

# Man to die for killing female classmate

*Mahmudul killed his classmate Mimi in 2009*

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Jamalpur*

A Jamalpur court yesterday sentenced a man to death for killing his female classmate at Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Mujib Fisheries College here in 2009.

District and Sessions Judge Md Sayedur Rahman pronounced the verdict in the murder case of fourth-year student Momtaj Begum Mimi, 22, said Public Prosecutor Nirmal Kanti Bhadra.

After examining the statements of 23 witnesses, the judge pronounced the verdict in presence of the accused, added Nirmal Kanti.

According to the prosecution, convict Mahmudul Hassan, now 30, son of Dr Abdul Bari of Mymensingh town, was a fourth-year student of Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Mujib Fisheries College in Jamalpur in 2009.

Mahmudul proposed love to his classmate Mimi, 22, daughter of SM Abdul Mannan of the same town, which the girl

declined, said the prosecution.

Mimi's refusal made Mahmudul angry and at one stage wanted to take revenge.

Mahmudul managed to enter the girls' hostel around 5:00pm breaking open the ventilator of a bathroom and was waiting before the Mimi's room No 103, says the case statement.

As soon as Mimi came out of her room, Mahmudul pushed her down on the veranda and started stabbing her indiscriminately, leaving her critically injured.

She was rushed to Melandah Upazila Health Complex from where she was shifted to Jamalpur General Hospital where the on-duty doctors declared her dead, said the prosecution.

Prof Md Forhad Ali, also superintendent of the hostel, filed a murder case accusing Mahmudul with the Melandah Police Station on February 14 the same year.



PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

A farmer looks at the vast tea plantation in the Indian side of no-man's land across the border of Nabinagar in Patgram upazila of Lalmonirhat while his own land in Bangladesh side of the non-man's land remains unused.

## 'Move on to create tension in CHT'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Khagrachari*

Five hill women's organisations alleged that some communal organisations are trying to create fear and tension in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

Speakers said this at a press conference at United People's Democratic Front office in the district town yesterday.

The organisations are Hill Women's Federation (HWF), Parbattya Chattagram Nari Sangha, Nari Attarokkha Committee, Sajek Nari Somaj and Ghilachari Nari Nirjaton Protirodh Committee.

President of HWF Nirupa Chakma said, "We are feeling afraid after Iti Chakma's murder. We heard police arrested two suspects, but are they the real killers? Police are still not sure who the killers are."

Some communal organisation tries to create fear when the Baishabi festival, the main socio-cultural festival in the CHT, is celebrated, Nirupa added.

General Secretary of Parbattya Chattagram Nari Sangha Kajali Tripura, Member Secretary of Nari Attarokkha Committee Ucraching Marma, Santi Devi Chakma of Sajek Nari Somaj and Santi Prova Chakma of Ghilachari Nari Nirjaton Protirodh Committee were present at the press conference.

Meanwhile, Parbattya Chattagram Bangali Chattr Parishad formed a human chain yesterday at Khagrachari Government College, demanding immediate arrest of the killers of Iti Chakma.

## Threat to blow up Kishoreganj jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

A Neo Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) man has threatened to blow up Kishoreganj district jail.

He issued the threat in a letter posted to District and Sessions Judge Mohammad Mahbub-ul-Haque.

The judge on Tuesday received the letter with numerous spelling errors and the sender's address was mentioned as Katiadi upazila in Kishoreganj, said Kishoreganj Court Inspector Humayun Kabir Akonda.

The letter also demands withdrawal of Sholakia's Imam Farid Uddin Mashud, scrapping of the death conviction of Mufti Hannan and postponement of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to India.

## NO MAN'S LAND Tea farming in Indian side Bangladesh lands lying unused

S DILIP ROY, *Lalmonirhat*

Hazrat Ali of bordering Patgram upazila under the district often observes tea plantations in no-man's land area on the other side of Indian border while his own land in the Bangladesh side is lying unused for years.

"My six bighas of land are lying unused as the land is high and not suitable for cultivating traditional crops. These high lands are better for growing tea, but it is not possible without the government's initiative and support," said Hazrat Ali, 58, a farmer of Nabinagar area in Patgram.

Many others, including Shafiqul Islam, 48, at Maminpur border and Mazibara Rahman, 56, at Islamnagar border of Patgram are in the same boat as vast lands on Bangladesh's side of the no-man's land are lying idle

due to lack of proper initiative from the government.

"The lands across the Indian border are being successfully used for tea farming and it is possible on our lands in the no-man's land area as we have the same kind of soil and weather," said farmer Shafiqul Islam.

"If the government takes proper step for using lands at no-man's land area like India, it will bring benefit to us," he said.

"With the help of Indian government, private companies have been farming tea on their side of no-man's land, taking lease of lands from Indian farmers. Around 15 thousand acres of land in the 30 kilometres of no-man's land areas on the other side of Lalmonirhat border is being used for the purpose," said Bangladeshi farmer Mazibar Rahman, referring to growers in

## Stalking charge against teacher

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Nilphamari*

A female student of Saidpur Women's Degree College in the district brought stalking charge against a male teacher.

Although the victim filed a complaint to the principal in this regard on March 19, the authorities concerned are yet to take any steps against accused Golam Rasul, a lecturer of psychology department of the college, said some guardians.

According to the complaint, Golam Rasul used to harass the eleventh grader at midnight over phone.

It was found that the accused teacher stopped coming to the college after filing of the complaint.

Refuting the allegation of stalking the girl, Golam Rasul said he is a victim of conspiracy.

Principal of the college Tohmudur Rahmam said he informed the college management committee about the matter.

Local lawmaker Shawkat Chowdhury, president of the committee, said he would look into the matter.



Huge quantities of mother crabs are seen at different markets in Khulna region despite ban on catching and sale of the species during the ongoing breeding period. This photo was taken from Chalna Bazar in Khulna's Dakope upazila recently.

PHOTO: STAR

# Crab catching unabated near Sundarbans

DIPANKAR ROY, *Khulna*

Random catching of mother crabs in different rivers and canals in the coastal areas adjacent to the Sundarbans is going on unabated, defying a ban by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, during the ongoing breeding season.

Hunting of crabs near the Sundarbans poses threat to the species and, consequently, ecological balance in the region.

Generally, crabs lay eggs in the Sundarbans areas on a large scale in the breeding period between the months of January and March, but they fall easy prey to hunting as a section of fishermen engage in crab catching.

The authorities concerned have imposed ban on crab catching in the Sundarbans area during this time of the year to protect the species as it is their breeding period.

Environmentalists urged the authorities concerned to take immediate steps to protect and preserve the species for its economic value.

Professor Salma Begum of Environmental Science Discipline at Khulna University said crabs help to maintain ecological balance as they are used as food by different animals in the mangrove forest areas.

It has high demand as an export item but its cultivation and research have not been given due importance, she added.

During a recent visit to the coastal areas, this correspondent found hundreds of fishermen catching crabs and shrimps with the help of current nets and traps, defying the ongoing ban.

A number of fishermen, seeking anonymity, said they catch crabs and sell those at different areas in Khulna region due to high demand.

A fisherman can catch 3 to 4 kg of crabs daily and each kg is selling for Taka 500 to 850.

Khulna District Fisheries Officer Shamim Haider said, according to the special act, crab catching is prohibited only in the Sundarbans area.

Shamim said in absence of such law in the other parts of the country, a section of fishermen are engaged in random catching of crabs.

## Sluice gate under threat of collapse

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

A sluice gate on the flood control dam near Payra port in Kalapara upazila is now under threat of collapse as some structures are being built there, thanks to the authorities' negligence.

Local influential people -- Gazi Sumon, Gazi Niaz, Hanif Khan and Badol -- are constructing four wooden structures on both sides of the sluice.

Of them, Sumon, Niaz and Hanif are activists of the upazila unit of BNP.

The four are so influential that none can dare to raise voice against them, said local union parishad member Md Kabir Hossain.

This correspondent phoned Sumon, Niaz, Hanif and Badol several times but they declined to make any comments on construction of the structures.

Kalapara Water Development Board Executive Engineer Abul Kahyer said they are taking steps to remove all structures from there.

## No headmaster in 117 Rajbari primary schools

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Faridpur*

As many as 117 government primary schools, out of a total 481 in Rajbari district, are running without headmasters for six months to three years as the vacancies caused by transfers, retirement or death have not been filled up.

Assistant teachers are serving as acting headmasters in those schools but official and academic activities are suffering as other teachers of the same position often show reluctance to follow the acting headmasters' direction, said several teachers and guardians.

The number of schools without headmasters is 28 in Rajbari Sadar upazila, 37 in Pangsha, 21 in Baliakandi, 18 in Kalukhali, and 13 in Gualando upazila, said sources at the district primary education office.

"It is very difficult for me to conduct office work and classes as there are only three teachers against the posts of seven," said Abdul Mazid, acting headmaster of Cowakhola Government Primary School in Kalukhali upazila.

Agroduct Chakrobarty, acting headmaster of Boholadanga Government Primary School in Pangsha, said, "I have been performing the duty for three years as no regular headmaster has been posted during the period. Obviously, I am facing various problems in running the school."

Md Habibur Rahman Mollah, president of Rajbari District Primary Teachers Association and also senior vice-president of Central Primary Teachers Association, said, "We have informed the ministry concerned about our problems but no step has been taken."

Tohidul Islam, district primary education officer, said, "We have already sent the list of vacant headmasters' posts to our higher authorities. But we do not know when the problem will be solved."



Under-construction wooden structures on both sides of a sluice gate of WDB near Payra port in Kalapara upazila of Patuakhali.

PHOTO: STA