

Classes hampered as market sits on school ground

Principal threatened out of office as he moves for shifting the market

ABM AMINUL ISLAM, Jamalpur

A village market occupies the common ground of Bangali Government Primary School and Baushi Bangali High School and College at Baushi Bazar in Sarishabari municipality under the district every Sunday and Wednesday, hampering classes for years.

Meanwhile, the principal of Baushi Bangali High School and College cannot attend his office for the last three weeks as the lessee of the market threatened him, following his initiative to remove the haat from the institution premises.

Bangali Government Primary School has 493 students from pre-primary to Class V and Baushi Bangali High School and College has currently 1176 students from Classes VI to XII, said sources of the two institutions, both situated within a single boundary.

As a portion of Baushi Haat (a village market) sits from 12:00pm to 6:30pm on the ground two days a week, noise disturbs classes in the afternoon hours, and the students, especially small children and girls, face problem while returning to their houses after the classes due to huge gathering there, said teachers.

Babu Talukdar, lessee of Baushi Haat since last year, has been using the ground for the haat on Sunday and Wednesday without permission of the institutions' authorities, alleged Shafiqul Islam, principal of Baushi Bangali School and College, and also president of the government primary school's managing committee.

Babu is also cultural affairs secretary of



PHOTO: STAR

MARKET ON SCHOOL GROUND: A variety of items including agricultural products occupy the common ground of Baushi Bangali High School and College and Bangali Government Primary School at Baushi Bazar in Sarishabari upazila under Jamalpur district during the school hours yesterday afternoon as a weekly haat is arranged there every Sunday and Wednesday.

Sarishabari upazila unit of Awami League.

"Mansur Rahman, organizing secretary of the municipality unit of AL, and Abdul Malek, member of the upazila unit of Jubo League, who are also members of the school and college managing committee, are shareholders of the lease," he said.

"As per advice of Gias Uddin Pathan, president of the school and college managing committee, I formally served a notice to the bidder requesting him to shift the haat from the ground on April 4, but he

did not receive it," he said.

"Failing to get the problem solved, I discussed the issue with a high official of the education ministry and the ministry issued a letter to the deputy commissioner (DC) of Jamalpur with a directive to take necessary steps on April 25," he added.

"Aggrieved due to the initiative to shift the haat, lessee Babu Talukdar accompanying Mansur and Malek, and his men equipped with sharp weapons entered my office around 11:30am on May 2 and forced me to put signatures on three Tk 100

stamps, containing a 'written agreement text' that lets the bidder use the ground for holding the two-day haat legally," says a case statement filed by the principal with a senior judicial magistrate's court on May 5.

"They also forced me out of the principal's office and threatened me of dire consequences if I try to enter the office," it adds.

Ten people including Babu Talukdar, Mansur and Malek, were made accused in the case filed by the principal.

"I dare not enter my office in fear of attack by the

men of Babu Talukdar," the principal told this correspondent.

Contacted, Babu Talukdar refuted all the allegations brought against him and his men and claimed that the said ground of the institutions has been used as a portion of Baushi Haat for about 50 years.

Md Shahabuddin Khan, DC of Jamalpur, said as per directive of the Ministry of Education, he has asked the local administration to settle the issue peacefully through discussions with all the local stakeholders.

Three to die for murder in Nilphamari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court here yesterday sentenced three people to death for killing a young man in Domar upazila of the district in 2013.

The death penalty awarded are Md Kamruzzaman Sebu, 28, son of Md Abdul Hakim Muhuri of Bagdokra village, Md Sirajul Islam Nader, 29, son of Ansar Ali Mondol of Naodabox village, and Buddhadev Roy Boidya, 30, son of late Prosonno Kumar Ghosh of Sathor Narayon village in the upazila.

Sirajul Islam Nader and Buddhadev Roy were tried in absentia.

According to the prosecution, the three were acquainted with Rakibul Hasan Pappu, son of Rezaul Huq Belal of Chikonmati Dhonipara village under Domar municipality. On July 17, 2013, they called Pappu to Mahiganj Bazaar, around five kilometres from the municipality, over mobile phone.

As Pappu reached there riding a motorbike, the trio took him to a lonely place and stabbed him. They also took away the motorbike.

Hearing screams, locals rushed in and took Pappu to a private clinic in the municipality. He was later referred to Rangpur Medical College Hospital, but succumbed to his injuries on the way to the

hospital. Before his death, the victim mentioned the names of the attackers to his relatives and friends who were attending him.

Md Mokdumul Huq Channu, uncle of the victim, filed a case with Domar Police Station, accusing the three, the following day. Police arrested Md Kamruzzaman Sebu, one of the accused, within a couple of days.

Sub-Inspector Md Shahinur Islam, also the investigation officer of the case, later submitted the charge sheet to the court.

After examining the witnesses and evidence, Judge Md Mahbul Alam pronounced the verdict.

4-KID MURDER IN HABIGANJ

7 charge-sheeted accused denied bail again

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A Habiganj court yesterday rejected the bail prayers of seven charge-sheeted accused in the case for murder of four kids in Bahubal upazila on February 12.

The accused are Abdul Ali, 60, his two sons Rubel Mia, 18, and Jewel Mia, 20, Arju Mia, 25, Shahed Mia, 32, Saleh Uddin, 30, and Bashir Mia, 48, of Sundrateki village in the upazila.

Habiganj Senior Judicial Magistrate Kawsar Alam also transferred the sensational murder case to Habiganj Chief Judicial Magistrate's

court and fixed June 9 for the next hearing.

On April 6, Inspector Muktar Hossain of Habiganj Detective Branch (DB) of Police pressed the charges against nine of the accused.

The bodies of Monir Mia, 7, Zakaria Shuvo, 8, Tajel Mia, 10, and Ismail Mia, 10, who had gone missing from Sundrateki village on February 12, were found from a Balu Mahal at the village on February 17.

Police said Abdul Ali of the village, who had a longstanding rivalry with Panchayat (a local body) leader Khaleque Master, and auto-rickshaw driver

Bachchu, who was expelled from the Panchayat, planned to kill Aziz or his son Tajel Mia as Aziz was a close aid to Khaleque.

According to the plan, Bachchu tactfully took the four children on his auto-rickshaw on the evening of February 12 from near a playground.

Later, Rubel, Arju and other accused joined Bachchu and drugged the kids to make them unconscious. They strangled the boys inside the three-wheeler, kept their bodies at Bachchu's garage and later buried them under sand.

Man killed over land dispute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A man was killed allegedly by his rivals over land dispute at Sreecole village in Pabna Sadar upazila on Tuesday night.

The deceased is Abul Kalam Khan, 45, son of Shamsher Ali of the village.

Police quoted victim's family members as saying that a gang of 5/6, equipped with sharp weapons, attacked Kalam while he was taking tea at a stall around 9:00pm.

They stabbed him indiscriminately, leaving him critically injured. Locals rescued Kalam and took him to Pabna Medical College Hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

Officer-in-Charge Abdur Razzak of Ataikula Police Station said deceased's son Suruj Mia filed a murder case with the police station yesterday, accusing six people.



PHOTO: STAR

A mud road at Bhitorkuti, a former Indian enclave in Kulaghat union under Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila, remains in the same condition ten months after the area's inclusion into Bangladesh territory as per an enclave exchange deal with the neighbouring country.

Ex-enclave residents still wait for key infrastructure, services

S DILIP ROY with ANDREW EAGLE

When 59 former enclaves finally became a fully-fledged part of Lalmonirhat district in northern Bangladesh on 31 July 2015, it seemed the decades of difficulty and disadvantage that had characterised life in an enclave were at an end. But for many former-enclave residents jubilation has turned to frustration. While some progress has been made in developing the former enclaves, key infrastructure is yet to be realised.

"Our children have to go to other places to study," says former enclave resident Yasin Ali, 48. "There is no school here."

"For healthcare we have to travel," says Rehana Begum, 42, of Banskata former enclave in Patgram upazila. "No healthcare centre has been constructed."

Residents complain too that the poor condition of connecting roads has seen no improve-

ment, making them feel as restricted as they were before the historic land exchange agreement was implemented.

"The government announced that all necessary development works, especially improved roads, would be completed this fiscal year," says former enclave resident Saidul Islam, 45. "Unfortunately the development work is yet to start, for reasons unknown."

"Last year we got our independence after 68 years of confined, enclave living" says Mahsin Ali, 56, also from Banskata. "We were so happy to become Bangladeshi citizens but still now we live without government facilities."

Hamidul Islam, 62, of Gotamari former enclave in Hatibandha upazila notes that some facilities including electricity connection and other benefits provided by government, NGOs and banks are now available in the former enclaves. "But developing road commu-

nication is essential," he says.

Abu Kalam, 55, resident of Bhitarkuti former enclave in Kulaghat union similarly mentions electricity as one of the achievements since the land exchange. "We also have sanitary latrines and tube-wells being provided free-of-cost." Nonetheless, former enclave residents wait with bated breath for new schools, healthcare centres and better roads.

According to Lalmonirhat's deputy commissioner Habibur Rahman, development projects will commence in the former enclaves soon. "The government has already sanctioned funding for these projects," he says. "Various departments will construct the new infrastructure required according to development plans in due course." The district administration is monitoring the progress of development projects earmarked for the former enclaves, he added.

PABNA'S BERA MUNICIPALITY Mayor, 4 councillors land in jail for corruption

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Mayor Abdul Baten and councillors Islam Uddin, Abdus Samad Mohaladar, Nargis Akhter, and Mahabub Hossain Babul of Pabna's Bera municipality were sent to jail yesterday in a corruption case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

Public Prosecutor advocate Abdur Rahim said the accused appeared before the Court of Special Judge Abdul Kuddus at noon, seeking bail in the case for misappropriating government fund of Tk 2.41 crore.

The court rejected the bail prayers and sent the mayor and the councillors to jail.

The same court on May 3 and May 4 sent seven other

accused, including a Water Development Board engineer, to prison, rejecting their bail prayers in the case.

Mohammad Jalal Uddin, deputy assistant director of ACC in Pabna, filed three separate cases with Bera Police Station on August 27, 2015, accusing 16 people, including Mayor Abdul Baten, of misappropriating Tk Tk 2.41 crore realised by leasing out a haat in the municipality area.

According to the case statement, the municipality authorities leased Karamza Haat in the area of the Water Development Board (WDB) and embezzled the money instead of depositing it to the government fund.

Naked, unsafe power lines pose danger

Eight electrocuted in 6 months in Gaibandha

KM REZAUL HOQUE, Gaibandha

Eight people were electrocuted in last six months as the victims came in contact with uncovered power supply lines and illegally drawn lines in different areas of the district, said police, referring to unnatural death cases filed in connection with the incidents.

There are 894 kilometres of active power distribution line in Gaibandha district, and 200 kilometres of it are made with naked wires set along croplands, village roads, even residential areas and market places, said sources of Power Development Board.

The naked wires are often drawn with bamboo poles and roadside trees, posing danger for people as well as animals.

Naked wires going across the road often get snapped after being hit by goods carrying trucks, leaving people and animals vulnerable to electrocution.

In many places power supply lines swing even in moderate wind and often sparking occurs due to twisting with other wires, said locals.

Sometimes fire incidents take place from short circuit in power lines, and even mild storms causes snapping of wire, said Abdul Mannan Mondol, chairman of Barisal

union parishad in Palashbari upazila.

Monwarul Hasan Jim, chairman of Damodarpur union parishad in Sadullapur upazila, said battery-run auto-rickshaw owners often charge the batteries with electricity from illegal lines, creating power disruption.

A plan for renovation of power distribution lines is under process and the work to replace defective wires and poles will start soon after approval from the authorities concerned, said Sadequul Islam, executive engineer (in-charge) of Gaibandha power distribution division.



PHOTO: STAR

Such uncovered power lines set with bamboo poles is a common sight in different areas of Gaibandha district. The photo was taken from Madanerpara in Fulchhari upazila under Gaibandha district.