but leaves of the plants are turning brown due to attack by *majra poka*," said Abdul Halim Khan, a farmer of Gabtali village under Dumki upazila.

Monirul Islam Babul, another farmer said, "I planted aman paddy on 3.50 acres of land but the leaves have dried as *majra poka* has affected the whole field. I sprayed insecticides but in vain."

Farmers Abdul Hye Howlader and Jahangir Hossen of Dakkhin Dumki village, Kalu Howlader of Kartikpasha, Jewel Akon of Pangashia, Shahabuddin of Muradia under Dumki upazila have similar tales to tell.

Motaleb Howlader, a farmer of Shreerampur village in Patuakhali Sadar upazila, also failed to prevent spread of the destruc-



PHOTO: STAR

Aman plants at a field of Kartikpasha village in Dumki upazila under Patuakhali district gets brownish due to attack by stem borer, locally known as *majra poka*.

ive pest to aman plants on his 12 acres of land despite spraying of insecticides.

"Frustration grips the local farmers as *majra poka* has attacked aman fields in vast areas of the upazila," said Maulana Alamgir Hossen, chairman of Shreerampur union parishad under Dumki upazila.

Dumki upazila parishad Chairman Harun or Rashid Howlader said he urged the

agriculture officials in the upazila to take necessary steps to control the pest as soon as possible.

"We are suggesting local farmers to make light-traps and keep branches of trees in the aman fields to control the insects. Only spraying insecticides in the attacked fields will not bring much benefit," said Lutfar Rahman, deputy assistant agriculture officer working for Shreerampur union parishad.

Aman seedlings have been planted on about 5,03,467 acres of land in seven upazilas of the district while the target was 4,90,134 acres, said sources of the office of the deputy director (DD) of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in Patuakhali.

According to DAE, only 7,293 hectares of aman fields are attacked by *majra poka* in the district. Local sources, however, said the affected area

would be more than double.

DAE sources also claimed that they have controlled the spread of the insect on 5,913 hectares of land.

When contacted, AZM Momtazul Karim, DD of Patuakhali DAE, said, "Long term rain is the main cause of attack by *majra poka* and the second cause is stagnant water on the aman fields. We hope we will be able to control the pest very soon."

Diarrhoea attacks 300 in Kawnia of Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Diarrhoea took an alarming turn in Kawnia upazila affecting over 300 people in the last 3-4 days.

Kawnia upazila health complex sources said scores of diarrhoea patients are being admitted to the health complex every day. Several others are taken to Haragacha hospital in the same upazila.

Doctors at the health complex attributed polluted water, unhygienic living condition and lack of sanitation to the main reasons behind the outbreak of the water-borne disease in the area. Children are the worst victims, they said.

In the last 24 hours, around 100 people were admitted to the health complex, they added.

Dr AKM Samsuzzoha Khondkar, acting RMO of Kawnia upazila health complex, said over 300 people of different villages in Kawnia have been affected by the disease and the number is increasing every day.

"We are working round-the-clock to thwart the spread of the disease," he said.

SEPT 27 ATTACK ON SENIOR LAWYER Members of Kurigram Bar abstain from work

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kurigram

Kurigram Bar Association observed 48-hour 'work abstention' programme in all the courts here in the last two days demanding immediate arrest of the culprits who injured advocate Mokhlesur Rahman on September 27.

After eight accused in a case in Phulbari upazila got bail from the court a few days ago following a plea by advocate Ashrafur Islam, a member of the Bar, the opponents of the accused threatened him, Bar sources said.

Consequently, a case was filed with Phulbari police station as per suggestion of advocate Ruhul Amin, another member of the Bar, against advocate Ashrafur Islam.

Centring the matter, a quarrel took place in Kurigram Judge's Court on September 27. The Bar association suspended the two lawyers for six months on charge of breach of discipline of the Bar and the court.

In the evening on the same day, a few attackers seriously injured Office Secretary of the Bar association and General Secretary of Kurigram district unit of

Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum advocate Mokhlesur Rahman beside Dharla Bridge in Kurigram municipality when he was returning home.

Advocate Ashrafur Islam once worked as a 'junior lawyer' of Mokhlesur Rahman.

Mokhlesur was admitted to Kurigram Sadar Hospital from where he was referred to Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

"We are observing the 48-hour work abstention programme as police could not arrest advocate Ruhul Amin, the main accused in the case for the attack on advocate Mokhlesur Rahman. We suspended for six months the two lawyers who broke the Bar and court discipline. The Bar association has formed a six-member team to investigate the matter," said district Bar General Secretary advocate Abraham Lincoln.

"A case was filed with Kurigram police station against six persons including advocate Ruhul Amin in this connection. Police arrested one of the accused today [Monday]," said the officer in charge of Sadar police station.

Three school kids commit 'suicide'

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Three school kids allegedly committed suicide in Brahmanbaria, Manikganj and Jessore districts on Sunday.

In Brahmanbaria, Monni Achary, 14, allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself from a ceiling fan at her house at Medda village under Sadar

police station.

Monni was daughter of Kanu Acharya and a student of class six at Anandomoyee Girls' High School, reports our correspondent.

Her parents were not at home when she committed suicide, family sources said.

Contacted, OC of Sadar PS Md Abdur Rob said the reason for committing suicide could not be known immediately.

Another schoolgirl allegedly committed suicide on Sunday in Manikganj, reports our correspondent.

Ankhi Akter, 11, was daughter of Altaf Hossain of Manta village. She was a student of class V at Manta Government Primary School.

She committed suicide by hanging from the ceiling of the house following an altercation with her mother, family sources said.

In Benapole, Jessore, a 15-year-old school student allegedly committed suicide by taking poison at Modhokul village in Keshobpur upazila on Sunday, reports our correspondent.

The victim, Sharifa Khatun, 15, was daughter of Nur Mohammad of the village.

According to police, Sharifa took poison following a family feud.

She died at Keshobpur upazila health complex and her parents buried her without post mortem.

Sharifa was a student of Nur Mohammed Madrasa in Keshobpur.