Headmaster held for caning 8 students

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Police arrested a school headmaster on charge of caning eight students of the institution in Shahzadpur upazila of Sirajganj yesterday.

The arrestee is Shahidul Islam Shahin, 40, headmaster of Rangdhanu Kindergarten and Model School.

Following the incident, upazila administration closed the school for two days and formed a threemember probe committee headed by the upazila education officer.

Police said observing the CC TV footage the headmaster went to the school's washroom and beat up them mercilessly.

Of them, Sadigul and Ashiqul became unconscious and were rushed to Shahzadpur Upazila Health Complex.

OC Rezaul Haque of Shahzadpur Police Station said police detained Shahin.

College girl kills herself

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A college girl allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself from a tree besides her residence at Sitarampur village in Sadar upazila of Jessore on Monday night.

The deceased was identified as Jesmin Akter, 19, daughter of Arif Sikder of the village. She was the student of Jessore Alhera Degree College.

The victim's father Arif said she took her life by hanging herself following a family feud with her brother.

Later, she was rushed to Jessore Medical College Hospital where she died around 12:30am, he said.



Pure water crisis in Tanguar Haor

MINTU DESHWARA with NDREW EAGLE

A tourist magnet, Tanguar Haor wetland in Taherpur upazila of Sunamganj is nothing if not beautiful. The about one lakh people who call the haor home likewise enjoy the idyllic scenery, as it changes with every season. But despite the fact that for at least half the year they live surrounded by water, many residents face a serious problem: a lack of reliable drinking water.

"People in this area, including the children, commonly contract water-borne diseases," says Morjina Begum, 38, a housewife from Gulabari village. "It's because they drink impure water."

"We collect water direct from the haor," says neighbour Sila Begum, 42. "We use haor water for drinking, cooking and other household work." In at least 88 fishing villages including Gulabari, there is an ongoing fresh water crisis.

The area has no lack of tube wells, which should offer a safer alternative; but underground water supplies in the haor area are tainted by high levels of arsenic and iron, making tube well water unfit for consumption.

"We have no alternative but to drink the haor water," says Husna Begum 45, another local housewife, "even though it can give us dysentery and diarrhoea.

Villager Sefhola Das, 45, says that with his younger brother he tried to find a solution to the drinking water crisis for their family. They constructed a 1,000-foot deep tube well. "But the tube well water was full of arsenic," he says.

Housewife Sabina Akhter, 38, also notes the unsafe condition of tube well water. "The tube well water is polluted by arsenic and iron: the reason I collect drinking water from the haor instead." Neighbour Tomij Miah adds that when

drinking the haor water, many families cannot even afford basic medicines to treat them. "Many of us live hand-to-mouth," he says. "We want government intervention, with a master plan to solve our water crisis." Saikat Roy, a sub-assistant engineer with the department of public health engineering notes

children and family members are ill from

that the international acceptable standard per litre for arsenic is 0.01 milligrams, and in Bangladesh it is 0.05 milligrams per litre. But in the Tanguar Haor area deep tube wells record levels of 0.07 milligrams of arsenic per litre.

Although he says iron offers less of a health risk, iron levels in the area's underground supply

are astronomical. "The standard in Bangladesh is 0.01 – 0.02 milligrams per litre," he says, "but in Tanguar Haor area deep tube well water contains 2 milligrams of iron per litre."

"We can't forbid people to draw water from the wells," he says, "because they use it for household chores; but if consumed the arsenic in particular will damage their kidneys, skin and liver. It causes cancer, stroke and diabetes. We promote awareness of the dangers and advise people to drink boiled surface water and rainwater.'

Taherpur upazila chairman Kamruzzaman Kamrul acknowledges that around one lakh people in Tanguar Haor area face an acute drinking water crisis. He says he has requested the administration to make a master plan to ensure safe supplies.

"The haor is painted by the three main seasons of winter, summer and monsoon," contemplates Amirul Islam, a fisher from Gulabari village. "Each season has its own beauty. To look across the water to the horizon in the monsoon makes me realise how tiny we are in this grand universe. The haor has diverse people and wildlife; the area is mesmerising. But nobody thinks about us."

First time in Marma community

8 women made karbaris

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Eight indigenous women were appointed as karbari (chief of village) for the first time in Marma community.

U Ni Hla Marma, headman of Taracha mouza in Rowangchhari upazila, appointed them yesterday. They are Pru Ma Ching Marma, U Mya Nu Marma, Nu

Ma Prue Marma, Kya Mra U Marma, Hla Ma Thui Marma, Ching Yoi U Marma, Sa Ma Prue Marma, and Shwe Yang Prue Marma.

Headman U Ni Hla said from now, the appointees will

take part in traditional social justice and development programme in their respective areas following the rules of Chittagong Hill Tracts. Sa Ma Prue, who was appointed as karbari for Baikkyong Noa Para, said, "I am very happy to receive

such an honour and I will try to serve my village people following the traditional rules in Chittagong Hill Tracts.' Bandarban Bohmong Circle Chief U Chaw Prue said there are around 1000 karbaris and 109 mouzas under the circle but there were no female karbaris in

his circle. "It's a good initiative and I hope newly appointed

indigenous female karbaris will play an important role in their respective field," he said.

Jamuna about to devour school

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Erosion by the Jamuna is about to devour Kalmu Government Primary School at Goghat village in Sadar upazila, much to the worry of students, teachers and guardians.

The fate of over 350 students of the school is now uncertain, as erosion by the river has taken a serious turn in the last three days.

The school authority has already suspended classes and shifted its all moveable properties to a safer place as it could be devoured by the river anytime.

The school has been declared closed for an indefinite period considering the security of the school kids as the authorities concerned did not get any other suitable place to relocate the school in a short time, said Afroza Begum, headmaster of the school.

A major portion of the school building has already gone into the river bed while the rest part is in the verge of collapse at anytime, she added.

Meanwhile, nearly 135 families of Jamuna river basin area have lost their all belongings due to the devastating erosion.

Most of the erosion victims took shelter on the nearby flood control dyke which also could be collapse anytime.

For the last couple of days the mighty river continued to devour homesteads, huge croplands, orchards, important infrastructures and flood control dike.

6th grader killed in classroom

Clash with fellows led to the tragedy

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

A Class VI student was killed during a clash with fellows inside the classroom at Dogasi School and College in Pabna Sadar upazila yesterday.

The victim was Md Sajib Hossain, 13, son of Md Asaduzzaman of Dogasi Kulunia village in the upazila, and a student of Dogasi High

School and College. Sajib locked in an altercation with a few other students of the class when the teacher of the third period left the classroom after the class, said several students seeking anonymity.

At one stage, a student hit him massively, causing him fall sick.

Later he died, they said. The teacher of the fourth period was late to come to the classroom and the trivial

clash led to the tragic death, they said. Md Minhaz Uddin, principal of the institution, said, "After hearing about the



Sajib Hossain

classroom and rescued Sajib. He was taken to Pabna General Hospital where the doctors declared him dead." "Teachers and students

scuffle, teachers rushed to the

caught Khairul Islam, 13, son of Habi Sarkar of Dipchar village in Pabna Sadar upazila, in the classroom on charge of hitting the boy. Later he was handed

over to police," he said. Under police custody, Khairul, however, said, "I did not hit Sajib so seriously. It was a friendly fight as his

hand touched my face earlier." Md Abdulla Al Hasan, officer in charge of Pabna Sadar Police Station, said, "Police is investigating the incident. We are not confirmed whether it is a murder or accident. We have learnt that the victim was a

cardiac patient." "Khairul is in our custody but he is not arrested yet. We will take legal

Housewife found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A woman, who was tortured allegedly by her inlaws, was found hanging in New Town area of Jessore town on Monday night.

Deceased's elder brother Sabuj Hossain said Jahir, an electrician, and his family members used to torture Marina Khatun, 25, for dowry since their marriage seven years ago.

On Monday night, they beat up Marina mercilessly till she went senseless and later hung the body from the ceiling of her room, Sabuj added.

Officer-in-Charge Illias Hossain of Sadar Police Station said none had filed any complain in this connection yet.



Locals join a banana tree rafts procession organised by Jago Nari, a coastal area-based NGO, in cooperation with Transparency International Bangladesh, on the Bishkhali river at Fuldhoula village in Barguna Sadar upazila yesterday marking 'climate justice week'. The programme aims at drawing attention of the government as well as international community for saving the coastal people from the adverse effects of climatic changes. PHOTO: STAR

USE OF CURRENT NETS AND CHAI

Indigenous fishes under threat

M JAHIRUL ISLAM JEWEL, Jhalakathi

Indiscriminate use of current net and chai (fishing trap made of bamboo slits) across the district causes serious harm to indigenous fishes. The chais and current nets are widely used for

six months from June to November of the year when all the low lands, canals, ponds and other

water bodies are full of water. "During the period, huge quantities of fish

breeding," said Pritish Kumar Mallik, deputy director of fisheries department in Jhalakathi. Current nets and chais are set at canals, and

other watery lands in the afternoon and the trapped fish are collected in the morning. All kinds of fish including their fry are trapped by the nets and chais, which drastically reduces

the fish stock, said the officer. "Earlier we used to catch fish with traditional nets. We got huge fishes of different kinds in the water bodies during this time of the year only a decade ago but now fishes are not that available," said Nuralom, a fisherman

of Rajapur. In the past the *chais* were made keeping sufficient gaps between bamboo splits through which small fishes could pass but now those are made with very little gaps and so, small fish and fry are caught, he added.

"I lived on catching local fishes but now those are not that available," said Paritosh, a fisherman of Jhalakathi Sadar area.

Use of such chais and current nets should be strictly checked for saving the stock of indigenous fish, said several fishermen, adding that some Evarieties have already disappeared from different

areas of the area. "We are operating mobile courts to stop the use of current nets. We are also trying to make people aware about the bad affects of using chai,"

Two Jamaat, Shibir men killed nals were going to the town alleged robber leader

activities there.

bike from the spot.

police claimed.

the next day.

to carry out subversive

Police also claimed to

have recovered two home-

made guns, two bullets, five

crude bombs and a motor-

were wounded in the "gun-

fight" and they took first aid,

Three police constables

Sajib's mother Mahfuza

plainclothes policemen

13 when he was returning

home from his in-laws'

with Sadar Police Station

son was not involved in any

She filed a general diary

She also claimed that her

FROM PAGE 16

ameer of Jhenidah town unit and a teacher of Asaduzzaman Hosnin Keyabagan College in Kaliganj upazila. Sajib was the adviser to Dhaka city (west) unit of Shibir.

Police said Jahurul stood accused in seven cases and Sajib in one case.

Ajbahar Ali Sheikh, additional superintendent of police in Jhenidah, said that around 4:00am, a team of police was patrolling near bypass road in Bhutiargathi village. At that time, they saw three motorcyclists coming speedily towards house. police van.

When the police signalled them to stop, the criminals hurled crude bombs at the law enforcers. Police then returned fire, triggering the "gunfight".

Sadar Hospital, the police

official said.

politics. Contacted, Ajbahar denied the allegation of Jahurul and Sajib were Sajib's mother. caught in the line of fire. The other managed to flee. The

He added that the crimi- In another incident, an

However, this correspondent failed to contact two were declared dead after being taken to Jhenidah

Jahurul's family as his house was found padlocked from outside.

'ROBBER' BULLET-HIT

leader of an inter-district robber gang, police said. Aminul Islam, officer-incharge of Kaliganj Police Station, said police arrested

suffered bullet injuries in a

"gunfight" with police in

Dhopabila village under

Kaliganj upazila early yester-

Nasir Uddin, 45, is a

Nasir, who is a convicted Khatun alleged that some accused, at Baro Bazar on Monday. picked up her son from the As per Nasir's statement, district town on September

police along with Nasir went to a field in Dhopabila village to recover firearms around 4:00am yesterday.

Sensing the law enforcers' presence, Nasir's cohorts opened fire. Police then fired back, triggering the "gunfight". When Nasir tried to flee, he was hit by bullets, said the police official.

Nasir was admitted to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital.

Police also claimed to have recovered a homemade gun, one bullet and two billhooks from the spot.

border of Jhalakathi and Pirojpur. Hardly aware of the harmful effects of catching small fish and fry with closely knitted chais, many fishermen use the item for fishing in water bodies of the area. said Pritish.

come with fresh water and mother fishes take

shelter in small canals and other water bodies for

A large number of chais (fish traps made of bamboo splits), are kept for sale at Kuriana bazar on the