

NOV 6 CLASH IN KUSHTIA

# Injured JSD activist dies, AL men's houses set afire

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A local activist of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD-Inu) who was injured during a clash with Awami League (AL) men on November 6 died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) early yesterday.

The incident sparked angry reaction among JSD activists who ransacked and torched at least seven houses and shops of local AL men.

The deceased was Babul Mondol, 35, son of Alim Uddin Mondol of

Chandgram village in Bheramara upazila under the district.

On November 6, a clash occurred between AL and JSD men at Chandgram village in Bheramara upazila centring attempt to establish supremacy by the two parties in the area, said Tazul Islam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Bheramara Police Station.

Five people including two AL and three JSD men were injured in the clash.

With serious head injuries, Babul was undergoing

treatment at Kushtia General Hospital.

Doctors referred him to DMCH as his condition deteriorated on Wednesday evening.

Babul was admitted to DMCH around 1:30am but he died one hour later.

As the news spread, agitated JSD activists set fire to seven houses and shops of AL men yesterday morning.

Police from Bheramara Police Station rushed to the spot and fired 12 rounds of bullets to bring the situation under con-

trol, the OC said.

A good number of local AL leaders and activists fled their houses in the face of the attack and a tense situation is prevailing in the area.

Additional police forces were deployed in the area to avert further untoward incident, the OC added.

Earlier dozens of people were injured as local activists of AL and JSD engaged in clashes over establishing supremacy in the area on several occasions.



PHOTO: STAR

One of the several houses vandalised and burnt by aggrieved activists of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal at Chandgram village in Bheramara upazila under Kushtia district yesterday, following the death of a fellow who was seriously injured during a clash with local Awami League men on November 6.

# Farmers lose interest in cultivating zinc rice

Production target not achieved

S DILIP ROY WITH ANDREW EAGLE

Enthusiasm among Lalmonirhat's paddy farmers for zinc rice cultivation has waned as predicted harvest targets fail to be reached. "We were advised that with BRRI Dhan-62 zinc rice variety we could achieve up to 15 maunds of rice from each bigha of land," says Mozammel Haque of Kakeyatepa village in Mogolhat union. "I couldn't achieve anywhere near that. I won't grow this variety again without better technical information and training."

"I became interested in zinc rice when I understood the importance of zinc to the human body," says his

neighbour Hazarat Ali. "But I could only harvest 9 maunds per bigha, while from general aman paddy on the same land 16 maunds is possible."

Another local farmer, Saiful Islam, shares the disappointment. "NGO officials encouraged us to try zinc rice, but they didn't share enough technical detail. I won't allocate much land to this variety next year." Zinc rice was cultivated on 400 bighas of land in the district this year, according to agricultural extension department sources.

Shahin Islam, agriculturist of the NGO Natun Zibon Rochi, which has been implementing zinc rice farming in Lalmonirhat and

Kurigram over the past three years, says although correct information about cultivating the strain was provided, many farmers did not properly understand. "We provided seeds, vermicompost fertiliser and pesticides to 450 zinc rice growers," he says, "Only those who properly followed the correct cultivation process achieved targets."

Meanwhile, Ruhul Amin Mondol, the Rangpur region's officer of agricultural research and development from partner agency Harvest Plus, says that the comparatively low output of zinc rice is partially offset by high demand.

Agricultural officer for Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila, Enamul Haque, says that

while production may be lower, so is the time required from seed to harvest. "Aman needs about 145 days to grow," he says, "Zinc rice is harvested after about 102 days." He suggests the earlier harvest is an opportunity for farmers to prepare their fields for early winter crops, with potential for an extra windfall.

However, with farmers dissuaded from zinc rice, the community will continue to suffer from a zinc shortage in many diets. "Zinc is important for nutrition," says Lalmonirhat's civil surgeon Dr. Abdus Samad. "Low zinc intake stunts growth, which means that zinc is especially valuable in children's development."



PHOTO: STAR

A demonstration plot of zinc-enriched BRRI Dhan-62 at Kakeyatepa village in Mogholhat upazila under Lalmonirhat district.

# Stalker gets life for throwing acid on 2 sisters

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A Gaibandha court yesterday sentenced a stalker to life imprisonment for throwing acid on two sisters.

The convict is Abdul Khaleque, 22, son of Joynal Abedin of Utter Analtair village in Sadar upazila. The court also fined the convict Tk 60,000. In default, he is to suffer one and a half years more in jail.

According to the prosecution, Khaleque proposed marriage to the victim Radha Rani, 18, of the village, but she refused.

Angry at the rejection, Khaleque entered the room where Radha Rani and her sister Beauty Rani were asleep on November 6, 2007. He threw acid on both the sisters and fled the scene.

Hearing screams, their parents and neighbours rushed to the spot and took the victims to Gaibandha Sadar Hospital. Radha Rani was later shifted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital in a critical condition.

Victim's mother Sneha Lata filed a case with Gaibandha Sadar Police Station the following day, accusing Abdul Khaleque.

Police later arrested the accused and produced him before the Gaibandha District and Sessions Judge's Court.

After examining the witnesses and evidence, Judge Rasheda Sultana pronounced the verdict.

Away in Jheidah, three youths were fined and another was jailed for stalking.

A mobile court sentenced a teenager to 15 days' imprisonment while three others were fined Tk 2,000 each for teasing schoolgirls in Shailakupa's Benipur Secondary School.

The arrestees were produced yesterday before a mobile court led by Assistant Commissioner (land) Chowdhury Rawshan Islam. The court sent Shamim Mollah to jail for 15 days and fined Samrat Joardar, Sohan Hossain and Reza Hasan Tk 2,000 each.

# Robbers loot 6 houses, injure 5

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

Armed robbers looted five houses and injured five people at Munipara village in Sreenagar upazila of the district early yesterday.

Of the injured, Babul Muni, 36, was admitted to Dhaka City Hospital while the rest four—Sharat Muni, 34, Bolai Muni, 60, Sonai Muni, 28, and Gobinda Muni Das, 55,—were admitted to Sreepur Upazila Health Complex.

Quoting Gobinda's wife Parboti Muni, police said a gang of 35/40 entered their house around 1:00am and fired gunshots to create panic among the family members.

The gang then entered Babul's room by breaking open the door and stabbed him with sharp weapon and looted 16 tolas of gold ornaments and Tk 12 thousand cash.

Later, they entered four other adjacent houses, stabbed the family members and took away 19 tolas of gold ornaments and Tk 2 lakh from the houses.

Hearing screams, neighbours rescued the victims and admitted them to the hospitals, said Shahidur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Sreenagar Police Station.

Away in Faridpur, robbers looted valuables from a house at Amgram in Boalmari upazila early yesterday.

The house owner Bilkis Pervin said a gang of 15/16 stormed into her house by breaking open the door around 2:30am and confined her to a room at gunpoint.

They later looted 22 tolas of gold ornaments, Tk 50,000 and five mobile phone sets from the house, Mizanur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Boalmari Police Station, said.



PHOTO: STAR

Huge quantities of betel nut arrive at Sonapara Bazar in Ukhia upazila under Cox's Bazar district on Wednesday as the area sees bumper yield of the crop this season. Around two thousand acres of land in the upazila famous for growing high quality betel nuts were brought under the cultivation this year.

# Schoolgirl's body found with throat slit

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Criminals killed a schoolgirl by slitting her throat in Mymensingh town yesterday afternoon.

The victim was identified as Nadira Akhtar, 10, daughter of Yunus Ali, a van puller of the town's Mashkanda area.

Quoting family sources, Md Kamrul Islam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Kotwali Police Station, said Nadira, a Class III student of Mymensingh Zila Parishad

High School, went to school in the morning but did not return home. Family members searched for the girl but could not find her, said police.

Locals found Nadira's body lying beside the bypass road at Bade Kolpa around 4:00pm and informed the police.

Police went to the spot, recovered the body wearing school uniform and sent it to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) morgue for

autopsy, the OC said. There were cut marks on the throat, he added.

Miscrants might have killed the girl at another place and left the body at Bade Kolpa, the OC said.

Police primarily suspected that the killing might have occurred following previous enmity with the girl's family.

No case was lodged and none was arrested as of filing this report around 6:30pm.



PHOTO: STAR

Criminals vandalise and loot Singra Kali Mandir Temple at Uttar Moheshpur in Kaharol upazila under Dinajpur district early yesterday.

# Clash over capture of water body leaves one dead, 50 hurt

STAR COUNTRY DESK

A young man was killed and 50 others were injured in a clash over taking possession of a water body at Joynagar village in Jagannathpur upazila of Sylhet district on Wednesday.

The deceased was identified as Nazrul Islam, 35, of the village, reports UNB.

Police and locals said there was a longstanding dispute between the men of UK expatriate Gias Uddin and the villagers over taking possession of the water body.

The clash ensued in the afternoon when the supporters of Gias Uddin went to the waterbody.

Nazrul was shot dead during the incident. Of the injured, 15 were admitted to MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital in critical

condition.

Police also arrested five people from the village in this connection, said Asaduzzaman, officer-in-charge of Jagannathpur Police Station.

In Gaibandha, a man was killed allegedly by his elder brother following an altercation over a disputed land at Dakkhin Jamudanga village in Sadullapur upazila of the district the same day.

The deceased was identified as Nawab Ali, 45, of the village, reports our correspondent.

Police and locals said there was a longstanding conflict between Abdul Matin and his younger brother Nawab Ali over the land.

On Wednesday morning, Nawab Ali along with some farm labourers went

to the land for harvesting paddy.

Being informed, Matin along with his men rushed to the spot and tried to prevent Nawab, triggering an altercation.

At one stage, Matin started beating Nawab, leaving him seriously injured. He later died on way to the upazila health complex.

On information, police rushed to the spot, recovered the body and sent it to Gaibandha Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police arrested Matin, 63, his wife Baby Begun, 55 daughters Mazeda Begum, 35, Mozma Begum, 30, Nazma Begum, 27, and son-in-law Sadequul Islam, 34, in this connection, said OC Farhad Emrul Kayesh of Sadullapur Police Station.