



PHOTO: STAR

A large number of statues, made at the 'idol factories' of Belgasi village in Chatmohar upazila under Pabna district, are being readied by the traditional artisans there as Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the Hindus, is only a few days away.

Factories busy making idols ahead of Durga Puja

Artisans of Belgasi in Pabna want govt help for smooth running of the traditional business

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

Artisans of Belgasi village, 15 kilometres from Chatmohar upazila headquarters under the district, are passing busy time to prepare idols ahead of Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the Bangali Hindu community.

"There were hundreds of traditional idol factories at the village in 50s of the last century but most of the artisan families left the country before the independence. Now 15 to 20 artisan families here are running idol factories to keep the 200-year-old heritage alive," Shyamol Pal, 77, a senior most artisan of the village, told this correspondent during his visit to the village last week.

"Artisans usually remain busy to prepare idols from the Bangla

months of Ashar to Kartik ahead of Durga Puja," said Shyamol who is preparing six big and 20 small idols at his household factory ahead of the Durga Puja.

During the rest seven months of the year, the artisans make earthen pots to maintain their family expenditure, he said.

Over 50 artisans were seen passing busy time making bamboo structures and putting clay on them to bring shape of the idols that are dried in the sun.

At least two weeks is needed to complete a big idol and then it is taken for colouring and decoration, artisans said.

It costs Tk 6,000 to 10,000 to complete a big idol at Belgasi village and each idol is sold for Tk 8 to 12 thousand, leaving only a little profit, they said.

Five big idol factories and a few household factories at the village are making several hundred idols of Durga and other gods and goddesses this year, said Amal pal, a leading artisan of the village.

"But river route is the only way to reach the upazila headquarters. Due to poor communication facilities we cannot take our idols to distance places for sale with good profit," he said.

"Before the Durga Puja we get offer to work in renowned temples for handsome remuneration but we prefer working for our inherited business here at the village," said Parimal Pal, another well-known artisan of the village.

Artisans have demanded government support including soft loan for smooth running of their traditional profession.

Medical student drowns in Bay

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A student of Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College went missing in the Bay along the Kuakata coast at noon yesterday when he was taking a bath along with his classmates.

He was identified as Mamun, a third-year MBBS student. He hailed from Jatrabari village in Gazipur district.

Local sources said a 54-member team came to Kuakata from Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College on a study tour. They reached the beach at about 10:30am and 30 of them went to the Bay for taking a bath.

Md Ruman, a classmate of Mamun said he went missing at 2:00pm while he was taking a bath.

Some trawlers went to the Bay to search for Mamun, but rescue operation was hampered because of gusty wind.

Contacted, Mir Foshiur Rahman, assistant superintendent of police of Kuakata tourist police, said the coastguards have been asked to search for the missing student.

JCD leader arrested

UNB, Magura

Police arrested a local leader of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) from his house at Gopal village in Shalikhapuzila of the district on Wednesday. The arrestee is Anup Biswas, convener of Shalikhapuzila unit of JCD, and son of Chanda Ali, a resident of the village. He was arrested in cases for subversive activities and terrorism, said Officer-in-Charge of Shalikhapuzila Police Station Abu Jihad. Act on a tip-off, a police team raided the house of Anup and arrested him in the afternoon.

VIOLENCE DURING PARLIAMENTARY POLLS Local govt ministry's action sought against 12 accused public representatives

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The deputy commissioner's office in the district has sent letters to the local government ministry, seeking necessary action against 12 elected public representatives as they are charge-sheeted accused in different cases for sabotage and anti-state activities, before, during and after the January 5 elections last year.

The letters issued on October 5 mentioned that the elected representatives, including two upazila parishad chairmen, a vice chairman, five union parishad chairmen and four members, in different upazilas of Dinajpur were involved in different anti-state activities including arson and sabotage in their areas.

The court accepted the charge sheets against them submitted by police and proceedings are on in the cases, the letters mentioned.

The charge-sheeted accused are Md Aftab Uddin Mollah, chairman of Chirirbandar upazila parishad, also former amir of Dinajpur district unit of Jamaat-e-Islami, Nure Alam Siddiqui, chairman of Nawabganj

upazila parishad, also upazila Jamaat amir, Abdul Cani Master, vice chairman of Kaharol upazila and amir of upazila Jamaat.

The accused union parishad (UP) chairmen are Nure Alam Siddiqui Nayan of Nashratpur union of Chirirbandar, Shahadat Hossain of Rampur of Parbatipur upazila, Anisur Rahman Badsha of Chehelgazi under Dinajpur Sadar upazila, Abdul Haque of Bherveri in Khansama upazila and Waheduzzaman Badsha of Mostafapur union under Birganj upazila.

Nure Alam, Shahadat Hossain and Anisur Rahman are local leaders of BNP.

The accused UP members are Azibar Rahman of Palsha, Abu Taher of Singra, and Md Labu and Saiful Islam of Bulakipur union in Ghoraghat upazila of Dinajpur.

In late September, the local government ministry suspended Md Shamim Hossain Chowdhury, chairman of Ghoraghat upazila parishad, also president of upazila BNP, vice chairman Md Alamgir Hossain, also amir of Ghoraghat upazila unit of Jamaat, and Md Ahsanul Kabir Shamim, chairman of Bhaduria UP of Nawabganj upazila under Dinajpur district.



PHOTO: STAR

Students of Boroikandi Government Primary School in Sariakandi upazila under Bogra district are in all smiles as they get study materials yesterday, thanks to the initiative of Bogra Facebook Friends society that arranged the materials for the learners in the area badly affected by the recent floods.



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Acid attack on college girl, culprit held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A college girl sustained burn injuries as a youth threw acid on her for refusing his marriage proposal in Jamalganj upazila of Sunamganj district early yesterday.

The girl, Sukhi Begum, 17, is daughter of Abu Taher of Lakhipur village in the upazila. She is now undergoing treatment at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital.

Abu Taher alleged that his neighbour Mohon Miah, 20, son of Salek Miah, had been offering Sukhi, a first year student of Sunamganj Government College, to enter into a relationship with him for the last one year.

A month ago, Mohon had threatened to harm Sukhi if she refused to marry him.

Being rejected by Sukhi, Mohon threw acid on her through holes in the wall of her room at around 1:30am when she was sleeping," Taher alleged.

Mostofa Kamal, sub-inspector of Jamalganj Police Station, said police rushed to the village on information and arrested Mohon at around 10:00am on Wednesday.

The victim's brother Monwar Hosain filed a case in this connection yesterday morning. "Sukhi suffered two percent burns on her face and elbow," said Taher, quoting doctors.

BSF returns 2 Bangladeshis

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Two Bangladeshis, who were arrested by Indian Border Security Force (BSF) from near the zero line on Lawerghar border in Tahirpur upazila under Sunamganj district around 3:00am on Wednesday, returned home at night.

They are Haque Miah, 16, son of Satu Miah of Lawerghar village, and Ali Hosain, 14, son of Abul Kashem of Santipur village in the upazila. Both are coal workers.

BSF handed them over to Border Guard Bangladesh following a flag meeting on Wednesday night.

Quoting local people, a BGB official said the BSF men arrested the two when they went to Koari hills of Meghalaya to bring coal.



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