

Lightning kills eight in five districts

STAR COUNTRY DESK

At least eight people were killed and 35 others injured by lightning strikes in Chuadanga, Chapainawabganj, Bagerhat, Jhenidah and Gopalganj districts yesterday.

In Chuadanga, three people were killed and 11 others injured in separate lightning strikes in Jibannagar, Damurhuda and Sadar upazilas, reports our Kushtia correspondent.

Witnesses said, Sadek Ali, 24, son of Abul Hashem of Tentulia village, and farmer Saidur Rahman, 26, of Kushodanga village in Jibannagar upazila were killed when they were struck by lightning in the morning. Sadek Ali was fishing on a boat.

Besides, 11 people were injured as thunderbolts hit them at Akandbari Kushodanga, Srirampur, Jadabpur and Tentulia villages of the upazila.

The injured were admitted to Jibannagar upazila health complex. Among them, the condition of three was stated to be critical.

Meanwhile, lightning struck Mandar Ali, 30, and his two buffaloes when he went to the courtyard of his house to take the animals to the cowshed amid storm at Nastipur village in Damurhuda upazila at 7am yesterday, leaving him and his cattle dead on the spot.

In Sadar upazila, day-labourer Anusuddin, 42, was injured when a thunderbolt hit him at Akandbaria village in the morning.

Besides, Nafiza Khatun, daughter of Kamruzzaman of Shyampur village, and Majnu Miah of Kurulgachhi village in Damurhuda upazila, were injured as lightning struck them in the morning.

In Chapainawabganj, two people were killed being struck by lightning in Sadar upazila in the morning, reports our correspondent.

The deceased were identified as Anisur Rahman, 55, and Monirul Islam Moni, 35 of two villages in Shibganj upazila.

Our Bagerhat correspondent reports: Farmer Akram Sheikh, 45, was killed by a lightning strike while working in a field at noon.

Akram was son of Shakhawat Sheikh of Barastia village in Chitalmari upazila.

In Gopalganj, housewife Smriti Saha, 40, was killed at Patgati Bazar in Tungpara upazila around 12 noon.

Smriti, wife of Gourango Saha, died on the spot when a thunderbolt struck the roof of their tin-made house, reports our correspondent.

In Jhenidah, Aynal Hossain Mollah, 40, son of Kalu Mollah of Kagmari village in Kotchandpur upazila died in the morning when he was returning home from cropfield. Seventeen others were injured in 3 other places of the upazila, reports our correspondent.

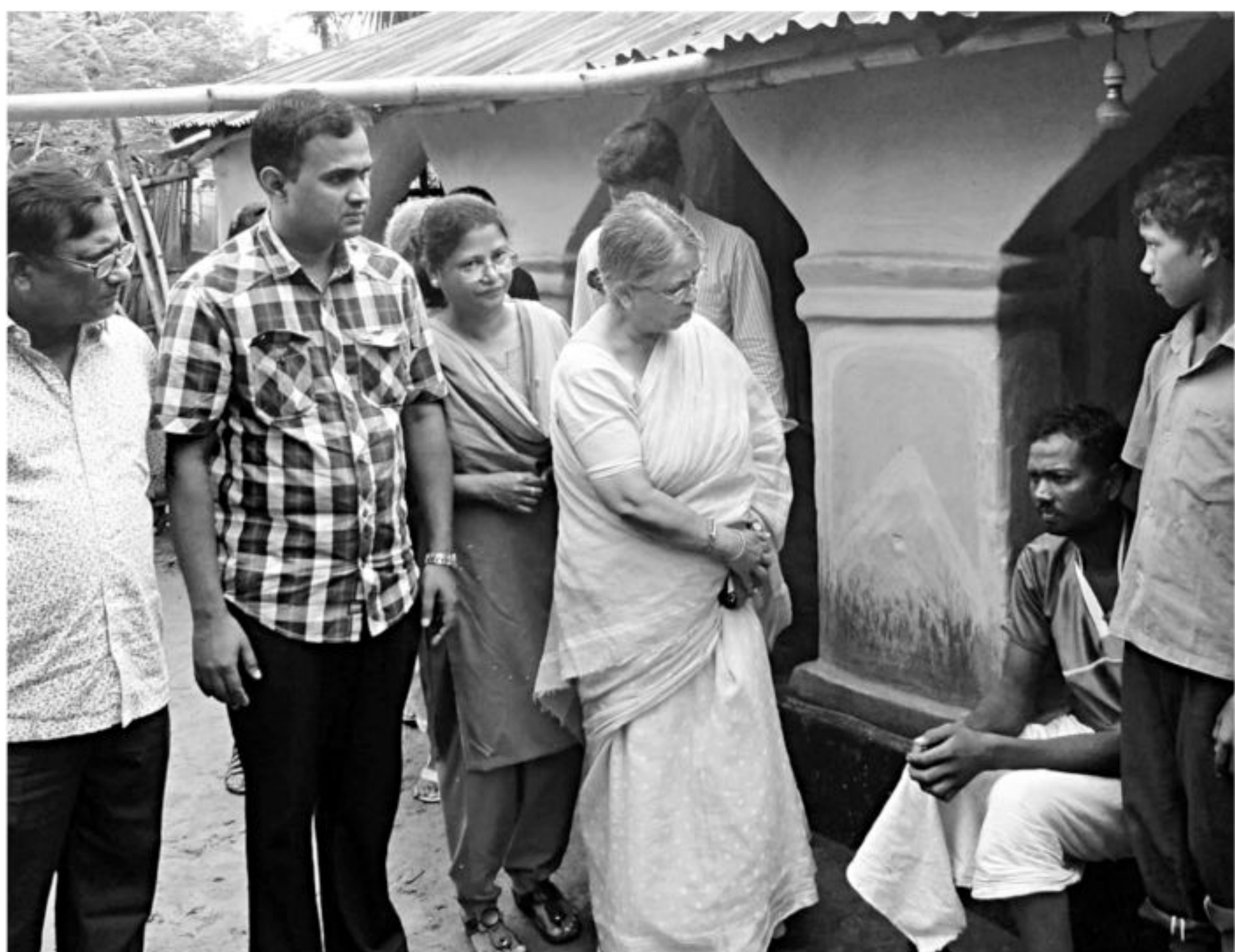


PHOTO: STAR

Sultana Kamal, executive director of Ain O Shalish Kendra, talks with the affected indigenous people while visiting their village at Khalippur in Nawabganj upazila of Dinajpur yesterday.

SULTANA KAMAL VISITS SANTAL VILLAGE 'Dishonest land, forest officials back local land grabbers'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Sultana Kamal, executive director of Ain O Shalish Kendra, yesterday visited Khalippur Adivasipara in Nawabganj upazila where four indigenous people were brutally tortured by a gang of criminals on May 9.

After the incident, at least 60 Santal families of the village are living in fear of attacks and have almost stopped going outside their village.

The former adviser to the caretaker government went to the houses of Som Soren, 43, Babulal Soren, 43, Sonaram Tudu, 27, and Bablu Soren, 25, at the village and spent at least two and a half hours talking with the victims.

A gang of criminals tortured the four of Santal community, hanging them from a banyan tree. The victims alleged that a motive of grabbing their cultivable land was the reason behind the attack.

They said police are yet to arrest the criminals, who continue to intimidate them.

Terming the May 9 incident inhuman, Sultana Kamal said a section of people helped by some dishonest land and forest officials are involved in such incidents to grab the land of indigenous people.

She assured the victims of legal aid and urged the politicians to come forward to stop such heinous act.

A gang of criminals led by Mahbubur Rahman, an influential man of Kazipara village, swooped on the four people when they were loading their paddy onto a tractor at the village and beat them up.

The attackers also hung the four from a banyan tree and tortured them inhumanly.

Sonaram, one of victims, filed a case with Nawabganj Police Station on May 14, accusing eight people.

The accused are Mahbubur Rahman and Hafizur Rahman, sons of late Nur Islam, Md Kalam and Nur Islam, sons of late Kawsar, Rafiqul Islam, son of late Ansar Ali, Rezaul Islam, son of late Mofa Mia, and Atul Mia and his son Khorshed Ali of Khalippur.



PHOTO: STAR

Doctors and staff at Thakurgaon diabetic hospital stage a sit-in in front of the hospital yesterday while on an indefinite strike to realise arrear salaries.

THAKURGAON DIABETIC HOSPITAL

Docs, staff on strike for arrear salaries

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Doctors and staffs at Thakurgaon Swasthoseba Hospital (diabetic) went on an indefinite work abstention programme yesterday, demanding arrear salaries for nine months.

During a programme from 10:00am yesterday, they staged a three-hour sit-in in front of the gate of the hospital.

Several doctors and staffs spoke at the gathering.

Medical Officer of the hospital Dr Nur Alam Mondal said that the doctors and staffs of the hospital had been passing hard days with their family members as they were not getting salaries regularly. The salaries of doctors and staffs became pending in three years as the authorities did not pay those showing various reasons.

Abul Hossain, an employee of the hospital, said that they were already burdened with huge loans.

"It is hard to pay attention to duties and give better service to the patients when you are starving. We got our salaries in March last in the current year, he said."

The protesters threatened to launch a tougher agitation if their salaries with dues were not paid immediately.

Earlier, the staffs of the hospital observed token work abstention every day for several days to realise their demands and wore black badges.

Seeking anonymity, a higher official of the hospital told this correspondent that they had already informed the matter to the higher authorities.

Replying a query, he said that 126 staffs including 12 doctors, 13 staff-nurses and 101 employees were working at the hospital.

The 30-bed Thakurgaon Swasthoseba Hospital started its journey in August 2006 under a joint Health Care Development Project of Bangladesh Diabetic Association and the Netherlands government.

In 2008, an Eye Care Project started at the hospital.

Under the project, unprivileged patients especially diabetes and eye patients were being treated with low cost.

The income of the hospital is sent to the central account of the project of Bangladesh Diabetic Association every day. Monthly expenditure of the hospital is about Tk 18-19 lakh while it needs Tk 26 lakh per month to run the hospital. Without subsidy it is not possible to run the activities at the hospital, the official said.



PHOTO: STAR

Fire at a furniture market at Mirkadim of Munshiganj district on Friday night gutted a bedding store and a furniture shop, damaging goods worth Tk15 lakh. The fire allegedly originated from a short circuit at a shop.

SNIPPETS

Former UP member killed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A former union parishad member was killed in an attack by his rivals at Saknite Chatulia village in Haluaghat upazila yesterday morning. The deceased was identified as Saifuzzaman Tota, 55. Police said there was a longstanding enmity between the UP member and Shamsul Haque of Saknite area over setting up a deep tubewell for irrigation. Shamsul Haque and his men attacked Saifuzzaman and his group while they went to take control over the tubewell in the morning. Stabbed by his rivals, the former UP member died on the spot.

Drug addict kills man

UNB, Bagerhat

A physically-challenged man was hacked to death allegedly by a drug addict youth on Friday night. The victim was identified as Abdul Khaleque, 50, son of Ahmed Ali of Dakkhin Sanyasi village in Rampal upazila. Khaleque used to earn his livelihood by begging. Officer in-charge of Rampal Police Station Kazi Daud Hossain said Zahid Sheikh, 28, a drug addict son of Mokammel Sheikh, entered the house of Khaleque around 8:00pm and started hacking him indiscriminately with a sharp machete, leaving him critically injured.

Two children drown in Barguna

BSS, Barguna

Two children drowned in the pond in Amtali upazila of the district yesterday. Police said Rima 15, daughter of Dulal Miah of Loda village drowned in a pond near her house when she went there to take a bath. Besides, one and half year old Raihan, son of Moni Shikder of Nilganj village fell in a pond and drowned when he was playing beside the pond.

BNP LEADER ISMAIL MURDER

Main accused held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

The main accused in Kaliganj upazila BNP leader Ismail Hossain murder case was arrested from Jessore town on Friday night.

The arrestee is Shahjahan Ali, 38, son of Lutfor Rahman of Chapali village under Kaliganj upazila.

Acting on a tip-off, law enforcers from Kaliganj Police station, led by Sub-Inspector Imran Hossain, also investigation officer of the case, raided Dharmotola bus stand at around 8:30pm and arrested Shahjahan from there.

Police yesterday produced him in the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court,

seeking a seven-day remand. The court sent him jail. Court sources said hearing on the remand prayer will be held today.

Ismail Hossain, 59, president of ward No-1 unit of BNP Kaliganj municipality, was hacked to death by AL activist Shahjahan Ali on May 30.

Ismail came under attack while he was going to the district headquarters from Chapali village at around 7:30am.

People of Chapali village formed a human chain in Nimtola bus stand area on Thursday morning, demanding immediate arrest of the accused in

Police rescue three girls from brothel, confinement

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Police rescued two minor girls of Tangail and Kurigram from a brothel in Rajbari district and another girl of Jhalakathi from Tejaona area of Dhaka City on Thursday.

Our correspondent in Kushtia reports: Police rescued two minor girls from Daulatdia brothel in Gualondo upazila of Rajbari district Thursday night.

Police also arrested a female pimp of the brothel for allegedly forcing them into prostitution after 'buying' them.

Tipped off that the under-aged girls were confined to a place in the brothel, Abul Bashar, officer in-charge (OC) of Gualondo police station, raided the spot at about 8.30pm and rescued the girls.

Police also arrested female pimp Sumi Begum from there.

Police said both the girls were cheated by two youths and were sold out to the brothel.

According to the OC, a 15-year old girl, hailing from Boali in Tangail district fell in love with one Hridoy of Manikganj district and eloped with him while

working at a garment factory in Savar several months ago.

But Hridoy took the girl to the brothel and sold him there.

The other girl, aged 14, of Rotnopur in Kurigram, also worked at a garment in Savar. She also fell in love with one Anis of Rajbari district and fled with him on May 10. Anis sold the girl to brothel.

Chief Judicial Magistrate Court of Rajbari sent brothel pimp Salma Begum to jail on Friday noon.

Police will return the girls back to their families after necessary legal process, the OC said.

Jhalakathi police rescued a kidnapped girl after one and half months from Tejaona area of Dhaka on Thursday noon, reports our correspondent.

SI Arifur Rahaman of Rajapur police station in the districtsaid that the 13-year-old girl hailed from Balaybari of Rajapur upazila.

With the help of police in Tejaona Industrial area, the SI raided a place after locating it through mobile tracking.

A case was filed with Rajapur PS but police could not arrest any kidnapper, he added.

Indigenous couple found dead in C'nawabganj

UNB, Chapainawabganj

An indigenous couple was found dead in their home at Biyana Balikapara village in Gomastapur upazila on Friday night.

The deceased were identified as Sree Rajesh Keoa, 26, and his wife Rina Khalko, 22. They have a one-and-a-half-year-old baby.

Family members broke open the door of their room as they did not get any response even after knocking the door repeatedly, and found both Rajesh and Rina dead, said officer in-charge of Gomastapur Police Station Firoz Ahmed.

Police suspected that the duo might have committed suicide over family feud.



PHOTO: STAR

Several hundred people formed a human chain near Modhupur launch terminal in Kalapara upazila of Patuakhali yesterday, protesting an alleged plan to set up a coal-based power plant in the area.

'Missing' BCL leader reappears

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leader of Mymensingh district, who allegedly went missing, surrendered to the Ramu police yesterday.

Taz Uddin Ahmed Rana, president of Mymensingh district unit of BCL, went 'missing' from Mymensingh town on May 24.

Officer in-charge (OC) Saikul Ahmed Bhuyan of Ramu Police Station, said Rana came to the police station yesterday morning and disclosed his identity.

Later he was taken to the police custody.

Our Mymensingh correspondent adds: Rana went out of his residence in the town on May 24 leaving his cell phone at home, said Abu Fazlul Karim, officer in-charge of Kotwali Police Station quoting Rana's wife Nadia Parveen Nipa.

Rana's maternal uncle Ramzan Ali filed a general diary with the police station on May 26 in connection with the alleged disappearance.

However, party insiders said, there might be a link between Rana's disappearance and the biennial conference of BCL that took place yesterday afternoon.

Rana was elected president of



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