



Police escort people from the premises of St Peters Church at Kakolir More in Barisal city to a safer place after some unruly people attacked on the human chain of local Christians yesterday morning. The human chain was organised protesting filling up of an old pond of the church to construct a court building.



PHOTO: STAR



15 hurt as Christians' human chain attacked

The community had organised the programme in protest at construction occupying church property

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Fifteen people including 10 women were injured in an attack on a human chain of Christian community yesterday.

The human chain was organised in protest against the move to fill up an old pond belonging to Barisal Saint Peter's Church to construct a court building.

The attackers allegedly led by a few lawyers snatched away banners, placards and festoons of the human chain and attacked the participants around 10:40am, said the victims.

Among the injured, Irani Bepari, Manju Baroi, Sima Biswas, Maria Biswas, Ava Haldar, Shefali Boiragi, Sandhya

Majumdar, Lila Bala, Alo Haldar, Paul, Shudhir Hajra, Robin Mandal -- all belonging to the Christian community, and Saiful Islam, a local journalist, received treatment at different clinics.

Later police rushed to the spot, escorted the Christian community people to a safer place, and helped them to form a human chain near Ashwini Kumar Hall around 11:10am, said Kabir Hossain, sub inspector of Kotwali Police Station.

The programme was addressed, among others, by Father Rinku Gomes, head of the church, Norbert Nipu Adhikari, president of Barisal Christian Association, Shanti Mandal, representative of Church of

Bangladesh in Barisal.

Condemning the attack, the speakers said Public Works Department on Friday started filling the pond of Barisal Saint Peter's Church for construction of a 10-storied court building adjacent to Barisal District and Sessions Judge's Court complex.

The 52-decimal pond was excavated for bathing of Christians during their baptizing at Barisal Saint Peter's Church that was constructed in 1849 on 1.5 acres of leased land during the British period.

Advocate Anis Uddin Shahid, president of Barisal District Bar Association, said, "Lawyers did not attack the human chain. Rather they became victim of attack. The pond is not

usable and as the construction would be done for the public interest, it would not violate the Environment Act."

"PWD started filling the pond for construction of a 10-storied Judicial Magistrate's Court building at a cost of Tk 27 crore," he said.

Lincoln Bayen, district coordinator of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association, said the pond is still used by a lot of people daily and marked as 'reserved' by PWD.

"Any construction by filling any water bodies used by public is violation of the Environment Act. There are a lot of lands inside the court compound that can be selected for the proposed construction," he said.

3 acid-burnt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Three people received severe burn injuries when criminals threw acid on them at Sadullahpur village in Tarakanda upazila on Friday night allegedly over a previous enmity.

Injured Rafat Mia, 27, Rafiqul Islam, 30, and Abu Bakar, 35, are now undergoing treatment at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH). They all hail from different villages in the upazila.

Sources said there had been a long standing rivalry between Aziz Talukder of Sadullahpur village and Rafiqul Islam of Dohar village over the ownership of 76 decimals of land.

Police quoted the victims' family members as saying that Aziz's men waylaid Rafat's motorbike, while he was carrying Rafiqul and Abu Bakar to Tarakanda Police Station around 8:00pm and locked in an altercation with Rafiqul over the issue.

At one stage of altercation, Aziz's nephews Amirul and Moksed threw acid on them and fled the scene. Hearing screams, locals went to the spot and rushed them to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, said Rafat's elder brother Tota Mia.

Illegal sand lifter fined

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A mobile court, led by Upazila Nirbahi Officer Golam Mawala, fined a man Tk 10,000 for lifting sand from the bed of Jumuneswari River illegally in Kashibari area under Taraganj upazila on Friday.

The convict is Md Abdul Qayyum, 25, son of Rashedul Islam of Baydanathpur village.

Police said Qayyum continued lifting sand from the river, threatening the newly built bridge over the river.

JAMAAT MEN'S BRUTAL REVENGE

5 hurt, houses torched in Joypurhat village

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

At least five people were injured when Jamaat-Shibir men launched an attack at Paterpukur village in Joypurhat Sadar upazila in reaction to the villagers' assisting police to capture a local Jamaat leader on Friday.

During the two-hour mayhem, the Jamaat-Shibir men damaged at least 10 houses of local Awami League activists and torched five other houses, locals said.

Injured Rawshan Ara, 65, Tanzin Khatun, 34, Kulsum Begum, 28, Ishak Ali, 40, and Shahadat Hossain, 29, is now undergoing treatment at Joypurhat Modern Hospital.

Meanwhile, police arrested two bullet-hit Shibir activists--Ahsan Habib, 22, and Nazrul Islam, 28, from the spot.

Locals said over 100 Jamaat-Shibir men equipped with sharp weapons and bamboo sticks attacked at least 15 houses of the village around 1:00pm, leaving five people injured.

On information, police rushed to the spot and fired several gunshots to bring the situation under control, said Anwar Hossain, officer in-charge of Joypurhat Police Station.

A team of Joypurhat Detective Branch of Police arrested Shah Alam, a leader of Amdoi union parishad from the village on Friday.

While the team was returning with the arrestee, Jamaat-Shibir men snatched away Shah Alam from the police. Five DB men were also injured in the attack.



PHOTO: STAR

A badly injured man is being taken to hospital as activists of Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir went into an orgy of destruction at Pater Pukur village in Joypurhat Sadar upazila yesterday, burning and vandalising houses and beating up people.

Palli Bidyut office gutted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A fire gutted the district Palli Bidyut Samity office at Nandina Bazar in Jamalpur Sadar upazila early yesterday.

Mafidul Islam, senior station officer at Jamalpur Fire Service Station, said the fire originated from an electric short-circuit at a room of the office around 1:30am and soon engulfed

its other nine rooms.

On information, two fire-fighting units from the fire station rushed to the spot around 2:00am and doused the blaze after half an hour of frantic efforts, said Mafidul.

Fire service sources said the fire damaged computers, motorcycles, electrical equipments, furniture, two fridges and a television worth around Tk seven lakh. Meanwhile, local people

beat up four firemen and also vandalised their vehicle allegedly for making delay to reach the spot.

Injured, Abdur Razzak, Akkas Ali, Sultan Mia and Rakibul Hassan received first aid at a local clinic, added the station officer.

A case was filed with Sadar Police Station yesterday accusing 10/12 people for assaulting the firemen and vandalizing the vehicle, the official said.

Rape accused held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Police yesterday arrested a local leader of Swachhshobok League on charge of violating a housewife at Hamcayapur in Shahbondegi union of Sherpur upazila.

The arrestee is Rakibul Hasan Babu, 27, secretary of Shahbondegi union unit of Swachhshobok League, and son of Motiur Rahman of

the area.

The victim, 25, wife of a Malaysia expatriate of Antikumra village in the union, filed the case with Sherpur Police Station, accusing Babu and his three cohorts under the Women and Child Repression Prevention Act on April 9.

According to the case statement, the accused violated the woman at the

house of Babu forcefully on January 25 and videoed the rape scene by a mobile.

Later, they continued threatening to release the video on internet if she did not give Tk 5 lakh to them.

Police are raiding different areas to arrest the other accused, said Sub-Inspector Rakibul Huda of the PS, investigation officer of the case.

20-MW power plant inoperative for 12 days

Irrigation hampered, people suffer due to loadshedding

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

The 20-megawatt power plant run by Power Development Board (PWD) at Nayahat in Saidpur upazila went out of order 12 days ago, causing immense sufferings to the local people due to frequent load shedding.

The deadlock occurred while it was on operation and the work to restore its operation was going on till yesterday.

On March 31, a 500 KVA transformer and three cooling fans of the power plant suddenly went out of order due to a technical fault, said Abul Kalam Azad, executive engineer of the power plant.

Due to the power disruption, farmers in the district are facing serious trouble for irrigation to thousands of acres of boro land in the district as the farmers mostly depend on power pumps.

Locals said frequent load shedding has led to students studying in the candlelight

almost every evening.

Sources said the France made 20-megawatt capacity gas turbine power plant was set up in 1987 with 25 years of warranty, which expired in 2012.

Although the plant is gas based but its being operated with diesel as gas supply is not available in Nilphamari.

Land feud kills boy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A teenage boy was killed allegedly by his cousins over land dispute at Gramtola village in Barolekha upazila yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Nepal Kor, 18, son of Gopal Kor of the village.

Md Moniruzzaman, officer-in-charge of Barolekha Police Station, said Nepal's cousins Sumia Kor, 19, and Dilip Kor, 21, attacked him with sharp weapons, leaving him critically injured following an altercation over the land.



PHOTO: STAR

Different communities of indigenous people bring out a colourful procession in Rangamati town yesterday marking their traditional festivals on the occasion of Bangla New Year known as, in different areas of Chittagong Hill Tracts, as Biju, Sangrai, Boisuk, Sangkran, Bisu, and Bihu.

1400 maunds of jatka seized in Chandpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Members of Bangladesh Coastguard in separate

drives seized 1400 maunds of jatka (hilsa less than 10 inches long) worth around Tk 6 lakh

from the district early yesterday.

None was arrested in this connection, said Commander of Coastguards Chandpur Station Saleh Hasanur Rahman.

On secret information, coastguards raided a passenger launch named 'Shariatpur-3' on the Meghna River and seized 200 kg of jatka.

In another drive, coastguards seized 1200 kg of jatka from a mini covered van in Guakhola area of the town.

Another team of coast-guard with the help of police seized 600 kg of jatka from Padma and Meghna rivers at midnight.

As part of creating hilsa sanctuary, the government has imposed a two-month ban on catching jatka and other fishes in 60-kilometre area of the Meghna River from March to April.



PHOTO: STAR

Coastguard seizes 1400 maunds of jatka (hilsa less than ten inches long) from different places in Chandpur and adjacent rivers yesterday.



FLASH FLOOD WREAKS HAVOC ON PADDY: Farmers are compelled to harvest unripe paddy from their fields of Hakaluki Haor in Kulaura upazila under Moulvibazar district yesterday as the crop on large areas of land went under water due to last few days' downpour.



PHOTO: STAR