

KERANIGANJ FOUR MURDERS

Robbers killed them

Finds primary police investigation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A primary police investigation found that the couple and their two children who were found dead inside their rented flat in South Keraniganj on Wednesday were murdered by a gang of robbers.

Keraniganj police yesterday said the gang was also involved in Yaba trade.

The dead were identified as Mohammad Sajú, 30; his wife Ranjina Begum, 25; their seven-year-old son Imran and two-year-old daughter Sanjida alias Moni. Their identities were confirmed by their relatives at Sir Salimullah Medical College morgue yesterday.

Azizur Rahman, a nephew of Sajú, told this correspondent that his uncle lived in his village home at Debiganj of Panchagarh district and studied up to class five. Later he came to South Keraniganj.

Sajú was once a rickshaw-puller who later became a truck driver. He also drove CNG-run three wheelers, Azizur said.

Sajú had been living with his family in South Keraniganj for about 14 years but he moved to a new flat under the same thana two months ago. It was in the new flat where their bodies were found.

"My uncle's standard of living was very low but during the last Eid he went home in a hired microbus and spent lavishly. In addition to his family, he had three friends with him," said Azizur.

Perhaps he has got some bad company lately, hence he communicates less with his relatives in the village, Azizur quoted some of his relatives as saying.

"We did not even know that Sajú uncle moved to a new flat. We actually lost touch with him. Then we were informed by police about their brutal murders," he said.

Jamaluddin Mir, officer-in-charge (OC) of South Keraniganj police station, told The Daily Star that three persons have so far been arrested in this connection.

Police gathered that Sajú had lately been mixing with a gang of organised robbers who might have killed him and his family members over intra-gang rivalry and share of Yaba business, said the OC.

On Wednesday, police recovered the bodies and found them gagged and their hands and legs tied behind their backs.

The family never interacted with people in the neighbourhood and Sajú went out early in the morning and returned late at night, locals said.

2 workers die from electrocution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two workers were electrocuted to death while repairing electric cables on Uttara Gausul Azam Avenue in the capital yesterday.

The dead were Abu Bakar, 26, and Al Mamun, 30, both worked for Dhaka Electric Supply Company Ltd (Desco).

Engr Mizanur Rahman, who was supervising the workers, said four staff of Desco were working on the cables when the lines suddenly became active. Two sustained slight injuries, while Abu and Mamun died on the way to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Mizanur claimed the control room activated the lines before they were given instructions to do so.



Roundtable

Institute of Architects Bangladesh will organise the sixth Arcasia Roundtable on Sustainability in Architecture and Construction. Venue: Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 4:00pm.

Human chain

Residents of Lalbagh will form a human chain to protect a pond named Pushposaha, near Jagannath Saha road, from occupation of a local land grabber. Venue: Near the pond. Time: 4:00pm.

Rally and blood donation campaign

Lions Club International will hold their opening ceremony through organising a rally and a blood donation campaign to observe their World Lions Service Week. Venue: Manik Mia Avenue and BLF Auditorium respectively. Time: 7:30am and 10:00am respectively.

Web portal for rural women launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women in rural areas who have little access to information technology can now learn about matters related to everyday life through a web-portal, said State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Meher Afroz Chumki yesterday.

"The idea is to introduce wonders like skype and facebook to women who have never even attended school," she said while launching the portal www.totthoapa.gov.bd, a part of the project, Tottho Apa (information sister), in the capital.

'FORCED CONVERSION TO ISLAM OF 200 HINDUS' IN 1971

Another witness backs allegations against Jabbar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Another prosecution witness yesterday corroborated the testimonies of some previous witnesses that on the directives of war crimes accused Abdul Jabbar, the anti-liberation Razakar force forcibly converted around 200 Hindus, including himself, to Islam in Pirojpur in May 1971.

The 10th prosecution witness, Bimal Chandra Bepari, then about 17 years old, said Razakars also gave them names after the forced conversions, at Kulupara and Nathpara of Phuljhuri village of Mathbaria upazila. "The Razakars also looted 72 bundles of tin sheets, ornaments, and other valuables from their houses," he told the International Crimes Tribunal-1.

On Wednesday, the ninth witness, Ahmed Mia, 60, accused Jabbar of the conversions.

Bimal Chandra also corroborated that ex-Jatiya Party lawmaker Jabbar, now absconding, termed the supporters of the Awami League, independence, freedom fighters, and Hindus the enemies of Islam, and vowed to destroy them in Pirojpur during the war.

Hindus' wealth and properties are war booty and thus can be used by Muslims, Jabbar was quoted by the witnesses as telling the rallies of collaborators in Pirojpur. If Hindus want to reside in the country, they must be Muslim, he would say, according to the witnesses.

BCL enforces

FROM PAGE 4

central committee member, was first hospitalised in Sylhet with gashes in the arms and left leg and then taken to the capital's Square Hospital.

He was attacked at a restaurant in front of the campus with six or seven others. Another BCL man, Ainul Islam, suffered minor injuries.

Sust BCL vice president Anjan Roy, a witness, said there were around 10-12 masked attackers carrying iron rods and cleavers. They fled shortly afterwards.

Following the attack around 10:10pm, BCL men vandalised 20 vehicles including auto-rickshaws, easy bikes, and burnt a rickshaw van on the road.

Anjan accused Islami Chhatra Shibir men of the attack but could not name anyone.

Jalalabad police arrested Sust Shibir's school affairs secretary Zabedur Rahman in this connection, and a case was filed without naming anyone by the university registrar.

However, the university officials and BCL insiders said Wednesday's incident might have been tied to a factional fighting in May last year, when Uttam led an attack on one of his peers and maimed him for life. Uttam had been sued for this and suspended for two semesters after he was found guilty by the university authorities.

Dhaka Saarc cultural capital for 2016

Bamiyan of Afghanistan for 2015

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Dhaka will be the "cultural capital" of Saarc for 2016 while Bamiyan in Afghanistan will be its first "cultural capital" for 2015 to host festivals on literature, films, foods and dances.

As the cultural capital of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation, Dhaka would also host a "cricket connect exhibition" to showcase relations regarding cricket, its glory and major achievements and other cricketing heritages of the member countries.

Joint Secretary of Indian Culture Ministry V Srinivas was talking to reporters while disclosing these first ever initiatives adopted under a "Delhi Resolution" at the Saarc Culture Ministers' conference held in New Delhi yesterday.

Cultural Affairs Minister Asaduzzaman Noor also joined the summit.

Afghanistan would also host a "cricket connect exhibition" and an under-19 cricket match with India in 2015.

BARISAL GIRL'S TORTURE

Rights activists demand punishment

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Rights activists yesterday formed a human chain, brought out processions and submitted a memorandum to the deputy commissioner of Barisal yesterday protesting the recent torturing and chaining up of an 18-year-old girl under the open sky overnight for 11 hours by her boyfriend and his family who were pressing her to withdraw cases filed against him.

Meanwhile, Barisal Metropolitan Magistrate Papiya Sultana recorded the girl's statement. The victim was



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A native granary in Bandarban, surrounded by a virgin forestland. The photo is an entry for The Daily Star photo contest, inPixel.

PHOTO: KAMOL DAS

Mobile courts whimsically fining supermarkets

Executives tell meeting with BSTI

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Supermarkets at a meeting yesterday accused mobile courts checking food adulteration and contamination of arbitrarily imposing fines and filing cases without specifying the crimes and giving them no chance to defend themselves.

"The BSTI (Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution) issues licences to manufacturers for maintaining product standards. So why should mobile courts fine us for the manufacturers' faults?" said Shaheen Khan, chief operating officer of Meena Bazar.

The meeting between supermarkets, bakery owners and BSTI was held at the BSTI conference room in the capital.

Shaheen said the mobile courts often accuse the products of bearing fake BSTI labels and demand import and purchase documents of the products at the retail shops, which was very illogical as those are kept in the warehouses.

Shamsuddoha Shemul, head of retail sales of ACI Logistics Limited, under which are the retail outlets named Shwapno, said fines were also imposed for products of manufacturers whose licence has not been renewed.

For example, if the manufacturer's certification marks (CM) licence, which certifies the standards, expires in June and the renewal process is underway, the mobile courts will fine stores marketing the products in September, he said.

"If we are notified of the CM licence

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

REDUCING CASE BACKLOG

Form management committees

SC orders dists courts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court has directed the district courts across the country to establish case management committees in order to improve access to justice and court services particularly for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and to reduce the backlog of pending cases.

The decision came at a meeting of Supreme Court Special Committee for Judicial Reforms on September 4 following the success recorded in three pilot districts that have been supported in tackling case

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

EID, PUJA HOLIDAYS

Ticket hogging VIPs leave people in quagmire

PANKAJ KARMAKAR

As of previous years, a large portion of bus, train and launch tickets have been kept reserved for VIPs ahead of Eid intensifying the crisis for tickets among common people.

While people desperately rushed around and patiently stood for hours in long queues, VIPs -- ministers, lawmakers, government officials, politicians, businessmen, journalists and people of a few other sections -- booked tickets through phone calls to high-ups of the authorities concerned.

"As they are influential and have close relations with many of our top level officials, we try to entertain their request," said a Bangladesh Railway official.

"This year, the pressure from VIPs is much higher than previous years. If all the requests are fulfilled, we will not be able to sell any ticket of some trains to common people," said a director of Bangladesh Railway seeking anonymity.

"I do not know how we will manage it. Only Allah can help us," he told The Daily Star last evening.

As per railway rule, only five percent of the tickets are supposed to be kept reserved for VIPs and another five for railway staff.

Alamgir Hossain, an official of private bus operator Shyamoli Paribahan said, "The demand is very high for tickets for October 1 to 4. The number of requests we received is several times the capacity we have."

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

PROPOSED REDUCTION OF MARRIAGEABLE AGE

Nari Jogajog Kendra expresses concerns

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nari Jogajog Kendra (NJK) yesterday expressed concern over the proposal of lowering the minimum age of girls and boys for marriage in the draft of child marriage restraint act.

The proposed act would reduce, for marriage, the minimum age of girls from 18 to 16, and of boys from 21 to 18.

NJK, an NGO based advocacy coalition working for women's rights in Bangladesh, cited a study of WHO saying that early marriage and early pregnancy results in substantially increased health risk of both the mother and the child, said a press release.

WHO in collaboration with the UN Population Fund in 2011 published guidelines on preventing early pregnancies.

The organisations recommended reducing the number of marriages before the age of 18, and reducing the number of pregnancies before the age of 20 for girls, added the release.

It further added that different studies and research indicate that early marriage is linked to extremely high rate of domestic violence in Bangladesh.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

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