



PHOTO: STAR
Witness to the gruesome killing of about 600 innocent people by Pakistan occupation army on April 5, 1971, this place beside Lalmonirhat railway station now has no sign of cognizance. Eleven other killing grounds in the district are also on the verge of obliteration.

Lalmonirhat killing grounds about to be obliterated

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

At least 12 killing grounds (bodhyabhumis), where hundreds of Bangladeshis were massacred by the Pakistan occupation forces during the War of Liberation in 1971, are about to be obliterated due to neglect by the authorities.

No government or non-government initiatives have been taken to preserve or renovate the killing grounds in four upazilas of the district, local people and freedom fighters said.

Lalmonirhat District Muktiyoddha Sangsad said it identified 12 killing grounds in the district which have almost vanished or lost area mark.

As it was a bordering district, thousands of people fleeing from different areas of the country gathered in Lalmonirhat town and adjoining areas for safety and shelter during 1971 war. But a large number of them were slain by the occupation forces and their cohorts.

One of the main killing grounds of the district was 'railway rickshaw stand

bodhyabhumis' in the town. On April 5, Pakistan Army killed about 600 people who were picked up from different places. The victims were buried near the Railway office at Railway Colony. Over 200 skeletons, bones and skulls were recovered from the mass graves in the area soon after the independence.

Khedabagh mass grave in Lalmonirhat Sadar has almost been grabbed and a number of houses have already been built there. Over 200 people, who were fleeing to India, met their tragic end when Pakistan Army opened fire on them near Barobari Bazar on April 25, 1971.

There is no sign of any mass grave at Khochabari village in the town now where nine innocent potters were brutally killed and buried on April 28, 1971 by Pakistani forces, said freedom fighter Syed Ali of the village.

The mass grave near Doljor Dola Railway Bridge in Aditmari upazila has also been grabbed by locals. At least 52 people including two freedom fighters lost their lives in a fierce firing on June

8, 1971 at Saptibari union of the upazila.

The other mass graves at Saheb Para in the town, Bhelabari, Polashi and Mishkhocho villages of Aditmari upazila, Bhotmari and Dolgram villages of Kaliganj upazila, Goddimari and Barokhata villages of Hatibandha upazila are also lying uncared for.

The occupations forces and their collaborators killed over 250 innocent people and buried them at the abovementioned spots during the War of Liberation in 1971, local freedom fighters said.

Talking to this correspondent, Lalmonirhat District Muktiyoddha Sangsad Commander Yousuf Ali urged the authorities to build memorials at the mass graves.

The memories of the heroic sons of the soils must be kept alive for the sake of future generations, he said.

"I placed the demand at least four times in the last three years before the ministry concerned, but to no effect," he lamented.

BNP leader murdered

STAR NATIONAL DESK

A BNP leader was brutally murdered in Shariatpur district early yesterday while two Jubo Dal men were stabbed in Jhenidah district on the previous day.

Criminals in Shariatpur killed a local BNP leader at Chandsar village in Sadar upazila early yesterday.

Police recovered the body of Mokbul Sarker, 50, a leader of Palong union BNP under the upazila in the morning.

UNB quoting family sources said, some people called Mokbul out of his house at night and since he did not return home.

Local people saw the body of the BNP leader near his house at about 5:00am and informed police. Criminals slit his throat, locals said.

The motive behind the killing could not be ascertained yet, police said.

Outraged by the incident, relatives of Mokbul vandalised and looted the houses of Siraj Sarker and Selim Sarker at Chandsar village, of Shahidul Islam at Datra village and that of Habibur Rahman at Dhanshi village suspecting their involvement with the killing of the BNP leader.

In Jhenidah, two Jubo Dal leaders were severely stabbed near the town's bypass road on Saturday night.

They are Ashraful Islam, 35, son of Rajab Ali of Kalikapur village under the municipality and Biplob Hossain, 30, son of Abu Sayeed of the same area, reports our correspondent.

Ashraful is general secretary of Sadar upazila Jubo Dal while Biplob is an activist of the BNP wing.

Officer-in-charge (OC) Iqbal Bahar Chowdhury of Sadar police station said, Ashraful and Biplob were returning home on a motorbike. When they reached by-pass road point, a gang stabbed them indiscriminately.

GP employee shot, robbed of Tk 3 lakh

UNB, Benapole, Jessore

A Grameenphone employee was shot and robbed of Tk 3 lakh in Jessore town on Saturday night.

Police said, three criminals coming in a motorbike opened fire on Masudur Rahman when he was returning to his office in the town from Barinagar Bazar after collecting some outstanding

Flexiload bills at about 9 pm, leaving him seriously wounded.

The muggers later snatched his bag containing the money and fled the scene exploding two powerful bombs.

২৬ মার্চ

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