



Different organisations in several districts yesterday stage protests against attacks on Hindus in Jessore and some other districts by BNP and Jamaat-Shibir men during and after the January 5 parliamentary elections. Photos show human chains in Barisal and Rangpur cities.



PHOTO: STAR

# Attacks on Hindus spark protests

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Different organisations in several districts across the country yesterday staged protests against attacks on Hindus in Jessore and some other districts during and after the January 5 parliamentary elections.

Bangladesh Puja Uddhayan Parishad (BPUP) and Sonatan Jubo Parishad (SJP) held a rally in new court building area in Rangamati town yesterday noon, protesting the atrocities let loose by BNP and Jamaat-Shibir men at Hindu villages in Jessore and several northern districts during and after the elections, reports our correspondent.

Addressing the rally, leaders of the organisations said BNP and Jamaat-Shibir activists beat up Hindus, vandalised and looted their houses and business establishments and set them afire, but the attackers are still at large.

They demanded immediate

arrest of the culprits involved in the attacks and urged the government to ensure security of the people belonging to the Hindu community. They also demanded rehabilitation of the affected people.

The two organisations also formed a human chain at the venue for an hour and later took out a procession in the town. Amar Dey and Panchanan Bhattacharya, president and general secretary of Bangladesh Puja Uddhayan Parishad, and Jewel Dey, Badal Dey and Shiva Prasad Dey of Sonatan Jubo Parishad addressed the rally.

In Bogra, Nagorik Samaj, a citizens' body in the town, formed a human chain in Satmatha area yesterday noon, protesting the recent attacks on Hindus in different parts of the country, according to our correspondent.

Journalists, representatives from other professional bodies and members of the different socio-cultural and political organisations

joined the programme.

A protest rally was also held at the venue. Gonojagoron Mancha Bogra unit leader JM Rouf, Bogra Press Club General Secretary Prodig Bhattacharya Shankar, local AL leader Ragibul Ahsan Ripu, cultural activists ABM Ziaul Haque Babla, Toufique Hasan Moyna, Chairman of Bogra Co-operative Bank Aminul Islam Dablu, BJD district unit convener Kamol Krisna addressed the rally.

The speakers demanded security of the minority groups and immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of the attackers.

Our Moulvibazar correspondent adds: A human chain was formed in the district town yesterday, demanding immediate steps to stop attacks on the minorities and arrest of the culprits, who launched the attacks on Hindus in Jessore and several northern districts during and after the national elections.

Sontras along Samprodayekta

Protrudh Committee Moulvibazar unit arranged the programme in Chowmohoni area of the town at noon.

People belonging to different professional bodies, cultural activists and local political leaders joined the programme.

Addressing a rally at the venue, Mokbul Hosain, president of the Moulvibazar unit of Udichi said BNP and Jamaat-Shibir activists vandalised and torched Hindus' houses in several districts during and after the January 5 parliamentary elections, but the government has not yet taken any legal steps against the attackers.

He urged the government to ensure security of the minority groups and immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of those involved in the recent attacks on Hindus.

Later, a procession was brought out in the town. Similar programmes were also held in Barisal, Gaibandha, Thakurgaon,

FREQUENT HARTALS, BLOCKADES

## Veg growers, traders in Ishwardi count loss

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR  
TOPU, Pabna

Transportation problem due to countrywide political agitation like hartals and blockades for the last couple of months brings woe to the vegetable growers and traders of Ishwardi upazila, one of the largest vegetable producing zones in the country.

"In winter, around 1.5 lakh tonnes of vegetables are produced in Ishwardi upazila that meets at least one-fourth of the vegetable demand in the capital. But the continuous blockade and hartal badly hamper vegetable supply there," said Md Khurshid Alam, Ishwardi upazila agriculture officer.

According to the Department of Agriculture Extension, 5,708 hectares of land in Ishwardi upazila have been brought under vegetable cultivation this season.

The area includes 1,405 hectares for bean cultivation, 1,125 hectares for cauliflower, 450 hectares for eggplant, 570 hectares for carrot, 430 hectares for radish and 1728 hectares for other vegetables.

But trading of vegetables worth Tk 100 to 150 crore hampered at Muladuli wholesale market in Ishwardi as supply from the famous vegetable market drastically fell due to frequent blockades and hartals in last two months.

"Truckers often refrain from carrying vegetables amid the blockades and hartals as picketers vandalise the vehicles, even conduct arson attack. A few truckers run their vehicles amid risk during the night but they charge excessive fair," said Md Abdul Hamid, president of Muladuli wholesale market association.

"Against the need of 50 to 70 trucks for carrying vegeta-

bles, now only five to ten trucks daily carry vegetables from Muladuli market. Up to 1.5 thousand tonnes of vegetables remain unsold here everyday," he said.

The situation has caused drastic price fall of vegetables.

A maund (40 kg) of bean is selling for Tk 200 to 300, eggplant for Tk 250 to 350, cauliflower for Tk 300 to 400 in the wholesale market while last year the items sold for Tk 1000 to 1200, said Aminur Rahman Babu, a vegetable producer, also a wholesale trader at Muladuli.

"I have cultivated bean on five bighas of land with the money taken as loan from an NGO. If a maund of bean sold for its usual price Tk one thousand, I could easily make profit. But the market price has fallen to Tk 300-400," said Mokbul Hosain, a farmer of Par Khidirpur village.



PHOTO: STAR

Wholesalers bring huge quantities of beans and other vegetables to Muladi market in Ishwardi of Pabna, only to count loss for lack of buyers due to hartals and blockades.

## Kid murdered, woman stabbed over family feud

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Police recovered the body of a slain two-year-old boy and rescued his mother in a critical condition from the Brahmaputra River and its bank at Madanchar village in Bakshiganj upazila under the district and arrested the woman's son-in-law in this connection yesterday.

The victims are Asadul and his mother Aysha Khatun, wife of Sadat Ali of Bualtoli village in Ullapara upazila under Sirajganj district.

Aysha was taken to Bakshiganj upazila health complex and later referred to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, said police.

Kohinur Begum, daughter of Sadat and Aysha Khatun, was married with Kamal Sheikh, 33, son of late Badsha Sheikh of Juniyarchar village in Bakshiganj upazila, four months ago, police quoted the victims' family members as saying.

One and a half months after the marriage, Kohinur went to Oman to work as a domestic help.

As she started sending money to her mother, a bitter quarrel ensued between the latter and Kamal, said Mostasinur Rahman, officer-in-charge (OC) of Bakshiganj police station.

Kamal along with his mother-in-law Aysha Khatun and brother-in-law Asadul started from his in-laws' house for his village home at Juniyarchar on Wednesday.

When they were walking by the river bank at Madanchar village at night, Kamal suddenly took out a sharp weapon from his bag and seriously stabbed Aysha and Asadul at around 11:30pm, leaving them critically injured and unconscious, said the OC.

Thinking Aysha dead, Kamal left her there and threw Asadul into the river to confirm his death, the OC said, referring to the statement of Kamal after his arrest.

The next morning, locals found the kid's body floating on the water and Aysha lying in a critical condition on the river bank.

Informed, police rushed to the spot recovered the body and rescued Aysha at 9:00am.

Later police detained Kamal Sheikh who confessed to the whole incident, the OC said.

"The body was sent to Jamalpur General Hospital morgue for autopsy. The victims' family members were informed of the incident and they were on the way to Jamalpur to lodge a murder case with Bakshiganj police station against Kamal as of filing this report at 6:30pm yesterday," he said.

## Camel smuggling goes on thru' Mogholhat border

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Lalmoinirhat

An organised gang smuggles camels into the country from India through Mogholhat border in Lalmoinirhat Sadar upazila, depriving the government of a huge amount of revenue.

People living in the border area said the gang smuggles camels through this route, bribing a section of the members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB).

They said the gang members brought at least 50 camels from India recently and sent them to Dhaka and other districts in trucks.

People from Kushtia, Tangail come to Moghohat

to purchase camels at high rate, they said.

A camel trader from Kurigram said he gave Tk 1.5 lakh to border guards at Mogholhat camp against seven smuggled camels a few weeks ago.

"I paid Tk 6,500 as customs duty on another camel," the trader said, adding that he never faces trouble in smuggling camels 'in this way'.

Another camel trader on condition of anonymity said he smuggled three camels from India, giving bribe to the border forces.

The border guards swing into action only when they do not get their 'share', he said.

Customs officials said

cattle and camels can be imported from India through land corridor LC system, paying tax to the government. Importers have to pay Tk 6,000 to 9,000 against each camel, they said.

Rafiqul Islam, assistant revenue officer at Lalmoinirhat customs office, said he recently issued nine LCs against nine camels. The importers paid Tk 6,500 as customs duty against each of the camel, he added.

Refuting the allegation, BGB Mogholhat camp commander Nayek Subedar Abdul Hamid said the BGB men allow bringing camel through the border only after checking legal documents of the importers.

### SNIPPETS

#### Urea production stops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Urea production at Jamuna Fertilizer Company Ltd (JFCL) in Sarishabari upazila came to a halt early Wednesday due to technical fault. The production is expected to resume by Sunday, said Zahidul Bari, general manager (operation) of the company. The industry is capable of producing 1700 metric tonnes of urea daily.

#### Ferry services restored

UNB, Manikganj

Ferry operation on the Paturia-Daulatdia route resumed yesterday morning after a suspension for nine hours due to dense fog. Salahuddin, office secretary of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) at Aricha ghat, said they remained stopped ferry services and plying of the water vessels from about 12:00 am due to blurred visibility for thick fog. Two ferries in the middle of the river Padma and eight in the ghat remained stranded for the suspension. Around 700 goods-laden vehicles, 50 passenger buses and 50 microbuses, had to remain in wait at Paturia ghat for the halt to ferry plying, he said.

#### 2 jailed in arms case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Two men were sentenced to jail in an arms case in the city yesterday. Of the convicts, Mizan Shikdar, 31, son of Abdul Gafur of Hayatsar in Kawnia area was sentenced to 17 years in jail while Liton Haoladar, 35, son of Gani Haoladar of the area awarded 14 years rigorous imprisonments. According to the prosecution, police arrested the duo along with a pistol and three bullets in the city on February 3, 2010. Assistant sub-inspector Habibur Rahman then filed a case accusing the arrestees under an Arms Act.

#### Fake energy drinks seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

Police in a drive seized 530 bottles of sex stimulating fake energy drinks from a shop in Erampur area of the town on Wednesday night. They also arrested one Al-Amin, 20, of Nanosri village in Karimganj upazila, in this connection. Officer in-charge of Kishoreganj police station Abdul Malek said, Al-Amin was secretly making and marketing the drinks-- Jinseng, Horse Feeling, Power Energy, Neonex and Jinseng-RS.

#### Two held with pistol, bombs

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Detective Branch (DB) of police arrested two men along with a pistol, four bullets and two bombs in Kaliganj upazila yesterday. The arrestees are Asif Iqbal Rubel, son, of Asanur Rahman and Alamgir Hossain Jewel, son, of late Abul Kalam Azad of Barobazar village. Officer in-charge Anwar Hossain of DB said a case was filed in this connection.

#### Free veterinary camp

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Bangladesh Army's Savar Remount Veterinary Farm Depot held a day-long free veterinary camp at KN Institution ground under Ghior upazila in Manikganj on Tuesday Col BM Abdul Hannan formally inaugurated the free camp in the morning. Lt Col Md. Harun Al Rashid, Lt Col Md. Tuhin Hasan, Mejar AKM Golam Mostofa, Mejar Md. Anwar Hossain, Captain Asaduzzaman Chowdhury, Captain Md. Enamul Haque and Ghior upazila livestock officer Dr. Md Anwar Hossain were present. The team gave vaccines, tablets and other medicines of anthrax, black quarter, foot and mouth diseases, duck plague, new castle diseases, deworming, vitamin minerals, anti biotic free of cost at the camp. They also made aware the farmers of the upazila on goat rearing, cow fattening and others livestock issues.

## Bring killers of Naba Kumar to book

### Demands human chain in Khagrachhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

The people of Tripura community formed a human chain at Shapla Chattar in the district town yesterday demanding immediate arrest and punishment of the killers of Naba Kumar Tripura.

Naba Kumar, 35, vice president of ruling Awami League's Logang union unit in Panchhari upazila under the district, was shot dead at Bidyamohan Karbaripara in Logang union Wednesday night.

Addressing yesterday's programme, leaders of Tripura community urged regional political party United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF) to stop terrorism in Khagrachhari.

The innocent people of the community often become victim of the conflicts among the regional political parties who try to force them to work in their favour for establishing supremacy in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), the speakers said.

The urged the government to take immediate initiative to stop criminal activities of the regional parties in CHT.

Manindra Lal Tripura, senior vice president of Khagrachhari district unit of BNP, presided over the programme while Jatan Kumar Tripura, president of district unit of Jubo League, Topu Tripura, central general secretary of Bangladesh Tripura Students Forum, local Chhatra League leader Bhabashar Tripura, Bangladesh Tripura Kalyan Sangsad leader Kajol Baran Tripura, spoke, among others, at the human chain.

Naba Kumar's body was handed over to the family members yesterday noon after autopsy at Khagrachhari Adhunik Sadar Hospital, said Abdus Samad Moral, officer in charge of Panchhari police station.

Panchhari upazila Awami League leader Mohammad Bahar Mia blamed the armed cadres of UPDF for the murder as Naba Kumar had worked for the party during the 10th parliamentary election, rejecting the proposal to work for UPDF.

Niran Chakma, press secretary of UPDF,

## Fleecing, cheating is the other name of kabiraji

S DILIP ROY, Lalmoinirhat

A section of so-called herbal practitioners, locally known as *kabiraj*, have continued fleecing people in the name of treating paralysis patients in different areas of Lalmoinirhat and adjoining districts, taking advantage of the blind faith of innocent villagers.

"I made a Tk 40 thousand contract with the team of Kashem Ali, a *kabiraj* from Chilmari area in Kurigram district, for treatment of my paralysed husband Mohor Ali, 70. After giving treatment for two weeks, Kashem Ali took the total amount from me, saying that my husband would be well by a month. But his condition did not improve. He expired after two months," said Saheda Begum, 60, of Bhadai village in Aditmari upazila.

Amena Begum, 48, of Uttar Saptana village in Lalmoinirhat Sadar, said, "I spent Tk 30 thousand as Nur Ali, leader of a *kabiraj* team from Dimla upazila in Nilphamari, assured me to save my paralysed husband Mazibar Rahman. They tried hard for about a month but my husband expired last week."

As part of the treatment, a *kabiraj* touches the paralysed patients with different plants and leaves. While chanting of *mantra* and singing songs continue, little girls dance around the patients, locals said.



PHOTO: STAR

A paralysis patient at Bhadai village in Aditmari upazila of Lalmoinirhat being treated with bunches of herbs supplied by a *kabiraj*.

The paralysed patients are also taken into holes dug on earth for giving another round of 'treatment' at midnight or early morning, when there is hardly anyone to see, they said.

Hasanul Islam Sheikh, a college teacher at Namuri village of Aditmari upazila, said, "I know at least nine paralysed patients at the village got such *kabiraji* treatment in last two years, but none of them got cured. And all of them expired finally. A group of people are cheating the innocent villagers in the name of ayurvedic treatment."

Contacted, *kabiraj* Kashem Ali of Chilmari upazila in Kurigram district

said, he and his eight-member team have been giving treatment to paralysed patients in greater Rangpur region for the last 20 years.

"There are at least 25 *kabiraj* teams, each comprising five to eight members, in greater Rangpur area. We remain busy round the year for giving treatment to paralysed patients," *kabiraj* Hamidul Islam of Kulaghat village in Lalmoinirhat Sadar said.

Lalmoinirhat Civil Surgeon Dr Jahangir Alam Sarker said, "There is no approval for such so-called *kabiraji* treatment and conditions of paralysis patients are likely to worsen if they receive it."