

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kurigram

Three members of a family and a minor boy were electrocuted in two upazilas of Kurigram in the last two days.

In Bhurungamari upazila, three members of a family died from electrocution at Khashervita village on Wednesday night.

The victims were Chhabiron Begum, 42, wife of Azizur Rahman, her son Saiful Islam, 25, and Saifur's wife Momtaz Begum, 20, of the village.

Zia Latiful Islam, officer-in-charge of Bhurungamari Police Station, said Saiful came in contact with a live electric wire when he was checking power line around 10:00pm.

Chhabiron and Momtaz were electrocuted when they tried to save him.

Meanwhile, Farid Hossain, 10, son of Mokbul Hossain of the village was electrocuted at Chamterpar village in



Paddy cultivation on vast lands in Kawadighi Haor in Rajnagar upazila under Moulvibazar district badly suffered this season as stagnant water could not be pumped out due to dysfunctional power pumps under Kashimpur pump house.

PHOTO: STAR

Journo beaten mercilessly

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Some drug traders and encroachers, who grabbed Pirganj railway department's land, beat a journalist in Pirganj upazila town of the district on Tuesday as he shared a news link in his Facebook account against grabbing of railway land.

The victim is Zakir Hossain, Pirganj upazila correspondent of Bhorer Kagor.

Locals said a gang of 10/12 allegedly led by Jony, 25, and Simanta, 24, of the town beat Zakir mercilessly for sharing a news link in his Facebook account against grabbing of railway land.

They also snatched a camera from him, said the victim.

A case was filed with Pirganj Police Station, accusing 8/10 people

# Aman farming hampered on 6,631 acres of haor land

## Boro cultivation also uncertain as Kawadighi Haor remains flooded due to failure in pumping out water

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Around three thousand farmers could not cultivate aman on 6,631 acres of land in Kawadighi Haor of Rajnagar upazila under the district this season as stagnant water could not be released due to malfunction of old Kashimpur power pump house.

The affected farmers are now facing uncertainty about boro farming due to the situation.

According to Rajnagar Agricultural Extension office, Kawadighi wetland covering 6,916 acres of land sees aman cultivation

every year.

But this year, aman was cultivated on only 285 acres of land as there is persistent water logging.

During a recent visit, this correspondent found vast areas submerged while different parts of the land remained covered with the water hyacinth.

The most affected area are Abdullahpur, Sadapur, Kubjhara, Kanikiari, Keola, Dhulijura, Rampur, Sunamapur, Munsibazar, Medenimahar, Jamura, Sonatiki, Miarkandi and Tarachang area under Rajnagar upazila.

"This year I could not cultivate

aman on my four bighas of land as it remained flooded," said Abdus Salam of Keola village.

"After failing to cultivate aman paddy, we are now facing uncertainty about boro cultivation," said Sultan Ahmed of Sadapur village.

"The situation arose due to failure in water drainage work through Manu River pump project. The pumps set in the Kaudighi Haor are about 35 years old," said Nokul Das, chairman of Fatehpur union parishad.

Haor Rakkha Somonnoy Parishad and local farmers

observed different programmes under the banner of "Save Haor, Save Farmers".

On August 7, farmers observed a mass rally and on September 5 they gave a memorandum to the prime minister through the Moulvibazar deputy commissioner.

Anisur Rahman, executive engineer (mechanical unit) of Water Development Board, said, "We will give a proposal to the higher authorities to set up a new pump house in Kaudighi Haor area to solve the waterlogging problem."

# MISAPPROPRIATING GOVT RICE ACC to probe case against UP chairman, three others

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) will investigate the case filed against four people, including a union parishad (UP) chairman, on charge of misappropriating rice meant for distributing among poor people at Tk 10 per kilogram in Domar upazila.

Officer-in-Charge Ahmed Raziur Rahman of Domar Police Station yesterday said they have sent the case details to the ACC on October 9. They will also submit a report to the court as per law, the OC added.

Domar Upazila Food Controller (UFC) Mrityunjoy Roy filed the case with the police station against four people including Harinchara UP Chairman Azizul Islam and former UP member Ahsan Habib, for issuing fake beneficiary cards for two solvent locals.

Two others, Rashidul Islam and Banomali Roy of Shalmara village, were also made accused in the case for concealing their wealth information, the OC added.

UFC Mrityunjoy Roy said he filed the case as per directives of Domar Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Sabiha Sultana.

UNO Sabiha Sultana said she went to Shalmara village on October 6 and found that the two cardholders have at least 15 to 20 bighas of farmlands. Even one of them has a rice mill in the locality, the UNO added.

The duo managed the cards through forgery with the help of the UP men concerned, the UNO further said.



MARTYR HONOURED: Manikganj police administration yesterday inaugurated a mural set at the gate of district Police Lines in honour of Rabiul Karim, former assistant commissioner of the Detective Branch of Police, who was killed while attempting to rescue hostages from armed militants at Holey Artisan Bakery in the capital's Gulshan on July 1. Rabiul, hailing from Katigram in Manikganj Sadar upazila, was involved in benevolent acts including establishment of a school for the physically challenged children and another kindergarten in the area. PHOTO: STAR

# Baul akhra under attack again

## Criminals torch mystic singers' meeting place in Faridpur

A CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Unidentified criminals set fire to a baul akhra (meeting place) at Paranpur village in Sadar upazila early yesterday.

Protesting the incident, local baul community formed a human chain in front of Faridpur Press Club yesterday and submitted a memorandum to Faridpur deputy commissioner (DC) demanding arrest of the criminals.

The incident occurred when the family members of Subash Biswas,

mentor of the akhra, were asleep.

Subash, also president of Bangladesh Arshinagar Baul Committee, said bauls from different areas across the country visit his house at times and stay there. Several musical instruments were also damaged in the fire.

Sandha Rani Biswas, Subash's aunt, said her son Ashit Biswas woke up around 2:00am and found the akhra was burning.

The akhra was completely burnt before locals could reach the spot, Sandha added.

Officer-in-Charge Nazim Uddin of Sadar Police Station said none had informed him about the incident first. However, after being informed by the media, he visited the spot in the afternoon, the OC said.

Subas filed a First Information Report (FIR) with the police station against Hasan Sheikh and Akkel Ali yesterday.

Pagla Babul, general secretary of Faridpur Lalon Parishad, demanded exemplary punishment for the attackers.

# Minor girl raped, boy held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Police on Tuesday arrested a teenage boy in a case for raping a three-and-a-half-year-old girl at Malipara village in Panchagarh Sadar upazila.

The arrestee is Hridoy, 13, of Nasir Bhela of the village in the upazila.

The victim's father said neighbour Hridoy called his daughter to their house on October 8 alluring her to give chocolate. He later violated her in their latrine.

Hearing screams, his wife rushed to the spot and rescued her. However, Hridoy managed to flee the scene, said the father.

The minor girl was later admitted to Panchagarh Sadar Hospital, said police.

On Tuesday night, the victim's father filed a case against Hridoy in connection with the incident, said Aminul Islam, officer-in-charge of Panchagarh Police Station.

After filing of the case, the law enforcers arrested Hridoy from his house, said the OC.

# Bird poachers make quick buck as actions rare

## The illegal act goes unabated as parrots sell for high prices in Lalmonirhat

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Illegal catching and sale of birds especially parrots, goes on under the nose of the authorities concerned in Lalmonirhat.

Violating laws, the poachers are selling parrots openly in different markets of the district but members of the law enforcement agencies are indifferent due to unknown reason, said locals.

Azizul Islam of bordering village Chandrapur in Kaliganj upazila said "I sell 20 to 25 parrots every day but never face any difficulty from any corner, especially the members of law enforcement agencies."

He purchased parrots from the poachers in border areas, Azizul said, adding that he also poached birds, especially parrots, in border area sometimes.

Another bird poacher, Mahir Ali, of Islampur village in Patgram upazila, said he poached three to four parrots that came to the country from India, seeking food in the crop fields in the bor-

der area.

"We sell a parrot at Tk 600-1200 in the local market," he said.

Farmer Shafiqul Islam of Sarkarerhat village in Patgram upazila said, "I along with some other farmers in the village always raise voice against bird poaching in our farmlands."

A few days ago, a man was given a good beating for poaching parrots in the border area, he said.

Aftab Hossain, a resident of Tushbhandar Bazar in Kaliganj upazila said he bought a parrot from a poacher at Tk 1100 two days ago.

District Livestock Officer Dr Nasir Uddin said due to shortage of manpower, they could not conduct drive against illegal poaching and selling of birds, especially parrots, that came to the country from across the border.

If anybody is found poaching and selling birds illegally in border areas or any place in the district, punitive action will be taken against them, he said.

The charred remains of Baul akhra at Paranpur village in Faridpur Sadar upazila after arson attack there early yesterday. Right, bauls accompanied by locals form a human chain in front of Faridpur Press Club yesterday demanding arrest and punishment of the criminals.

PHOTO: STAR

# Rab rescues 39 trafficking victims

FROM PAGE 16

Miftah Uddin Ahmed said they had information that 130 illegal migrants would take two Air Arabia flights to Libya at 10:10am and 12:30pm on Wednesday.

The Rab team rescued 19 illegal migrants who would take the first flight.

"However, 21 managed to fly as they boarded the flight before the Rab team reached

the airport.... We have already informed the Bangladesh embassy in Libya to take necessary measures for their safety," said the Rab-7 chief.

Later, 20 more illegal migrants, who were supposed to take the second flight, were rescued. In the mean time, brokers informed 70 more passengers of that flight not to come

to the airport, said Miftah.

According to him, the illegal migrants were supposed to be taken to Dubai first. From there, they would be flown to Libya via Turkey.

The Rab suspects many of the victims travelled on fake visas. It found that some of their visas have already expired while those of few others would expire in a day. Even photocopies of some

original visas were pasted on passport pages.

Miftah said two Sylhet-based travel agencies, Shamim Tours and Travels and Al Mamun Travels, were involved in the illegal trade.

"A syndicate of brokers entices poor and unemployed people with promises of lucrative jobs abroad. They pledge the victims to take them to Libya without

spending money beforehand. But once the victims reach Libya, they torture the victims and inform their family members over the phone about their suffering for realising money," he added.

Husain Ahmed, 19, of Biswanath upazila in Sylhet, told this correspondent that many men from his area went to Italy via Libya in last five to six

months.

He became interested in going to the European country after seeing migrants' photos on a social networking site. He contacted a local broker to take him to Libya for Tk 4.2 lakh. From there, he would board a boat to Italy.

Hedyat Ullah, a tea stall owner and father of three children, wanted to go to

# UP member shot dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A Union Parishad (UP) member was gunned down by unidentified criminals at Godkhali Bazar in Jhikargachha upazila of Jessore yesterday.

The deceased, Rahat Sardar, 40, son of Jalil Sardar of Mathbari village, was a member of Godkhali union parishad in the upazila.

Officer-in-Charge Masud Karim of Jhikargachha Police Station, said six criminals riding on two motorbikes stormed inside a saloon in the area around 9:15am and shot him dead. The deceased's younger brother Mizan Sardar said his elder brother Hasan Sardar was shot dead by a local gang in the same manner on July 5 this year.

The accused in Hasan murder case might have killed Rahat, Mizan added.

# Underweight urea sacks sent to dealers

FROM PAGE 16

warehouses in Jessore, Jhenidah, Barisal, Patuakhali, Bhola and Mymensingh.

The Khulna warehouse refused to store fertiliser sacks that weighed less than 50kg.

"I've weighed 680 sacks and found 50 sacks weighing less than 50kg. I didn't receive them," the warehouse in-

charge Jahangir Alam told The Daily Star on Tuesday.

However, upon directives from the BCIC higher authorities, he allowed the carriers to store the sacks at the warehouse with signatures and the condition that they would take them back," he said.

After the Khulna incident, the BCIC's Dhaka office, in an attempt to cover up the incident, asked the in-charges of the warehouses to deliver the fertiliser to

dealers directly instead of storing them, according to sources in the BCIC.

The sources said farmers would suffer as they would get less fertiliser for their money.

BCIC officials in Dhaka and the districts where the fertiliser were supposed to be kept fear that the organisa-

tion might incur a loss of Tk 3 crore due to this.

The lighter vessel's logs, however, showed a few of the sacks were overweight. Unloading of the fertiliser from the mother vessel at the port was going on.

Shahadat Hossain, operator of one of the lighter vessels

unloading fertiliser at the port, said, "We informed the BCIC authorities immediately after we had found the mismatch in the fertiliser sacks. We also refused to carry those."

Contacted, BCIC Chairman Mohammad Iqbal said, "We have

informed the Saudi supplier about the mismatch in weight. They admitted that due to technical errors in their system it might cause this untoward thing.

"They've promised us to compensate. We are in contact with them," he told The Daily Star.

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