



PHOTO: STAR

A mobile court in Patuakhali yesterday removed all illegal posters, festoons and banners hung beside the road from main intersection in the district town to circuit house.

BAMONDAL VILLAGE IN LALMONIRHAT

Silicosis kills one more stone crushing worker

Medical team goes to spot today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Another stone crushing worker died at his house at Bamondal village under Burimari union in Patgram upazila yesterday due to silicosis, a common occupational lung-disease caused by inhalation of crystalline silica dust.

Earlier, labourer Nuruzzaman died in the same village on Tuesday.

The dead was identified as Mazibar Rahman, 50, son of late Yakub Ali of the village.

Mazibar's wife Anju Ara Begum said that her husband used to work at limestone grinding factories in Burimari land port areas of Lalmonirhat.

He worked there for four years and was attacked with the disease a year ago, she said.

By their own expenditure, Mazibar was first treated at Rangpur Medical College Hospital and later taken to the National

Institute of Diseases of the Chest and Hospital (NIDCH) in the capital with the help of Labourer Studies of Bangladesh (BLS), an NGO, a month ago.

"My husband was released from the hospital a week ago as doctors said that he had little chances of recovery," Anju said, adding her husband died at home yesterday morning.

With Mazibar Rahman, more than 41 limestone grinding factory workers died from silicosis in the last four years, said Momin Ali, joint secretary of Sanjukt Sramik Federation, a trade union federation at the port.

"Only BLS extends help and bears the expenditure for treating silicosis attacked labourers. So far, no other organisations, even any government health department, came forward in this connection," he said.

He urged the govt for providing proper treatment facility to the silicosis attacked people.

As the limestone crushing factories produce volumes of silica dust, workers of 26 factories at Burimari often get attacked with silicosis and complain of breathing difficulties, said the Patgram upazila health officer Dr. Golam Mostafa.

Confirming the labourer's death from silicosis, Lalmonirhat Civil Surgeon (CS) Dr. Mostafa Kamal said, the disease turned into a big threat for the labourers who used to work at different limestone factories in Burimari land port area.

Silica is the main element of sand and an intense inhalation of the dust can cause silicosis in a few years or even months, depending on the lung condition of the patient, he said, adding a medical team will start working in the area today.

Meanwhile, several silicosis attacked labourers in the port area urged the govt and NGOs for extending them treatment facilities free of cost.



PHOTO: STAR

Little Shilpi Rani of Badia community in Jaldhaka of Nilphamari poses with her child in the lap in front of her hut.

SNIPPETS

3 to die, 5 get life for murder

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A court here yesterday sentenced three people to death and five others to life term imprisonment for killing a farmer in Phulpur upazila of the district in 2002. Those awarded death penalty are, Askar Ali and Tula Mia, sons of Suruzzaman, and Shahabuddin, son of Safir Uddin. The lifers are, Rubel Mia, Abdus Sattar, Suruzzaman, Abu Bakar and Atab Uddin. They all hail from Bainjana village in Phulpur upazila. The court also fined the convicts Tk 10,000 each, in default, they are to suffer another six months in jail. According to the prosecution, there had been a longstanding rivalry between two neighbouring farmers of the village Abdul Halim and Suruzzaman over the ownership of a piece of land. As a sequel of the enmity, Suruzzaman's men stabbed Halim with lethal weapons at his home on May 27 in 2002, leaving him dead on the spot.

College girl's body recovered

A CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Police on Tuesday recovered the body of college girl, who allegedly committed suicide by jumping into the river near Matlab upazila from a Chandpur-bound launch on Monday night. The deceased, Amrin Nur Muna, 16, daughter of Advocate Mir Aminur Rashid, was a first-year student at Shaheed Bir Uttam Lt Anwar Girls College in the capital. Police quoting witnesses said, Amrin jumped into the river from Sonar Tari-2 launch in Shatnal area, leaving a bag and a diary on the deck of the launch. Following the incident, the launch crews stopped the launch on the spot and searched for Amrin for an hour, but all their efforts went in vain. Shah Alam, sub-inspector, also in-charge of Mohanpur River Police, said locals spotted her floating body at Satnal area in Meghna River and informed the police. Being informed, police recovered the body. Sajib Bhuyan, a passenger of the launch, said seeing her crying on the deck, other passengers wanted to know the reason. In reply, Amrin said she left her home in the afternoon following an altercation with her mother over a trifling matter, added Sajib.

6 held in India return home

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole, Jessore

Six Bangladeshis, who were held by Indian Border Security Force (BSF) while trying to enter Indian territory through Petrapole border illegally, returned home through Benapole check post on Tuesday. BSF members handed them over to Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) at the check post at night. The returnees include three women, two men and a kid, hailing from different villages of Bagerhat and Munshiganj districts. Away in Lalmonirhat, three Bangladesh nationals returned home through Burimari land port on Monday morning after serving two years' jail in an Indian prison. Indian immigration police handed them over to Bangladeshi immigration police in the morning, reports UNB. The returnees were identified as Rafiqul Islam, 38, son of Ibrahim Miah, Dulal Miah, 35, son of Moynul Islam, and Chamir Hossain, 22, son of Ekabbar Ali, hailing from Thakurgaon district.

Warehouses gutted in fire

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A woman died while four warehouses burnt down during a fire at a jute mill at Odhira in Bera upazila on Tuesday. The fire erupted from an oil tank blast at the factory at noon, sources said. Fire service officials said the fire broke out as an oil tank of Bengal Jute Mills near the warehouses suddenly exploded and it soon engulfed the warehouses. An unidentified woman, aged about 35, died when a sand-land truck which was carrying to douse the fire, hit her on the way. The affected mill owner claimed that the extent of losses from the fire may go up to Tk 30 crore. Away in Patuakhali, medicines worth several lakh taka were gutted as fire burnt the storehouse of Barguna General Hospital yesterday morning, reports our correspondent. Eyewitnesses and hospital sources said, at about 11 am, smoke came out from the storehouse of the hospital and within a very short time, the fire spread to different areas of the hospital. On information, fire service men rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control after an hour. Md Humayun Shamim Khan, Residential Medical Officer (RMO) of the hospital said that the fire might have originated from electrical short circuit. Medicines worth Tk 4 lakh were burnt. However, the accurate figure would be found later, he said.

Minor boy abducted for ransom still untraced

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Police are yet to rescue eight-year-old Bishal, who was abducted for ransom in Sadar upazila last year.

Following the incident, a charge sheet was pressed against four people.

The charge sheeted accused include the victim's neighbour Nuruzzaman, 27, his wife Achhia Akhtar, 22, and brother-in-law Fazlur Rahman, 24. They hail from Singdoi Kamar Para village in the upazila. Another accused is a resident of Narayanganj.

On August 16 last year,

Bishal, son of Faruq Hossain of the village, was abducted when he went to watch a TV programme at a shop beside their house, said the father of the victim.

The following day, the abductors demanded Tk 10 lakh ransom from the family for his release, he said.

Bishal's grandfather Mokhesuddin then filed a case with Sadar police station on August 24.

Police later arrested Nuruzzaman, Achhia and Fazlur from Sahrampur village in Birampur upazila of Dinajpur, said sub-inspector Tapon Kumar, investigation

officer of the case.

In another drive, two people were also arrested in Narayanganj district in the case, he said, adding that during interrogation, four of the arrestees confessed to abducting the boy.

Despite their confessional statements, police were yet to rescue the boy as the arrestees were giving contradictory information about the whereabouts of the victim, said the IO.

Last month, police pressed charge sheet against the four to the court on completion of investigation, he said.



PHOTO: STAR

Buddhist monks and indigenous people formed a human chain in Bandarbanj district town yesterday protesting a recent local newspaper report against U Panny Jota Thera, founder of local golden temple. They demanded action against people involved in such 'baseless' reporting and termed it a conspiracy to tarnish the image of Jota Thera.

Child in child's lap

Shilpi Rani of Badia community in Jaldhaka upazila of Nilphamari becomes mother at 11 as her poor father married her off at tender age for fear of insecurity

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

A girl in her early teens was standing beside a road at Horisabhapara village in Itakhola union of Sadar upazila with her baby daughter on the lap, a sight not so uncommon among the backward Badia community in the area.

Talking to this correspondent a few days ago, the girl said she is Shilpi Rani, daughter of Punya Wrishi, belonging to the scheduled caste people at the village.

The nomadic community people earn livelihood by beating drums rhythmically at Hindu religious festivals and making musical drums with cattle hide.

"When I was reading in Class V at the age of eleven in 2012, my parents married me off with an aged day labourer of Balagram village in Jaldhaka upazila," said the girl.

Her schooling came to an abrupt end and the

pressure of household work along with utter poverty robbed her of sweet childhood days amid the company of classmates and other friends.

Shilpi's father Punya Wrishi said he married off his daughter at a tender age as he was worried about her security.

"If local delinquents did any harm to her, there was hardly any hope of getting justice from the society leaders as we are poor scheduled caste people," he said.

After one year of marriage, Shilpi gave birth to a girl child at her father's house, without any prenatal and postnatal support from medical professionals.

"After two weeks of giving birth, my daughter lost the ability to move her right hand and leg. She has continued staying at our house with her child. Her husband is unwilling to take her to his home as she can't do household work as before," said Shilpi's

mother Champa Rani.

The pain of carrying a child and giving birth at a premature age led to Shilpi's ailment, said Dr Abdu Rashid, health and family planning officer of Sadar upazila.

Sudhangshu Roy, a freedom fighter of Horisabhapara village, said marrying off daughters at early age is a regular matter among the Badia community as they are unaware about its bad effects and a sense of insecurity haunts them.

Only a few children of Badia community get admission to school while they often drop out due to early marriage or poverty, said Sankar Kumar Roy, headmaster of a local high school.

Chairman of Itakhola union parishad Hafizur Rashid Monju said they always campaign against child marriage but poor people of Badia community often arrange their children's marriage secretly without registration.

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-18°C temperature and more storage must be ensured in freezer part for Bangladeshi weather & food habit.

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