

BANANA TREES, THEIR LAST MEANS



PHOTO: STAR

The students of Dakkhin Chirapara KM Non-government Primary School in Kawkhali upazila under Pirojpur district make a Shaheed Minar with banana trees on Wednesday as they prepare for observing Ekushey February today. Surprisingly though, all of the 605 government and 347 non-government primary schools in the district are without any permanent Shaheed Minar dedicated to the martyrs of 1952 Language Movement.

C'NAWABGANJ AFTER 62 YRS OF LANGUAGE MOVEMENT

Most schools, colleges still have no Shaheed Minar

RABIUL HASAN,
Chapainawabganj

Most of the educational institutions in the district are without any Shaheed Minar, 62 years of the Language Movement and 43 years of our independence.

Visiting 20 educational institutions in Chapainawabganj municipality in last two days, this correspondent found only two Shaheed Minars on the premises of Chapainawabganj Government College and Nayagola High School.

Golam Mostofa, president of managing committee of Nawabganj High School, and Ataur Rahman, headmaster of Tikampur High School, said they could not construct Shaheed Minar on the

District Primary Education Office and Secondary Education Office could not give the number of Shaheed Minars in educational institutions under their jurisdiction.

institution premises due to lack of fund.

There are three government colleges, 54 non-government colleges, four government high schools, 215 non-government high schools, 27 junior high schools, 102 dakhil madrasas, 17 alim madrasas, 12 fazil madrasas, three kamil madrasas, 691 government primary

schools and 7 non-registered primary schools in five upazilas of Chapainawabganj district, said sources of the education offices in the district.

District Primary Education Office and Secondary Education Office could not give the number of Shaheed Minars in educational institutions under their jurisdiction.

"We want to establish

Shaheed Minar in all primary schools but fund is not available for the purpose," said Abdus Sattar Sarkar, district primary education officer.

The government should help build Shaheed Minar at every educational institute, said Anwarul Islam, principal of Shah Neyamotullah College, also general secretary of Chapainawabganj district unit of Bangladesh College Shikkhak Samity.

"Shaheed Minar dedicated to the martyrs of the Language Movement inspired us in the later democratic movements and eventually the Liberation War. So every educational institution should have Shaheed Minar," said Language Movement veteran advo-

JCD leader stabbed to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Moulvibazar

A local leader of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) has been stabbed to death by criminals in the district town of Moulvibazar.

The deceased was identified as Miladur Rahman Milad, 28, son of late H a b i l M i a h o f Jagannathpur village in Sadar upazila. He was joint convener of the municipal unit of JCD.

Police said Milad went 'missing' near Moulvibazar Government College in the town on Wednesday.

Locals and party sources, however, said, Milad was picked up by a gang of 10-12 from a road near Jagannathpur fuel station at night.

Seriously stabbed, he was later found lying near the new bus terminal in the town's Jugidar area around midnight.

Locals rescued the JCD leader and rushed him to Moulvibazar 250-bed Hospital where doctors referred him to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital.

He, however, succumbed to his injuries on the way to Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday morning.

Inspector (investigation) of Sadar police station M Abdul Hye Chowdhury said they were investigating the incident.

FALLOUT OF RECENT SEVERE COLD, DENSE FOG

Irri-boro seedlings sell at high price in Lalmonirhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Lalmonirhat

A section of traders are doing brisk business with Irri-boro seedlings at the local markets taking advantage of their prevailing crisis.

Farmers are compelled to buy seedlings at high rate because of peak season of cultivation of the paddies.

Local farmers said many seedbeds and seedlings in the district were damaged due to severe cold and dense fog at the fog-end of winter.

A large number of farmers are facing trouble as they are not getting enough seedlings for farming.

Poor and marginal farmers bear the brunt as a bundle of 150 to 160 seedlings is being sold at Tk 6 against Tk 4 last year.

However, the production cost of two bundles of seedlings is not more than Tk 2, farmers said. At least 250 bundles of seedlings are needed to cultivate one bigha of land (30 decimal), they said.

Mansur Ali, 45, a farmer of Etapota village in Sadar upazila, said seedlings crisis has made his IRRI-boro cultivation uncertain.

Farmer Helemul Alam Sarker, 55, of Kashiram village in the upazila, said that he had prepared boro seedbeds on 20 decimal of land this season.

"But 50 per cent seed-

lings were damaged due to severe cold and heavy fog. So I have to purchase seedlings from the local market at high price now."

Manirul Islam Shaikh, a seedling trader at Durakuti Haat (market) in Sadar upazila, said they purchased seedlings from different districts at high price.

"So we also sale those at high price at the markets," he said.

According to the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources in Lalmonirhat, local farmers prepared seedbeds on 2,287 hectares of land to cultivate IRRI-boro on 53,600 hectares this season, they

said.

Most farmers have already completed cultivating IRRI-boro in their lands and only a few farmers are facing seedlings crisis.

They prepared seedbeds late, because of which those were damaged by fog, said Abdul Mazid deputy director o-



PHOTO: STAR

Traders sit in a row to sell their Irri-boro seedlings at Durakuti Haat in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila on Tuesday as the item now sells for good prices.

RELIGIOUS EDICT IN B'BARIA

Two village leaders held for ostracising woman

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Brahmanbaria

Police arrested two village leaders at Norsingshar village in Sadar upazila under the district on Tuesday night on charge of ostracising a woman through a so-called *fatwa* (religious edict).

The victim, Nazma Begum, 55, faced confinement to her house and non-cooperation from the villagers, including provision of stopping food and water, as the leaders, instigated by Nazma's husband Abdul Karim and *satin* (co-wife) Johora Begum, had Moulovi Rahmat Ullah pronounced the *fatwa*.

Declaring illegal the restoration of marriage between Nazma and Karim after a few years of their divorce, the village leaders asked both to pay *kaffara* (penance) of Tk 5,000 each.

They ordered Nazma to pay Tk 1 lakh as compensation to Karim and leave the village soon.

They also erected a high

fence in front of Nazma's house to isolate her.

Informed by Nargis Akter, upazila manager of BRAC, a police team led by Brahmanbaria Sadar model police station OC Md Abdul Rab rushed to the village on Tuesday night and arrested two village leaders - Abdur Rouf and Safar Mia - while a few others fled.

Nazma filed a case with Brahmanbaria Sadar Model Police Station in this connection.

Narrating her ordeal, Nazma said, "In 1982 I was married to Abdul Karim of Norsingshar village under Sadar upazila. Two sons were born to us. In 1988, Karim divorced me following a family feud. I along with two sons took shelter at my father's house at Talshahar village in Sadar upazila while Karim married another woman named Johora Begum, who has now three daughters.

"Meanwhile, my sons

grew up. In 2001, they persuaded their father to marry me again. Karim arranged two separate houses for me and Johora at Norsingshar.

"Afterwards, my two sons went abroad for work and they started sending money to me. I used to share it for both the families and thus spent at least Tk 15 lakh so far. But Karim and Johora wanted my sons to send all the money only to them.

"A few months ago, Johora, her elder daughter and Karim mercilessly beat me and my second son Haroon's wife Yeasmin Begum. I filed a case under Woman and Children Repression Prevention Act and Karim was sent to jail custody.

"After release on bail Karim called a local arbitration on January 20 this year when the village leaders and Moulovi Rahmat Ullah, being motivated by my husband and Johora, declared our marriage illegal and pronounced the so-called *fatwa*.



PHOTO: STAR

Criminals vandalise idols at a family temple and later set it (temple) afire at Dhopakhal village in Kachua upazila of Bagerhat on Wednesday night.

Temples set on fire, idols damaged in Bagerhat

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Criminals vandalised and torched two family temples of Hindus in Bagerhat district and set on fire an arch of a religious programme of the community in Chandpur district early yesterday.

In Bagerhat, a gang vandalised several idols at the family temples of Noni Gopal Sarker and his neighbour Tapan Kumar Kabiraj at Dhopakhal village in Kachua upazila, reports our correspondent.

On information, police

visited the spot yesterday afternoon.

Officer in-charge (OC) Rafiqul Islam of Kachua police station said, the criminals set the temple of Harichand Thakur belonging to Noni Gopal on fire after pouring kerosene.

They also damaged the idols of Goddess Manasha at the temple of Tapan Kumar Kabiraj the same night.

Earlier, local gang on January 9 torched Shree Shree Radha-Gabinda temple at Uttar

Kachuabunia in Morelganj upazila.

On January 21, another gang set a family temple of Soilendra Nath Mondal in Gazalia union of Kachua upazila.

Meanwhile in Chandpur, criminals attacked a religious programme and torched an arch at the venue in Upadi area of Matlab upazila, reports our correspondent.

The religious programme started at Karmaker Bari on Friday. But the criminals set fire to the arch early yester-



PHOTO: STAR

This bridge, built in 1960 on a canal on Khagrachhari-Feni Road in Ramgarh upazila of Khagrachhari district, has become unfit for use as a portion of it got damaged two years ago. Though vehicles, including passenger buses, use the bridge amid risk of accident, the authorities concerned are yet to take any steps to get it back into good condition.