



Traders form a human chain at Ulania Bazar in Galachipa upazila under Patuakhali district during their half-day hartal yesterday demanding withdrawal of what they said false case against a medicine shop owner and his release.

Hartal protesting arrest of alleged Yaba trader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali
Traders observed a half-day hartal at Ulania Bazar in Galachipa upazila of the district yesterday, protesting arrest of a shop owner on Tuesday.
Rab personnel arrested Obaidul Haque Khokon, a medicine shop owner of the bazaar, at around 7:00pm for his alleged involvement in Yaba trading.
Rab claimed that they found 98 pieces of Yaba tablets, searching Khokon's shop. They later handed over Khokon to Galachipa Police Station where Sub-Inspector Abdul Malek filed a case as complainant against him.
Immediately after the arrest, over 100 shop owners of Ulania Bazar went to

Galachipa upazila town, staged demonstrations in front of the upazila nirbahi officer's office and the police station, demanding release of Khokon. All shops at the bazar have remained closed since the arrest of Khokon.
During hartal hours yesterday, the shop owners took out a procession and blocked all roads in and around the bazar. They formed a human chain in front of the bazaar committee's office at around 11:00am and also held a rally there to press the demand for release of Khokon.
Addressing the rally, Md Mujibur Rahman, president of Ulania Bazar Committee, said they won't reopen their shops until the case against Khokon is withdrawn.

He alleged that Rab men kept Yaba tablets in a packet at Khokon's medicine shop and then arrested him. They did the job only to harass Khokon, Mujibur added.
Refuting the allegation, Fayzul Islam, company commander of Rab-8 camp, said a Rab team was patrolling the area on the day. When Rab men reached in front of the medicine shop, owner Khokon tried to flee his shop, Fayzul said, adding that they felt something wrong, searched the shop and found 98 Yaba tablets in a packet.
The commander further said that the elite force arrested the owner of the medicine store for his involvement in illegal drug trading.

ALL FOR LOVE MARRIAGE Tortured by 'in-laws', Monir is now in hospital, handcuffed

M JAHIRUL ISLAM JEWEL, Jhalakathi

Brutally tortured allegedly by in-laws for love marriage, car driver Monir Hossen is going through an ordeal as the torturers, who caused serious damage to his eyes, a leg and a hand at Isalia village in Jhalakathi Sadar on October 13, also filed a 'false' arms case against him.

Police brought the victim, Monir Hossen, 24, son of Md Munsur Ali of Angaria in Rajapur upazila, to Jhalakathi Sadar police station from Barisal Sher-E-Bangla Medical College Hospital yesterday evening.
That time he could hardly keep standing.

Earlier on Wednesday, Munsur Ali filed a case with a Jhalakathi court on charge of torturing his son.

Monir, who works as a car driver in Dhaka, married Tania Aktar Nity, daughter of Jahangir of Isalia village, on August 17 last year following love affairs.

"Three or four months after the marriage, Nity's family members gave me death threat over phone while her guardians again married her off with another person secretly," he said.

"On the night of October 13, Nity's uncle Jasim phoned me and told me to come to Nity's house to settle the matter.

"Arriving near the house around 11:00am on October 12, I saw some unknown men with Jasim. Sensing danger, I tried to leave the place but Nity's father Jahangir and Jasim caught me and stared hitting in my face and eyes. Then a tall black man shot a blank fire, joined the torture on me and asked for the documents of marriage with the girl."

"They dragged me to a house where the three men badly pinched my both

eyes with needles and poured some soda and chun (acidic elements), causing loss of sight with my right eye and blurring that of the left eye.
"Then they beat me with a heavy wooden stick, breaking my hand and one leg. I fainted and after regaining sense, found myself on the hospital bed, handcuffed. I was informed that a case was lodged against me on charge of possessing illegal arms. The case is a false one," Monir said.

Contacted, Jasim said, "Suddenly Monir aimed at me with a pistol. As I caught him and cried for help, villagers came and took him to my house and tortured him."

On the other hand, Abdul Hamid Mallik, 65, a neighbour, said he saw Monir being pulled to Jasim's house where Jasim and Jahangir tortured Monir. It was heavily raining that time.
"Jahangir said that his daughter Nity married Monir at a kazi office in Patuakhali and later was divorced," he said.

"I saw Monir was brought by a tomtoy (engine-run three-wheeler) to Jhalakathi by the police and he was lying unconscious," said Rahat Khan, brother of Nity.

"Local people handed over seriously injured Monir to us with a pistol and five bullets and Jasim filed a case against Monir," said SI Jakir, investigation officer of the case at Jhalakathi Police Station.
"Monir was brought here in a critical condition and then he was referred to Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital in Barisal," said Dr Manosh Krishna Kundu, RMO of Jhalakathi Sadar Hospital.

The reporter failed to contact Jahangir despite repeated attempts over phone. He was not found at his house too.

Boy dies while imitating suicide acting

UNB, Sylhet

A minor boy was killed allegedly as he hanged himself with a ceiling fan to imitate a suicide scene in a Bangla movie shown on television in Jagannathpur upazila of Sunamganj district on Wednesday.

The deceased was identified as Helim, 12, son of Helal Mia of Shibashram village in the upazila.

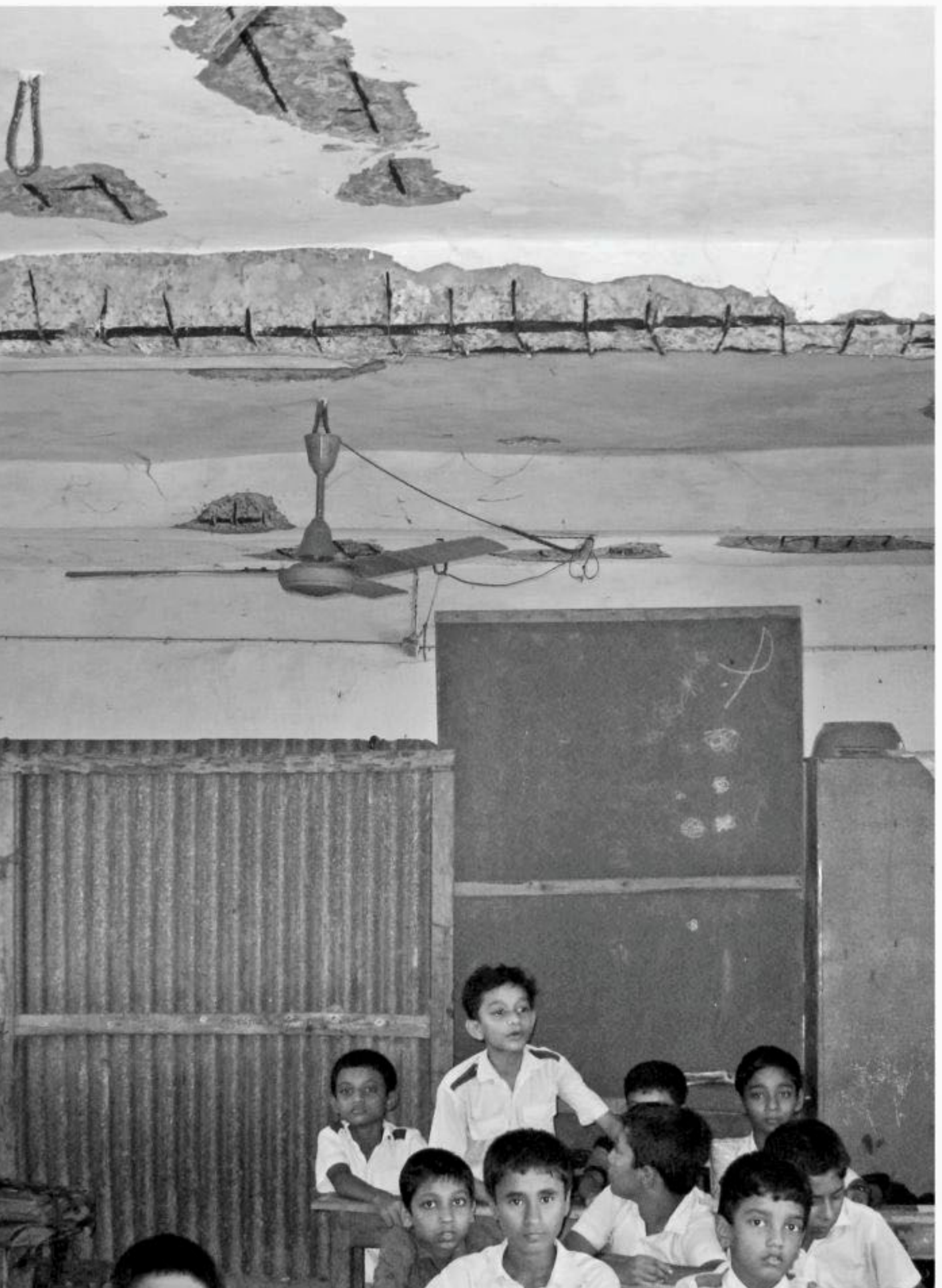
Helim along with his parents used to live at a rented house at Jalalpur village in Jagannathpur municipality area.

Mother of the deceased

Helana Begum said Helim used to watch television and imitate acting from different scenes of dramas and movies.

On the fateful day, Helim imitated suicide acting by tying his neck with the ceiling fan in his room at noon and died on the spot when other members of the family were out of the house.

Sub-inspector Lutfar Rahman of Jagannathpur Police Station confirmed the incident and said that they recovered the body and sent it to Sunamganj Sadar Hospital morgue for an autopsy.



Though the schoolhouse was declared abandoned a year ago, students of Rajapur Government Primary School in Jhalakathi still attend classes at the dilapidated building, risking their lives.

Two women murdered

UNB, Sylhet

A pregnant woman was killed in a clash between two groups of villagers at Dashghar village in Bishwanath upazila on Wednesday night.

The deceased is Rokhsana Begum, 26, wife of Matiur Rahman of the village.

Locals said, there had been a longstanding dispute between Sadiqur Rahman Furali, father of Matiur Rahman, and Nur Ali of the village over the ownership of a piece of land.

Following an altercation between the men of Furali and Nur Ali over the issue in the evening, Nur along with his men attacked on the house of Furali.

At one stage, both the groups equipped with home-made firearms, attacked one another, leaving 10-month pregnant Rokhsana injured.

Rokhsana later died at hospital around 8.00am.

Away in Mymensingh, a housewife was stabbed to death allegedly by her husband over family feud at Dhanikhola village in Trishal upazila on Wednesday.

The deceased was identified as Kanika Begum, 28, wife of Shajahan Hossain Saju, a resident of the same village.

Qamrul Islam, OC of Trishal PS, said Saju and his wife Kanika picked up a quarrel over a family matter at about 1:00 pm.

At one stage, Saju stabbed Papia with a sharp weapon indiscriminately, leaving her dead on the spot.

SNIPPETS

Wall collapse kills 2

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kusthia

Two members of a family were killed as a wall collapsed on them at Doribila village in Sreepur upazila of Magura district yesterday. The deceased are Sirajul Islam, 55, and his younger brother's wife Lovely Khatun, 45, of the village. Awlad Hossain, OC of Sreepur PS, said a brick wall of their kitchen fell on the two when Sirajul along with four construction workers was repairing the rain-soaked wall around 9:30am, leaving Lovely dead on the spot and injuring Sirajul critically. Sirajul died on his way to Magura Sadar Hospital around 10:15am, added the OC.

Man killed in land dispute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

A man was killed in an attack allegedly by his neighbour over the ownership of a piece of land at Purbo Purura village in Katiadi upazila yesterday. The deceased is Ratan Mia, 52, son of Motaleb Uddin of the village. Police quoting locals said there had been a longstanding feud between Ratan and his neighbour Nuru Master of the village over a disputed land. As a sequel of the enmity, Nuru's men attacked Ratan with sharp weapons while he was working at a field near his house, leaving him dead on the spot. Police arrested Jillur and Sultan, to local youths in this connection.

Gold trader murdered

A CORRESPONDENT, Feni

A gold trader, hacked by criminals in the district town on Sunday, died at Chittagong Medical College and Hospital (CMCH) on Wednesday. The dead is Md Babul Mian, 32, a gold trader at Kaska Bazar in Lemua union under Sadar upazila. On Sunday afternoon, a gang of 10/12 waylaid him on Trunk Road in the town over previous enmity and took him to Takia Road. They stabbed the trader indiscriminately, leaving him critically injured. He was rushed to a local private clinic and later shifted to CMCH as his condition deteriorated. He died at the hospital on Wednesday night, said officer in-charge of Feni Model Police Station Mahbub Morshed.

Madrasa kid caned for truanting hospitalised

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A 10-year-old madrasa boy who was caned mercilessly just for truanting last Sunday is groaning in pain at Pabna Medical College and Hospital.

"Azmain Amin Ceaser, a Class III student at Saad Nurani Pre-cadet School, still suffers from the trauma," said Dr Jahedi Hasan Rumi, physician of Orthopedic department at the hospital.

Shimul Hossain Mona, father of the victim of Shalgaria village, said Amin did not want to go to madrasa after Eid vacation.

He fled madrasa on Sunday, the day of reopening of the institution and returned home.

Being informed, vice principal Mamunur Rashid took the boy back to madrasa from home and confined him to a room. He beat up Amin so



Brutally caned Azmain Amin Ceaser, a class three student of Saad Nurani Pre-cadet School in Pabna Sadar upazila, lies in a bed at Pabna Medical College Hospital.

severely that my son at one stage fell unconscious, said the father of the boy.

"Amin was so traumatised that he sometimes was unable to recognise us," he said.

The accused madrasa teacher went into hiding immediately after the incident, said the officer in-

charge of Sadar police station.

A case was filed in this connection, said the OC.

Meanwhile, protesting the inhuman torture on the minor boy, several guardians of the district demanded exemplary punishment to the offender.

Exploited, abused

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system chains domestic workers to their employers and then leaves them isolated and at risk of abuse behind the closed doors of private homes," said Rothna Begum, Middle East women's rights researcher at the HRW.

"With no labour law protections for domestic workers, employers can, and many do, overwork, underpay, and abuse these women," she said.
However, Bangladesh government officials responsible to take care of the expatriates apparently are not much aware of their nationals' exploitation in the Middle Eastern country.

"We usually don't receive such complaints," said Muhammad Imran, Bangladesh ambassador to the UAE.
"When any victim

comes to us with a complaint, we respond to it sincerely," he said over the phone yesterday.

When his attention was drawn to the HRW report, he said, "I can't make comments as I haven't gone through the report yet."

Similar responses were received when this correspondent contacted the expatriates' welfare and overseas employment ministry.

"We get very few complaints from our female migrants working in the UAE. Usually, two or three migrants in a month contact us with their complaints," said Khondaker Showkat Hossain, secretary of the ministry.
Currently, the UAE is hiring only female workers from Bangladesh and around 5,000 Bangladeshi women, according to the government, are going to

the Gulf nation for domestic jobs every month.

However, Showkat admitted that migrants sometimes fall victim to exploitations by agency brokers and employers.

He hoped all the issues concerning the Bangladeshi migrants' welfare would be raised during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to the UAE due next week.

However, Bangladesh Ovivashi Mohila Sramik Association director Sumaiya Islam thinks there are truths in the HRW findings.

"Still there's no legal protection for the Bangladeshi victims in the UAE," she observed.
At least 1,46,000 female migrant domestic workers -- possibly many more -- from countries such as the Philippines, Indonesia, India, Bangladesh, Sri

Lanka, Nepal and Ethiopia work in the UAE, according to the HRW report.

"Domestic workers told the HRW about not being paid, not having rest periods or time off, being confined in the employer's homes, and of excessive workloads, with working days of up to 21 hours," said the report prepared after interviewing 99 of domestic female workers, as well as recruitment agencies, lawyers, and others.

"They described being deprived of food and reported psychological, physical, and sexual abuse.
"Many said their employers treated them like animals, or as if they were dirty and physical contact with them would be contaminating. In some cases the abuses amounted to forced labour or trafficking."

In June 2014, the UAE

authorities revised the standard domestic worker labour contract to require a weekly day off and eight hours of rest in any 24-hour period.

However, the contract does not address other issues such as limits on working hours.

The UAE authorities have reformed some aspects of the kafala system in recent years, but not for domestic workers, observed the New York-based rights watchdog.

The kafala system, under which employers confiscate passports of the workers and restrict their freedom to switch jobs, makes an individual's right to work and legal presence in the host country dependent on his or her employer, rendering him or her vulnerable to exploitation. In fact, migrants cannot even leave or enter the

country without their employer's permission.

"Many domestic workers who leave abusive employers face a stone wall," said Rothna Begum of the HRW. "They can be prosecuted for running away, while their abusers have little to fear."

On labour-sending countries' services for the abused domestic workers, the report said some embassies or consulates in the UAE do not have shelters or adequate staffing to deal with the victims.

But they should increase trained staff to help abused workers and bolster cooperation with the UAE government to monitor recruitment and contracts, resolve labour disputes, and combat forced labour, the HRW recommended.

Ebola fear grips

FROM PAGE 1

claiming over 4,500 lives so far.

Amid this situation, Dulu and five others arrived in Dhaka from Ebola-affected Liberia on October 9 and came out of the airport without any health check, revealing a gaping flaw in the airport's screening measures.

Following news reports on this, five of them were screened and found not infected with the virus.

Dulu was the only one who could not be traced or diagnosed as he directly went to his village home in Kotalipara.

When the news reports came to the attention of his villagers, they started panicking. And on Sunday night, Dulu fled the village with his family fearing for his life, according to his neighbours.
However, his relatives see a conspiracy behind Dulu's fleeing the village.
"Dulu had a huge amount

of land. Some people of the village had for long been trying to grab it. Now taking advantage of the villagers' panic, they were conspiring to burn him alive. Sensing this, he fled home," the relatives said. They did not want to be named fearing backlashes.
"If he really was infected, he would start showing some kind of symptoms. But he was fine this whole time," they said. "Besides, doctors checked him at the Liberian airport and they found nothing wrong."

"Dulu plans to go through a health check-up in Dhaka on Sunday," a cousin of Dulu told this correspondent.

Contacted, Shafiqul Islam, the acting chief surgeon of Gopalganj, told The Daily Star yesterday that medical teams were sent to the village twice but they could not find Dulu.
He, however, asked the villagers not to panic.