

# Kids being used in violent political movements

QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT, Thakurgaon

The use of children in violent political movements in the northern districts of Thakurgaon and Panchagarh has become a cause of concern for the parents and locals.

Children are often kept in the front lines of processions and gatherings, and instigated to involve in picketing and clashes with sticks and brick-bats during political programmes like hartals and blockades, said witnesses.

During a visit to different places in Thakurgaon and Panchagarh districts on Tuesday and Wednesday (November 5 and 6), this correspondent saw stick wielding children aged between 6/7 to 14/15 picketing at different intersections during the 60-hour-long countrywide hartal enforced by BNP-Jamaat led 18-party alliance.

A good number of children were seen taking part in Tuesday's clash between BNP and Awami League activists at Thakurgaon intersection in the town.

The same day a group of 15-20 boys aged below 15 damaged a motorcycle after forcing its rider to get down at BISIC intersection in Thakurgaon municipality area.

In Boda upazila headquarters of Panchagarh, a group of children damaged a three-wheeler on Panchagarh-Dhaka highway at Boda Bazar on Tuesday afternoon when Jubo Dal activists standing nearby were shouting



PHOTO: STAR

**Children join a procession led by a BNP leader at Thakurgaon during the countrywide hartal enforced by BNP-led 18-party alliance on Monday.**

'bravo' to them.

On February 27 this year, a large number of children were seen being used in political violence in the northern districts, said Principal Merajul Hossain, former president of Thakurgaon Press Club.

"After pronouncement of death sentence of war criminal Delwar Hossain Sayedee, also a top leader of Jamaat-e-Islami, the party gathered around 5,000 madrasa students aged between 7-16 in Goreya Bazar area of Thakurgaon Sadar upazila and instigated them to attack police in the name of saving Islam.

"As they encircled the law enforcers and attacked them

with sharp weapons, sticks and brick-bats, police and BGB members opened fire in defence. Six people including two children and four youths died during the incident.

"Schooling should be done in such a way that children cannot be instigated to involve in militancy in the name of serving Islam," Merajul Islam said.

"Using children in political activities is a gross violation of child rights. It derails children and eventually hampers social harmony. Political parties should not use children in violent political movements," said Dr

M u h a m m a d Shahiduzzaman, social researcher and also executive director of Eco Social Development Organisation.

"Hiring children for political programmes is very harmful for the society. But the offence is a non-cognizable one," Md Firoz Khan, officer in charge of Thakurgaon Police Station, told this correspondent over cell phone.

Contacted, general secretary of district unit of BNP, said, "We have enough activists to make hartal and other party programmes successful and so, there is no need to use children for picketing. Some children, especially the street urchins,

## Journo hurt in bomb attack

UNB, Satkhira

A journalist was injured in bomb attacks by criminals in Badhghata area under Sadar upazila on Wednesday night.

He was identified as Samiul Monir, former president of Shyamnagar Press Club.

Police and locals said a gang waylaid Saimul on his way to home and hurled three crude bombs at him around 9:45pm, leaving him seriously injured.

He was rushed to the upazila health complex. Sagir Miah, officer in-charge of Shyamnagar Police Station, said they were raiding different areas to arrest the attackers.

However, the reason behind the attack could not be known.

## Minor girl raped

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

A four-year-old girl was raped allegedly by a youth at Kholabaria village in Sadar upazila on Wednesday.

Police and locals said the girl of the village went to visit her brother's house at noon.

At this, neighbour Tajul, 25, son of Abdul Hakim of the area, picked up the victim on her way to home, took her to a lonely place and raped her.

After returning home, she was rushed to Natore Adhunik Sadar Hospital, said Aslam Hossain, officer in-charge of Natore Police Station.

Father of the girl filed a case, accusing Tajul, said the OC. Police were raiding different areas to arrest the culprit, he said.

# Garbage dumping on in Puratan Brahmaputra

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Workers of Mymensingh municipality have continued garbage dumping in the dying Puratan Brahmaputra River, despite serious protest from the local people and businessmen.

Following reports in different national dailies, the rush of garbage carrying trucks and trolleys has lessened but they still come, especially at night or early in the morning, said local residents and sand traders.

On October 17, workers of the municipality started dumping huge garbage in the Puratan Brahmaputra River at Puran Godara Ghat [old ferry ghat] area in the town without considering the disastrous effect on the river.

Then municipality Mayor Ekramul Haque Titu

claimed that the decision was taken to dump garbage in the river considering the interest of the town dwellers as there was serious traffic jam in Shambhuganj Bridge area soon after the Eid-ul-Azha.

Over 500 people are involved in sand business adjacent to the garbage dumping spot and the odour spreading in the area has become a nuisance for them, said Md Shahjahan, a sand trader in the area.

Around 1400 families live in the slums adjacent to the area and there are five pre-primary schools run by NGOs there, locals said, adding that the people, especially the kids are badly affected by the pollution.

Mohabbat Ali, conservation inspector, also assigned for garbage dumping,

claimed that now garbage is being dumped at municipality's dumping spot at Moilakanda, on the other side of the river.

About the allegations made by locals, he said, "The drivers might have dumped garbage here and there to lessen their work. We will see the matter."

Asked whether the already dumped garbage in the river will be removed, he said the authority will take steps for removal of the garbage soon.

The Department of Environment (DoE) has asked the municipal authority to stop garbage dumping in the river and clean up the already dumped garbage to prevent river pollution, said Md Yousuf Ali, assistant director of DoE in Mymensingh.



PHOTO: STAR

**Mindless garbage dumping on the bank of Puratan Brahmaputra River flowing by Mymensingh town worsens the condition of the already decaying water body.**

## SNIPPETS

### Three shops gutted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

Three shops were gutted in a fire at Fakirhat village in Zianagar upazila early yesterday. The reason behind the fire could not be known immediately, said Omor Ali, a victim. Locals doused the flame. The affected shop owners claimed that the loss caused by the fire could go up to Tk six lakh.

### Jamaat man held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Police arrested a local Jamaat leader in the district early yesterday. The arrestee is Motahar Hossain, Harinakundo upazila Jamaat secretary and chairman of the upazila parishad. Motahar was arrested on charge of killing a police constable during hartal hours on March 3 this year, said Moniruzzaman, officer in-charge of Islami University Police Station.

### 10,000 sacks of fertiliser seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

Police seized 10,000 sacks of nitrogen fertiliser from a cargo in the River Kacha under Bhandaria upazila on Wednesday night. Police said on secret information, a team raided the cargo at Charkhali launch terminal and seized the fertilizer. Police also arrested two staff of the cargo as they could not show any legal document of the fertilizer.

### Man electrocuted

UNB, Sylhet

An elderly man was electrocuted at Bilai village in Chhatak upazila on Wednesday afternoon. The deceased is Tofazzal Mia, 80, son of late Monfor Ali of the village. Locals said Tofazzal came in contact with a snapped electric wire of Palli Bidyut Samity in the area while fishing in a pond at 1:30pm, leaving him severely injured. Two people-Aina Mia, 35, son of Tofazzal and his nephew Shebul Mia-were also injured while trying to rescue Tofazzal. The injured were rushed to Sylhet Osmani Medical College and Hospital where doctors declared Tofazzal dead.

### Three held with yaba

UNB, Benapole

Police arrested three alleged drug peddlers along with heroin and yaba tablets at Ghup Nauapara in Jessore Sadar upazila on Wednesday night. The arrestees are Raihan, Sajjad Hossain and Aris, of the upazila. Sub-Inspector of Kotwali Police Station Jamal Uddin said on information, a team arrested the trio along with several packs of heroin and yaba tablets in front of Mahmudur Rahman School around 11:45pm.

### Liquor kills one

UNB, Benapole, Jessore

A man died after taking excessive rectified spirit at Gurulia village in Sadar upazila early yesterday. The dead is Harunur-Rashid, 42, an employee of Jessore district administration, and son of Afsar Biswas of the village. Sources said Harun fell sick after having the spirit. He was rushed to Jessore Medical College and Hospital where on duty

## BNP to enforce hartal in Khagrachhari tomorrow

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

BNP will enforce a half-day hartal in the district tomorrow, protesting interception of their procession allegedly by police at the district headquarters yesterday.

Shamiran Dewan, a member of BNP Central Executive Committee, announced the shutdown at a programme at his residence in the town yesterday noon.

He alleged that police intercepted the BNP men while they were going to the Court Building area in a procession to place wreaths at a portrait of Ziaur Rahman, founder of the party, on the occasion of "national revolution and solidarity day".

However, the BNP leader said the ongoing JSC and JDC examinations will remain out of the purview of hartal.

On the other hand, the leaders and activists of other faction of the district unit, led by Abdul Wadud Bhuyan, held a discussion meeting at local BNP office in observance of the day.

## CLASHES OVER LAND DISPUTES

# One killed, another injured in acid attack

STAR COUNTRY DESK

A man was killed and another injured in acid attack during clashes over land disputes in Dinajpur and Moulvibazar districts yesterday and the day before.

Our Dinajpur correspondent reported that an elderly man was killed in a clash between two groups of villagers over a disputed land at Paikarpara village in Khansama upazila of the district on Tuesday night.

The deceased was identified as Md Kalim Uddin, 60, son of late Feraz Uddin.

Locals said there was a longstanding dispute between Kalim Uddin and Hasinur Rahman of the village over the ownership of a land at the village.

At around 11:50pm, Kalim Uddin along with his supporters went to the land with a tractor. Hearing the news, Hasinur Rahman and his men came to the spot. At one stage of altercation, both sides swooped on each other, leaving Kalim Uddin critically injured.

He died on way to Dinajpur Medical College Hospital. Police recovered

the body and sent it to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

A murder case was filed with Khansama Police Station on the day. Police arrested three people in connection with the incident.

In Moulvibazar, a villager sustained acid burn injuries during a clash between two rival groups over a disputed land at Vanubill village in Kamalganj upazila yesterday, reports our correspondent.

The victim, Yasin Miah, 37, received injuries as his opponents threw acid on him during the clash. He was rushed to Kamalganj Health Complex.

Locals said there was a longstanding dispute between Rubel Mia and Yasin Miah over the ownership of a land. Both the groups locked in a clash yesterday morning over capture of the land.

During the clash, Rubel's men hurled acid on Yasin, leaving him seriously injured. Yasin's father filed a case with Kamalganj Police Station, accusing Rubel Miah.

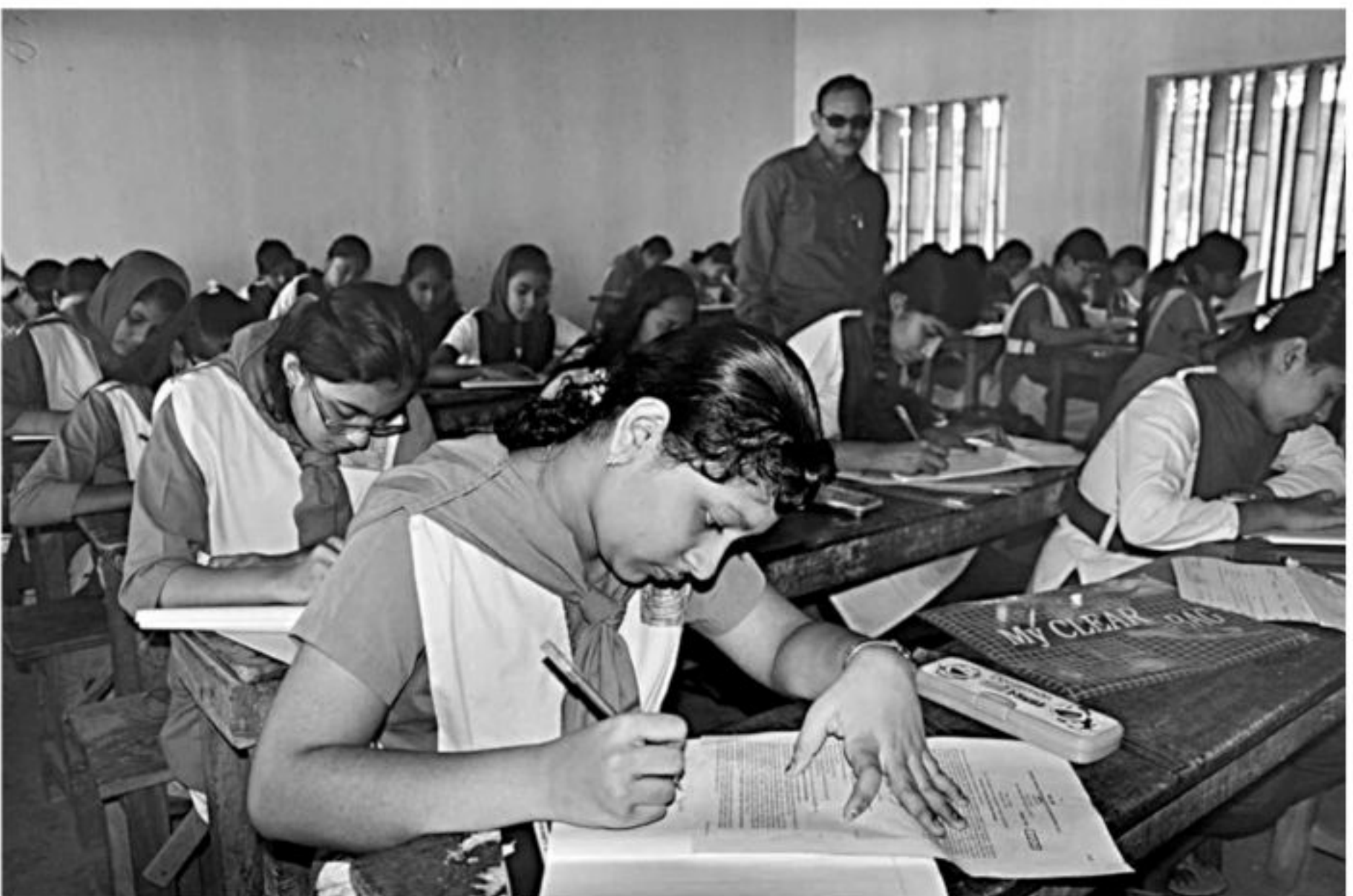


PHOTO: STAR

**Candidates write answer scripts at Dinajpur Collegiate Girls School centre during the Junior School Certificate (JSC) Examinations that started throughout the country yesterday.**

# Realtor murdered in Hathazari

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

A realtor was found murdered in Katakhalia area under Hathazari upazila yesterday morning.

The deceased is Md Ameer Khasru, 27, son of Hafez Abdus Sattar of Fateyabad area in the upazila.

He was one of the owners of a real estate company named 'Akbar Shah Properties'.

On information, police recovered his body, wrapped in a plastic sack, from a bush in the area at 10:45am.

They also recovered Khasru's motorbike

just 50 to 60 yards off the spot, said Sub-Inspector Rashedul Huq, in-charge of Modunaghat Police Investigation Centre.

Khasru went out of house by his motorbike at 7:00pm on Wednesday and since then his mobile phone remained switched off.

The reason behind the killing could not be known immediately. Police said they are trying to unearth clue to the murder.

The body was sent to Chittagong Medical College and Hospital morgue for autopsy, he said.

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