

# PATGRAM VILLAGES YET TO RETURN TO NORMAL Jamaat-Shibir men defy joint patrol, chase Hindus

S DILIP ROY, *Salmonirhat*

Panic haunts around 600 families belonging to the Hindu community at eight villages of Bawra and Jongra unions in Patgram upazila under the district as Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir launched several attacks on the minority community during the last two months.

Lastly on Sunday midnight, Parapukur Mandir, a heritage temple at Shafinagar village of Bawra union was attacked and six idols of gods and goddesses were vandalised there, during the countrywide hartal called by Jamaat.

Joint forces started patrolling the areas on Monday night but the minority people are too panicked to lead a normal life as Jamaat-Shibir activists continued threatening them to withdraw the cases filed for attack on the minority people.

Denying the allegation, Habibul Haque Basuniya said he formed a peace committee comprising 25 members from both the Muslim and the Hindu communities in the village to restore peaceful environment yesterday noon.

Around 60 Hindu families at Ghoshpara village of Jongra union in Patgram upazila are also passing their days amid panic as Jamaat-Shibir men vandalised and looted five shops and two houses of Hindus there on November 28, during the BNP-led opposition called three-day countrywide blockade.

A case was lodged with Patgram police station accusing 40 people including three identified Jamaat and Shibir leaders for the incident.

"Many people in the village, including myself, are still staying away from homes as Jamaat-Shibir men continued threatening us," said Dhananjit Chandra Ghosh, a local.



PHOTO: STAR

Villagers demolish two houses used by illegal drug sellers at Khochabari Linerpar in Salmonirhat town yesterday.

## Locals destroy drug peddlers' den

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
*Salmonirhat*

Locals destroyed two houses that were being used for selling illegal drugs at Khochabari Linerpar in Salmonirhat town yesterday.

Over 1,000 people of the area launched the attack on the houses of drug peddlers Golam Rabbani, 44, and Mazidul Islam, 40, after police arrested Shefa Begum, 30, wife of Mazidul, at noon.

Shefa Begum was arrested while selling phenisidyl at their house. Police also seized illegal drugs, including eight bottles of phenisidyl syrup,

from her possession.

Locals alleged that Rabbani and Mazidul had been using their houses for selling illegal drugs for long.

Locals staged protest against illegal drug trade several times, but to no effect.

Some of them faced false cases for protesting illegal drug trade and were also harassed by the hired goons of the two drug peddlers.

Rabbani was arrested by a mobile court a month ago and sentenced to jail for 12 months, while Mazidul had gone into hiding soon after the arrest of Rabbani. But the families of the two used their houses as drug-selling dens.

## 10 hurt as JP factions in Rangpur clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
*Rangpur*

At least ten people were injured in a clash between two factions of Jatiya Party (JP-Ershad) in Rangpur city yesterday.

The clash erupted when the JP men led by Moshiur Rahman Ranga, former president of the district unit, swooped on the rival party men at around noon.

Police and witnesses said several hundred JP activists led by Mostafizur Rahman Mostafa, member-secretary of the newly formed convening committee of the district unit, brought out a procession from College Road area in the city, demanding 'release' of party chairman HM Ershad.

When the procession reached Jahaj Company intersection, the supporters of Ranga hurled brick chips at their rivals, prompting them to retaliate.

The two factions chased each other and locked in a clash that left at least ten people from both sides injured.

Being informed, police rushed to the spot, charged batons and fired tear gas shells to disperse the clashing groups.

Additional police, Rab and BGB personnel have been deployed in the city to avert any further untoward incident.



PHOTO: STAR

Naogaon District Rice Mill Owners Association forms a human chain at Batar More in the town yesterday in protest against the ongoing violent political agitation across the country and also to press home the traders' five-point demand, including waiver of the interest on their bank loans.

## Sugarcane crushing gets fresh hiccup

### Blockade stops production

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
*Thakurgaon*

Thakurgaon Sugar Mills suspended cane crushing yesterday for disruption in supply of sugarcanes due to the ongoing BNP-led 18-party sponsored 72-hour blockade.

Despite good production of sugarcane, the mill authorities can not collect raw materials from their 49 purchase centres under five upazilas of Thakurgaon and Birganj upazila of Dinajpur due to blockade.

Managing Director (MD) of Thakurgaon Sugar Mill AM Abdul Aziz said they started the season's sugarcane crushing on Friday.

Till yesterday morning,

the mill produced 130 tonnes of sugar by crushing 3,810 tonnes of sugarcanes.

Abdul Aziz said that the production target was fixed at 8,050 tonnes of sugar by crushing 1 lakh 15 thousand tonnes of sugarcanes.

The mill was set to continue its operation for 90 days during the current season, he said.

The farmers have cultivated sugarcanes on 9,221 acres of land against the target of 13,000 acres and the mill authorities distributed Tk.47,10721 as subsidy among 1,714 farmers of the sugar mill's cultivation zone.

President of Thakurgaon Sugarcane Farmers' Association Ruhul Amin told this correspondent that

they had been continuing talks with the BNP leaders to keep the sugarcane vehicles out of the purview of blockade but they did not pay heed to it.

Khalilur Rahman, a sugar cane farmer of Thakurgaon Sadar upazila, told this correspondent that cane crushing began around 15 days late this year.

If the mill fails to take our sugarcanes immediately, we will incur a huge loss as the weight of sugarcanes will reduce significantly due to dry season, Khalil said.

Contacted, general secretary of district unit BNP Taimur Rahman said that his party would take a decision about the matter at district committee meeting soon.

## Pabna, Rajshahi were freed two days after final victory

STAR COUNTRY DESK

People of Pabna and Rajshahi districts got the taste of freedom on this day in 1971, two days after the nation's final victory.

On December 18, the valiant freedom fighters of Pabna declared the district free by hoisting the national flag of independent Bangladesh atop the deputy commissioner's office, reports our correspondent.

They entered the district on this day along with the Indian army and declared the area free after nine months of liberation war.

The following day, the Pakistani occupation forces surrendered to Captain Nanda, an Indian army officer, said Md Babi Islam, commander of freedom fighters in the district.

Earlier, they were barred from entering the area as the Pakistani army put up barricade on the entrances while the whole country was freed from the enemy forces on December 16.

In Rajshahi, the district was freed through the surrender of Pakistani occupation forces in Natore on December 18 in 1971.

## Abducted trader murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
*Gaibandha*

A local seed trader, who was abducted on Friday, was found murdered at Bairapara village in Gobindaganj upazila yesterday.

The deceased is Monirul Islam, 45, of Mojipur village in Satkhira district. He stayed at a rented house in the upazila town.

Locals found his boy floating on a pond in the area and informed the police.

Moinul Islam, officer in-charge of Gobindaganj police station said, Monirul might have been killed by his rivals.

reports our correspondent.

The enemy forces took shelter at strategic camp at Rajshahi University's Shaheed Shamsuzzoha Hall, where they left marks of inhuman tortures and atrocities.

The Pakistani troops fled Natore on the very night of December 17 in the face of strong resistance by freedom fighters and the following morning, the FFs and locals took control over the camp.

The Pakistani forces were later forced to surrender to the allied forces in Natore on December 20.

Meanwhile, the 43rd Victory Day was observed in Chuadanga district amid great enthusiasm on Monday, reports our correspondent.

The district administration and different political and socio-cultural organisations had separate programmes on the occasion, said organisers.

## Expatriate, bank official murdered in Comilla city

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
*Comilla*

A bank staff and an expatriate were murdered in the city yesterday and the day before.

Criminals stabbed to death Dilip Kumar Bonik, 31, field officer of Grameen Bank in Jagannathpur union in the city's Sujanagar area yesterday noon.

Eyewitnesses said, a gang of five came by a CNG-run auto-rickshaw and stopped the motorcycle of Dilip in Sujanagar area at around 2.00pm. They pulled Dilip down from the bike and stabbed him with sharp weapons.

Dilip was returning home from his bank. Local people took him to a nearby clinic but he died there due to excessive bleeding barely half an hour later.

Officer in-charge of Comilla Kotwali PS Mohiuddin Mahamood said, locals saw the body of the deceased on the veranda of Bibortan, a house in Housing Estate area at night and informed the police.

Shamsul Huda was strangled, police said, adding that a case was filed with the PS.

Police also arrested three people in this connection.

They are Ripon

Mojumder Ripon, 32, of Manikpur village, Md Shahabuddin, 22 of Atgram village in Choudhogram upazila and Taslima Akter Salma, 26, wife of Khokon Miah of Chandpur village in Sadar upazila.

In another incident, a

Singapore expatriate, who went missing from Dakkhin Chartha area in the city on December 12, was found dead at a house in Housing Estate area in Sadar upazila on Monday night.

According to family sources, Shamsul Huda, son of Piyar Ahmed of Cheora village in Choudhogram upazila went to Dakkhin Chartha to meet one of his friends on the day and since remained missing.

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## BGB, BSF exchange detained nationals

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
*Thakurgaon*

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and Indian Border Security Force (BSF) on Monday exchanged a Bangladeshi and two Indians following a company commander-level flag meeting.

The hour-long meeting was held on the zero line on Dharmagarh border under Ranishankoil upazila of Pashchimbanga to BSF. They were detained inside Bangladesh territory near Dharmagarh border on the same day at 11:00am.

Ranishankoil upazila to BGB. He was detained from a point near Molani border under Ranishankoil upazila around 5:30am on Monday.

BGB handed over Bimal Biswas, 28, son of Kanai Biswas and Prodip Boidyo, 18, son of Badal Boidyo of Dangipara village under Gowlapur PS in Uttar Dinajpur district of Pashchimbanga to BSF.

They were detained inside Bangladesh territory near Dharmagarh border on the same day at 11:00am.

## 12 arrested while going to Malaysia illegally

UNB, *Cox's Bazar*

Police in a drive arrested 12 people from Kolatali area in Sadar Upazila on Monday night while they were preparing to leave for Malaysia by boat.

All of the arrestees were from different places of Narsingdi and Jhessore districts.

Assistant sub-inspector (ASI) of Cox's Bazar Sadar Model Police Station Rezaul

Karim said, a team of police raided two residential hotels -- Hotel Lodge and Hotel Blue Sea -- on a tip-off around 11:00pm and arrested six people from each of the hotels.

Quoting the arrestees, the ASI said three human traffickers brought them there a few days ago promising to send them to Malaysia by a boat for Tk 20-25 thousand per head.

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