



PHOTO: STAR

Earlier named after two local martyred freedom fighters, Shaheed Azad Pauro Primary School, and right, Shaheed Titu Milanayatun (auditorium) in Bogra town got different names a few years ago, exposing the then authorities' deliberate attempt of obliterate the memory of the heroic sons of the soil.

MAMUN-UR-RASHID, Bogra

Utter disrespect to two martyrs of Bogra

The term shaheed (martyr) was dropped from the names of an auditorium and a school in the town a few years ago, as if the then authorities wanted to to obliterate the memories of two local martyred freedom fighters.

Shaheed Titu Milanayatun (auditorium) in Bogra was named after martyred freedom fighter TM Ayub Titu, but the authorities changed the long-established name during the last tenure of BNP-led four-party alliance government.

Son of late Asmat

Zaman of Malotinagar in the town, Titu was president of Bogra district unit (School Branch) of East Pakistan Students' Union.

"Changing the name is an example of utter disrespect to those who sacrificed their lives for the country's independence," said Shaheed Titu's elder brother TM Musa Pesta, a freedom fighter and vice-president of the district unit of Awami League.

Locals said, they placed demand to the municipality mayor for revival of the former name of the auditorium on several occasions but to no effect.

After the crackdown by the Pakistan army on March 25 night, Titu, a student of Class X of Bogra Zila School, joined the resistance against the enemy at Borogola of the town but he was killed by a bullet.

Contacted, Bogra municipality Mayor Mahbubur

Renamed Bogra Pre-Cadet High School after the political changeover following the killing of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15, 1975.

Locals have demanded revival of the name of Shaheed Azad with the school.

On March 26 in 1971, Azad, along with other local youths joined the resistance to the Pakistani occupation force in the town and killed in a firing by the troops.

This correspondent could not contact school managing committee Chairman Tajul Islam as his cell phone remained switched off.

But the school was

'Virus' attack on bean fields worries farmers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bhola

Bean leaves have turned yellowish due to 'virus' attack, much to the worry of thousands of farmers in Sadar upazila.

Sources at Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in the district said, as the vegetable farming became profitable in the area, over 5000 cultivated bean on about 1120 hectares of land this year.

During a recent visit to the fields of Koralia, Balia and Dakkhin Dighaldi villages, this correspondent found bean leaves dying after the disease.

Farmers used pesticides to protect the fields from insects but all went in vain as the bean leaves and flowers turned yellowish day by day.

Finding no other way, they tore the bean leaves from the plant and used those as cattle feed, said the affected farmers.

Md Sadeq Mullick, a bean grower of Koralia village, said pest attacked the plants

on his 2.52 acres of land in spite of using two pesticides--Kasumin and Ridomil Gold. Like him, farmer Yasin Mollah, Idrish Biswas and Mofizul Islam of the area expressed deep concern over the situation.

They said because of the disease, bean yield would drop by around 30 per cent this year.

Muhammad Nazmul Hossain and Moen Uddin Mollah, sub-assistant agricultural officers of Bhola Sadar upazila, said more than 700 acres of land in Dakkhin Dighaldi union alone have been brought under bean cultivation.

Identifying the disease as a virus attack, Bashir Ahmed, plant protection officer of Bhola DAE, said the affected leaves and flowers should be dumped as it was not safe to eat bean from the attacked plants.

Ramendranath Baroi, deputy director of Bhola DAE, said necessary action would be taken soon after investigating the cause of the disease.



PHOTO: STAR

A farmer sees virus infected bean plants at his field at Koralia village in Bhola Sadar upazila.

ATTACK ON ASIA ENERGY OFFICE Phulbari mayor among 150 sued

Fresh rally on December 27

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

At least 150 people, including the Phulbari mayor, have been sued on charge of attacking and damaging the local office and vehicles of Asia Energy Corporation of Bangladesh in Phulbari upazila on November 26.

Saidur Rahman, a field officer of Asia Energy Corporation of Bangladesh, filed the case with Senior Judicial Magistrate court of Md Nazmul Hossain in the district on Wednesday, said police.

The accused include Golam Mortuza Sarker Manik, mayor of Phulbari municipality and convener of a Professional Group, a local anti coalmine body in Phulbari and local leaders of National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Ports including its convener Syed Saiful Islam Jewel, member secretary Joyprokash Gupta, SM Nuruzzaman, former member of the committee, SM Kayyum and Aminul Islam Bablu, a member of the committee and former UP chairman.

The court directed ABM Rezaul Islam, officer in-charge of Phulbari police station to record the case.

Meanwhile, the move to sue the leaders of anti coalmine protesters in Phulbari triggered a fresh anger among the local people.

Contacted, Saiful Islam Jewel, convener of Phulbari unit of National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Ports said "We are worried about the government's slow pace in implementing our demands".

The leaders of the committee called for a rally to realise their demands on December 27.

The demands include ouster of the Asia Energy company from Bangladesh and issuing arrest warrant against its chief executive Gary Lye.

Gary Lye visited the office on November 24.

Protesting his visit, the anti coalmine protesters attacked the Asia Energy office and went on rampage there on November 26. Two jeeps and a pickup van were also damaged during the attack.

Schoolgirl held as drug peddler to 'teach lesson'

Nalcity incident needs fair probe

M JAHIRUL ISLAM JEWEL, Jhalakathi

A schoolgirl, arrested on charge of keeping drugs and fake currency notes at her Anurag village home in Nalcity upazila under the district on Monday, actually fell prey to a conspiracy, said locals.

"The arrested girl is a regular Class X student of science group of my school. She is going to appear at the SSC examinations next year. I did not find any sign or heard about her addiction or involvement with drug peddling," said Abdul Jalil Akon, headmaster of Nalcity Girls' High School.

The girl, daughter of Jakir Hossen of Anurag village in Nalcity upazila, lives with her mother at the latter's house at the same village while the father, who earlier divorced her mother, lives in Dhaka.

Abul Khayer, officer in charge (OC) of Nalcity Police Station, said police recovered fake five 500-taka notes, five 100-taka notes, a 1000-taka note, a few foreign notes, a bottle of phencyclidine and 50 gram of ganja from her house at Anurag, arrested her and sent to Jhalakathi jail after filing a case in this connection on Monday.

As a few journalists including this correspondent talked to the girl at the jail gate on Tuesday, she said, "I have been victimised with this drug drama."

I don't know any drug let alone drug business. I am a regular Science Group student of Nalcity Girls' High School, preparing for the SSC examinations in 2015."

"After my mother went missing, I filed an abduction case on April 28 this year against a few people including our neighbours Khayer Chowdhury and Runu Chowdhury," she said.

Nargis Chowdhury, mother of the arrested girl, said, "After my rescue, police

forced me to give statement that none abducted me. Nalcity police then filed the final report in the case dropping all identified accused and my daughter filed a naraji petition against it in a Jhalakathi court."

"They are harassing us to make us leave the area so that they can grab our house and six bighas of land that I inherited from my father," she said.

"Police did not help me when I went to Nalcity Police Station for filing a complain against those men five days ago. Rather the OC gave me an illicit proposal that rejected. Then the OC threatened to teach me a lesson," the arrested girl said.

Refuting the allegations, the OC said, "She is a drug addict. People say she is a drug peddler. We are investigating the case."

The reporter went to Anurag village and talked with around 20 people but none of them heard or saw anything about the girl's drug addiction or peddling.

"We never saw any sign of drug addiction or peddling by the girl," said Zaman Chowdhury, 70, a shopkeeper near Rimi's house.

"I saw her going to school on auto-rickshaw in front of my shop every morning," said Jakir, a shopkeeper at Anurag bus stand.

"Nobody in the area said that the Class X girl was an addict or drug seller," said Sohan, a local madrasa student.

"The girl was victimised and arrested so that she could not be present in the court on the date of hearing of her naraji petition," said Nasir Uddin Kabir, lawyer of Rimi.

Contacted, Runu Chowdhury and Khayer Chowdhury claimed themselves as innocent and said Rimi was a wicked and drug addict girl who harassed them.



PHOTO: STAR

This land belonging to a Hindu family at Rasulpur village in Hatibandha upazila under Lalmonirhat district remains under illegal occupation of a few local Awami League leaders who built a house there after forcing the owners to leave the land ten months ago.

Police yet to free 'grabbed' land of Hindu family

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Follow-up

Ten months into the incident, a piece of land of a Hindu family grabbed allegedly by local Awami League men is yet to be recovered at Rasulpur village in Hatibandha upazila.

Although police submitted charge sheet in the case, accusing seven AL men for grabbing the land last month, the affected Hindu families have been passing their days amid fear as the accused are allegedly giving them fresh threat.

The charge sheeted accused are Patgram upazila's Bawra union unit AL president Rabiul Islam alias Miron, 46, his cohorts

Nazrul Islam, 52, union unit Jubo League president Mukul Hossain, 37, and their aides Anar Ali alias Anar, 52, Sultan Ali Khan, 67, Abdus Samad, 42, and Nasimuddin, 60, of Rasulpur and Saradubi villages in the upazila.

Meanwhile, the accused built a house on the grabbed land but police are yet to take any steps to remove the illegal structure showing the cause of litigation, said the victims.

"We could not recover the land as we are yet to get any order from the court in this regard," said SI Abul Kalam, also the investigation officer

of the case. On February 9, three local AL leaders and their four aides forcibly occupied 43 decimals of land of Bhabani Kanta Sen of the village.

Bhabani and his two sons, Bidhan Chandra Sen and Bidyut Chandra Sen, were later picked up by a group of ruling party men and forced to sign a non-judicial stamp which stated that they were willingly handing over the ownership of the land.

Following a report on the incident published in the Daily Star on March 2, Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB), a rights body, filed a writ petition with the High Court the same day.

13 cyclone shelters being constructed in Koyra

UNB, Khulna

Construction work of 13 school-cum-cyclone shelters in coastal Koyra upazila of the district is progressing fast with a deadline in February next year.

Sources at the upazila engineer's office said, the work for building the shelters involved over Tk30 crore.

These buildings in the Sundarbans area can provide shelter to nearly 30,000 people of Koyra Sadar and Maheshwaripur union at the time of any natural disaster like cyclone or tidal surge.

Two contractor firms -- Khaleque Enterprise and Dhali Construction -- have taken up the work under a project of the Local Government Engineering

Department (LGED). Tidal surge during cyclones 'Sidr' on November 15 in 2007 and 'Aila' on May 25 in 2009 wrecked colossal havoc in the coastal region of Sundarbans.

Giving utmost importance to the safety of people's lives and properties during natural disaster, the government took an initiative to build two-to-three storey school-cum-cyclone shelters in the region. Under the circumstances, the government appealed to the World Bank and other donor agencies to extend financial assistance to build the cyclone shelters.

In response to the government's request, different high-profile teams of representatives from the World Bank visited the disaster-hit areas several times and after-

wards, the government managed to construct some cyclone shelters.

During a recent visit, this correspondent found that almost 80 per cent work of the cyclone shelters in 3, 4, 5 and 6 No. unions of Koyra and Kalikapur, Chowkuni, Madhya Maheshwaripur, Bhagba and Hodda of Maheshwaripur have been completed.

Upazila engineer KM Farukh Hossain expressed the hope that the construction work of the cyclone shelters would be finished within the next three months.

Once built, the school-cum-cyclone shelters will be of great use to the coastal people, both for academic activities and as shelter during natural calamities, the engineer added.

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