

# TORTURE ON WOMAN INDIGENOUS LEADER

## Five lawmakers demand arrest, trial of culprits

Promise to raise the issue in JS

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Five lawmakers yesterday demanded immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of those who beat up and raped a woman indigenous leader in Gomostapur upazila of the district on August 4.

They made the demand at a rally held on the premises of Parbatipur Union Parishad office at noon. The lawmakers, Fazle Hossain Badsha from Rajshahi, AKM Fazlul Haque from Sherpur, Nazmul Hoque Prodhan from Panchagarh, Yasin Ali from Thakurgaon and Hajera Sultan also assured the locals that they would raise the issue in the parliament, demanding punishment of the culprits.

Prof Mesbah Kamal of Dhaka University, Rabindranath Soren, president of Jatiyo Adivasi Parishad, Rina Roy, director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, Protima Rani Rajoar, vice-chairman of Nachole Upazila Parishad, and the victim herself also addressed the rally.

The speakers said they would provide legal aid for the indigenous leader and give financial support for her better treatment. They urged the police administration to forward the case to the court and declared that a grand conference of plain land

indigenous people would be held in Rajshahi on September 27.

At the rally, the indigenous people chanted a slogan, demanding formation of a separate land commission for plain land indigenous people.

Earlier on the day, the woman indigenous leader was released from Chapainawabganj Sadar Hospital. The five lawmakers and others received the leader and took her to the meeting venue at Parbatipur. They later went to the house of woman indigenous leader at Zinarpur village in the union and gave her Tk 10,000 for her treatment.

A gang of land grabbers beat up and raped the president of Jatiya Adivasi Parishad Chapainawabganj unit at Zinarpur village under Parbatipur union of Gomostapur upazila on August 4.

The indigenous leader, also a member of Parbatipur Union Parishad, came under attack while she along with labourers was planting aman seedling on a farmland.

As the labourers fled the scene in the face of attack, three of the gang -Rezaul Karim, Akbar Ali and Akbar Hossain -took her to one side of a field and raped her. The attackers also took away her power tiller, two bullocks and a shallow pump machine.

### Minar among 10 Fulgazi UZ chairman aspirants

A CORRESPONDENT, Feni

Ten candidates, including local BNP leader Mahtab Uddin Chowdhury Minar, who was in prison as prime accused in Fulgazi upazila chairman Ekramul Haque killing case, submitted the nomination papers as the deadline expired yesterday.

Among others, Awami League leaders Md Selim Sheikh Abdulla, Serajul Haque Azad, BNP leaders Golam Rasul Majumder alias Golap, Selina Akter and Jamal Uddin Majumder, submitted the nomination papers as independent candidates.

The last day for withdrawing the nomination paper is September 7 as the election is set to be held on September 21.

Fulgazi upazila chairman Ekramul Haque, also the president of Awami League upazila unit, was shot and burnt to death in his car on May 20.

Rezaul Haque Jasim, brother of the deceased, filed a murder case with Feni Model police station against 30 to 35 people, including Minar.

On May 27, DB police arrested Minar, convenor of Feni district unit of Tanti Dal, a wing of BNP, and the lone named accused in the case, from a house in Kachukhet area near Dhaka Cantonment.

The High Court granted a six-month bail to Minar on July 15. Later, he was freed from jail on July 17.

On July 20, the Supreme Court stayed the HC order that allowed Minar's bail, and directed him to surrender in two weeks in response to a petition filed by the government.

On August 3, a court issued arrest warrant against him.

A total of 32 people have been arrested so far in connection with the killing.

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"But all of a sudden, the duo along with their cohorts entered my orchard and cut down the trees in a bid to grab the land." Nazmul alleged.

Contacted, Ruhul Amin, Superintendent of Police in Dinajpur, said additional police have been deployed on the spot to avert any untoward situation.

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They cut down the trees and damaged the boundary wall of the 20 decimals land and immediately built a bamboo fence allegedly to capture the orchard. The gang also hung two sign-

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