



Family members of slain Narsingdi municipality mayor Lokman Hossain among multitude of people join a human chain on Dhaka-Sylhet highway in Narsingdi district yesterday demanding fair investigation into the murder, *right*, a large number of vehicles got stuck in tailback during the programme.

25-km human chain demanding justice in Lokman killing case

STAR NATIONAL DESK

People from all walks of life formed a 25-kilometre-long human chain in Narsingdi district yesterday demanding fair and neutral investigation into the case for murder of Narsingdi mayor Lokman Hossain.

Tens of thousands of people kept standing peacefully on both sides of Dhaka-Sylhet highway from Madhabdi to Raipura upazila during the hour-long human chain from 11:00am to 12:00pm.

Participants including students, teachers, farm-

ers, workers, service holders and leaders of different political parties in the human chain reiterated their demand for bringing to book the real perpetrators of the murder of popular public representative Lokman.

Holding banners, festoons and placards, they also demanded that the government remove posts and telecommunications minister Rajiuddin Ahmed from the cabinet for the sake of 'fair and impartial' investigation into the much talked about killing.

"Rajiuddin's brother



Lokman Hossain

Salauddin Ahmed is the main accused in the murder case. Law enforcement agencies are not investigating impartially due to interference of the minis-

ter," Kamruzzaman, younger brother of Lokman, said in the human chain.

Masterminds behind the gruesome assassination have not been arrested more than a month after the incident, speakers said at the programme organised by Narsingdi unit of Awami League.

People will be bound to wage agitation if law enforcement agencies divert the case to a wrong direction, said SM Kaiyum, a close aide to Lokman, said.

Local lawmaker Nazrul Islam, Lokman's mother

Majeda Begum, wife Tamanna Nusrat Bubli and brothers Kamruzzaman and Shamim Newaz also took part in the human chain.

Thousands of vehicles got stuck in around 40-kilometre-long tailback on Dhaka-highway during the human chain, witnesses said.

Meanwhile, Narsingdi police yesterday took Kazi Alam, a suspect in Lokman killing, under a fresh remand for four days. Arrested on November 28, Alam was earlier taken to eight-day remand.

Newly-wed woman set afire allegedly by husband

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

A newly-wed young woman received serious burn injuries allegedly by her husband and his accomplices at Betrahati village in Maizkhan union under Kishoreganj Sadar upazila yesterday.

The victim, Mariam Akter, 20, daughter of Giasuddin of Betrahati village, fell in love with her cousin Abu Bakkar, 27, son of Abdul Kuddus of the same village, around one year ago, said police and locals.

At one stage Bakkar had to marry Mariam under pressure from a local arbitration around 20 days ago.

"But after marriage Abu Bakkar and his family members started torture on me," Mariam told this correspondent at hospital.

Around 5:00am yesterday Abu Bakkar, his brothers Kashem and Shahid and friends Kanchan, Mamun, Lalon and Kalam allegedly set fire to Mariam after pouring kerosene on her when she went to respond to the call of nature outside her room at her father's house at

Betrahati village.

Hearing her scream, family members and neighbours rushed to the spot, doused the fire and admitted her to Kishoreganj Sadar Adhunik Hospital, said family members and locals.

As two-thirds of Mariam's body got burnt by fire, she was shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said Dr Abul Hossain Masum, on duty doctor of Kishoreganj Sadar Adhunik Hospital.

Mariam's mother Ambia Khatun said, "As they [in-laws] continued torture on my daughter Mariam, we took her to our house on Sunday. They also assaulted and injured my husband Giasuddin as he protested their acts."

Mariam's elder sister Bedena Khatun filed a case with Kishoreganj Sadar police station accusing seven people including Abu Bakkar in his connection, said Mir Musharraf Hossain, officer in-charge of the police station.

"We are trying our best to arrest the absconding accused," he added.

Gaibandha journo, trader killed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A newsman and a trader were murdered in two upazilas of the district on Tuesday.

The victims are Faridur Rahman Ranju, 48, Gobindagnaj upazila correspondent of daily Bhorer Dak and Abdur Razzak, a rice and jute trader of Sundarganj upazila market.

Locals said some unidentified men waylaid journalist Faridur Rahman Ranju, son of late Mozahar Ali Mondol of Kaksha village, in Kurail area while he was returning home from Baneshwer Bazar riding a motorcycle at around 10:00pm.

The gang took him to a nearby crop land, slit the throat and fled the scene, they added.

Fazlur Rahman, younger brother of the victim, filed a murder case with Gobindagnaj Poice Station yesterday morn-

ing against 22 people of the village.

In the case statement, the complainant stated that Ranju was killed by the accused following a dispute over the ownership of a land at the village.

Rice and jute trader Abdur Razzak, 45, of ward No 3 of Sundarganj municipality was stabbed to death by an employee of his shop on Tuesday night.

Police quoting locals said the employee, Sukumer Mohanta, swooped on Razzak and tried to snatch over Tk one lakh from him when he was leaving the shop for home at around 9:00pm.

As Razzak foiled Mohanta's bid to snatch the money, he stabbed Razzak in the abdomen. Hearing screams, locals rushed to the spot, caught Mohanta and handed him over to the police.



PHOTO: STAR

SNIPPETS

Convict dies at hospital

UNB, Barisal

A life-term convict in Barisal central jail died at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH) on Monday. The deceased was Atahar Bepari, 52, son of late Kadam Ali of Dighlipacha village in Muladi upazila. Partha Gopal Banik, senior superintendent of the jail, said Atahar had been serving life-term conviction in a murder case for last three years. He was sent to SBMCH after he fell sick on Monday morning and declared dead by the attending doctors.

Culvert collapse kills man

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A labourer was killed and four others were injured seriously when an under-construction culvert collapsed on them at Koya Chaighoria village in Sader upazila on Tuesday. The deceased was Manu Miah, 35. The injured were sent to Gaibandha hospital in critical condition. The accident occurred in the afternoon when a large chunk of the culvert on Gaibandha road fell on the victims, said police.

RCCI website opens

A CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Rangpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) launched its website and high-speed Wi-Fi internet zone as well on Monday. Divisional Commissioner (DC) Jasim Uddin Ahmed inaugurated the website-www.rangpurchamber.com at the auditorium of RCCI. Speaking as a chief guest, the DC said the country's growing digitized information and communication technology has been boosting trade and commerce at home and abroad. Alhaj Mochhaddek Hossain Bablu, president of RCCI, presided over the programme.

Barisal university admission

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

The admission test for the first batch of Barisal University (BU), the only public university in the division, will be held today. Around 10 thousand applicants will vie for 400 seats, said Bahauddin Golap, acting assistant registrar of public relations of the university. A 120-mark one-hour written test in Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) system will be held at four government colleges and two government schools of the city. The seat plan and name of the centres will be available at the BU website-www.barisaluniv.edu.bd and notice board of the university office and will also be published in newspapers. "The Admission test is going to be held on an auspicious day as Barisal district was freed from the clutches of the Pakistan occupation forces on this day in 1971", Vice Chancellor Prof Md Harun-Or-Rashid told newsmen yesterday.

Youth's body recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Madaripur

Police recovered the body of a young man from a bamboo cluster at Norarkandi village in Rajoir upazila on Tuesday. The deceased, Iqbal Bapari, 25, son of Asoruddin Bapari, was a rickshaw-van puller. Police said unidentified criminals might have strangled him. Victim's father said "Iqbal demanded Tk 100 from me on Monday evening to leave for Dhaka and since then he went missing". He claimed that rivals killed his son over a land dispute.



PHOTO: STAR

Locals form a human chain on Madhabpur-Nasirnagar road in Brahmanbaria yesterday demanding withdrawal of an election violence related case against Md Abdul Hai, the winner in the last election to Dharmandal union parishad in Nasirnagar upazila of the district. Political opponents belonging to the ruling Awami League falsely accused Hai in the case for the August 6 post-poll violence that left one killed and 50 others injured, said the agitators.

6 YEARS INTO NETRAKONA JMB BOMBING Verdict yet to be executed, victims' families helpless

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

On this day in 2005, nine people were killed and over 50 others injured in a suicide bombing by Islamist outfit JMB, in front of Udichi office at Azahor Road in the town.

Three people killed on the spot are Khwaza Haider, 38, joint secretary of Netrakona Udichi Shilpi Goshti, Rani Begum, 35, wife of a police sub-inspector and beggar Joinal, 55.

Six others who succumbed to their injuries on the way to or at hospitals here and in Mymensingh are Yadob Das, 28, Rais Uddin, 35, Ashab Uddin, 40, Jahanara Begum, 45, Sudipta Paul Shelly, organising secretary of Netrakona Udichi, 28, and an unidentified bomber.

But six years into the incident, neither the families of the victims got compensation nor any government official visited the bereaved.

During a visit to the house of Shahanaaz Begum, 30, wife of Khwaza Haider, this correspondent came to know that her family is yet to get any monetary help from the government.

"No minister, even the Netrakona deputy commissioner (DC) did not visit my house," she said.

Shahanaz, mother of two children-Shiplu, 16, and Shaon, 8,-- maintains a

family of four including her elderly mother-in-law.

"We have become simply helpless after the death of Haider as he was the only earning member of the family," she said.



Sudipta Paul Shelly and Khwaza Haider of Udichi were among the nine people killed in JMB bomb attacks in 2005.

In reply to a question she said, "I do not feel like seeking any help from the government because of its failure to punish the culprits involved with the killing." Udichi leader Sudipta Paul Shelly was also the lone earning member of her family. After her death, Shelly's old parents Sushil Paul, 68, and Aruna Paul, 58, along with her ailing brother have also become totally helpless. All of them live at a rented house. They also did not get any help from the government.

During a visit, this correspondent found Aruna Paul suffering from a serious disease but unable to buy

medicine for want of money.

This correspondent also visited the houses of other victims -- Rani Begum, Joinal, Raisuddin, Yadav Das and Jahanara and talked to their family members. All of



them told similar tales.

On 17 February, 2008, Speedy Tribunal Court-2 Dhaka sentenced three JMB bombers to death for involvement with Netrakona blast. They are Salah Uddin, Ashaduzzaman and Yunus. But the verdict is yet to be executed. On the other hand, police failed to arrest bomber Yunus till today, said Golam Mohammad Khan Pathan Bimol, public prosecutor of Netrakona Judge Court.

Netrakona Udichi Shilpi Goshti has taken up various programmes including a protest procession and a discussion meeting to observe the day.



PHOTO: STAR

Liberation War memorial in Patuakhali town.

Patuakhali people recall the day of freedom

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

On December 7 in 1971, the valiant sons of the soil freed Patuakhali from the clutches of the Pakistan occupation forces.

Different organisations including district unit of Muktijoddha Sangsad have taken up various programmes including colorful rally, discussion meeting, cultural function in the town to mark the day.

After the declaration of independence on March 26, several battles took place in the district and the occupation army aided by their local collaborators started indiscriminate killing.

On April 26 in 1971, Pakistani army men with the help of peace committee members picked up women,

tortured many people and looted several hundred houses in the district town. On the day, they gunned down seven Ansar members near the residence of deputy commissioner (DC).

Later the Pakistani army killed Abdul Awal, the then DC as he helped the freedom fighters.

A day-long fight between freedom fighters and Pakistani army took place at Panpatti village on November 18.

In the last week of November in 1971, the freedom fighters entered Patuakhali town and defeated Pakistani troops in face-to-face battles.

On December 6, the freedom fighters hoisted national flag on the judge court building and declared the district free from occupation.