

Woman kills brother-in-law to save herself

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A woman killed her brother-in-law in Nagarpur upazila while he was allegedly making sexual advances to her early yesterday. Bulbuli, 24, wife of Saiful Islam of Gangbihali village in the upazila, told the police that she hit her husband's elder brother Mizanur Rahman with a shovel around 1:00am as he tried to rape her. Mizanur died on the spot. The woman along with her four-year-old son Solaiman lives in the house while her husband Saiful Islam does book binding works in Dhaka. Deceased Mizanur, 38, lives in the same house along with his family. Bulbuli told the law enforcers that she hit Mizanur just to protect herself and had no intention to kill him, police said. Locals said Mizanur used to try to sexually harass Bulbuli since her marriage taking advantage of her husband's absence. Earlier, village arbitration was also held in this regard where Mizanur was given warning to be corrected, locals said. Reckless Mizanur, however, attempted to rape Bulbuli on that night again, they added. Being informed of the incident, police arrested Bulbuli and recovered the body and sent it to Tangail General Hospital morgue for autopsy, told Jahirul Islam, officer-in-charge of Nagarpur Police Station. Mizanur's another brother Majibar Rahman filed a case with the police station in this regard.



Women collect oysters from the Sati river at Gokunda village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila as sale of the item, widely used for producing poultry feed, serves as an earning source for many poor people in the area during the dry season.

PHOTO: STAR

Abductor gets 14-yr

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A court here yesterday sentenced a youth to imprisonment for 14 years and fined him Tk 5,000, in default, to serve six more months in jail, for abducting a girl from the town. Judge Md Abdul Mannan of the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-1 handed down the verdict in a crowded court. The convict is Md Pappu, 24, son of late Joynal Abedin of Nishindhara area in Bogra municipality. The case statement said Pappu abducted a 16-year-old girl of the area from her house on September 1 in 2013. Victim's father lodged an abduction case against Pappu with Sadar Police Station the next day. Police rescued the girl and arrested Pappu a few days later and produced him before a court that sent him to jail. He later got bail. Public Prosecutor Naresh Mukharjee said Investigation Officer Sub-inspector Anayet Hossain placed a charge sheet against Pappu in November last year.

Livelihood on collecting oyster

Each maund of oyster shell sells at Tk 180

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Collecting oysters from the Sati and Ratna rivers in the district is a means of earning a livelihood for ultra poor women in three upazilas of the district. They collect the oysters between February and April every year, when the water in the rivers is waist deep. Oysters are used for producing poultry feed. Oyster trader Hamidul Islam, 42, of Gokunda village in Lalmonirhat Sadar said at least 2,000 women are involved in collecting oysters from two rivers in 30 villages

of Lalmonirhat Sadar, Aditmari and Kaliganj upazilas. "I purchase one maund of oysters from the women for Tk 170 to Tk 180, and sell them for Tk 210 to Tk 220 to the poultry feed producers," he added. Poultry feed producer Alamgir Hossain of Roypara area in the town said he gets a 50-kg bag of poultry feed from 60 kg of oysters, and sells each bag for Tk 480 to Tk 500 to the poultry farm owners. Poultry farm owner Abdul Aziz of Jummapara area said poultry feed produced from oysters is essential for poultry birds as it makes the eggshell strong.

Asthma Begum, 46, wife of Nazrul Islam of Gokunda village said, "I am able to collect 25-30 kg of oysters after working from morning to afternoon every day." They collect oysters under the water manually, she added. "Collecting oyster is our tradition. Some years ago we had to sell the oysters to duck farm owners and lime producers at low rate, but now we are selling directly to the oyster traders," said Santona Rani Das, 44, of the same village. "I collect 30 kg of oysters every day from the Ratnai river," said Khodeza Bewa, 48, of

Shiberkuti village. "I could not stay for long in the river when I started collecting oysters six years ago, but now I'm habituated to staying for a long time there," said oyster collector Rehana Begum, 38, wife of Sahidar Rahman of Shialkhowa village in Kaliganj upazila. Atiar Rahman, 45, a farm labourer at Hajiganj village of Aditmari upazila, said male labourers are not interested in collecting oysters due to the meagre income, but the women labourers are happy. "Sometimes we also collect oysters when we are without any job in the village," he added.



A hawker shows hawai mithai, a traditional sweet especially popular with rural children, at Sindurmoti village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

Fairy floss a favourite

BY S DILIP ROY with Andrew Eagle

In Lalmonirhat and across the country, no village fair can truly be complete without stalls selling fairy floss, the sweet called hawai mithai locally. Flavoursome, inexpensive and especially popular with children, fairy floss is a much enjoyed taste bud tradition. "I spent Tk 18 at the village fair yesterday," says Sourav Chandra Roy, 11, from Sindurmoti village in sadar upazila. "I bought six sticks of fairy floss because I really like it." "I also ate two servings yesterday," confesses Sourav's grandfather Narayan Chandra Roy, 65. "Fairy floss brings sweet memo-

ries of my childhood." "Children are not my only customers," says fairy floss hawker Nur Islam, 47, who has a stall at the Sindurmoti fair. "Even old people buy this item. It is made without chemicals. One serving is only Tk 3. The taste is heavenly." Nur says he sells around six hundred pieces per day at the fair. One kilogram of sugar in boiled water with air pressure added with his manually-run machine makes around 120 servings of the sweet, explains Nur. "We never use chemicals for making fairy floss," agrees another hawker at the fair, Shah Alam, 35. "Village boys like it when it's shaped

as a cricket ball." "Fairy floss is well-liked in villages," says another hawker Jamil Islam, 40. "We never go to the towns to sell it because town children are used to fast food and expensive sweetmeats. There are around 25 fairy floss makers in this area and we do our best business at the village fairs during the dry season." A fairy-floss seller at a fair can earn around Tk 1200 per day, he adds. According to paediatrician Dr Hafizur Rahman of Lalmonirhat sadar hospital, traditional fairy floss isn't a health hazard for children or anybody else, as it is made without chemicals. "I also ate fairy floss during my childhood," he says.

'Arrest killers of college girl Jabeda'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Teachers, students and staff of Khondaker Delwar Hossain College at a human chain programme here yesterday demanded immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of the killers of Jabeda Akter. Jabeda, 18, daughter of Joynal Hossain of Dhamrai upazila in Dhaka, was first year student of the college. The human chain formed in front of the college on Shaheed Swarani Road demanded immediate arrest and punishment to Jabeda's killers. The victim's father Joynal Hossain, Principal of the college Prof Md Fazlul Haque and lecturer Shahinur Islam spoke at the rally. The incident occurred when Jabeda went out of her house around 8:00pm on April 8 after receiving a phone call. Her body was found at the maize field near her house next day. Sub-Inspector Enamul Haque said Jabeda was strangled with her scarf. Enamul, also investigation officer of the case, said police are trying to arrest the culprits.

Construction materials on Bogra road

Commuters suffer

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Piling up of construction materials on Shaheed Abdul Jabbar Road (known as VIP road) in the town is causing immense suffering to the people using the road. Heaps of sand, stones, bricks, brick-chips, along with illegal parking of vehicles, obstruct movement of the commuters, and many shopping centres, show-rooms, restaurants, coaching centres, educational institutions and residential buildings have been erected without parking facilities on the busiest road of the town. Haphazard storage of construction materials and illegal parking of vehicles can be seen in the roads at Kalibari intersection, Seujari, Jhaotola, and other locations of the town. Traffic Inspector (TI) of Bogra Bikorno Kumar Chowdhury said the owners of under-construction buildings and the construction firms do not pay heed to the orders of the police, although the traffic police have been trying hard to lessen traffic congestion on the roads. Mobile courts will be conducted soon, he added. Gazi Real Estate Limited is constructing a multi-storey building in Shaheed Abdul Jabbar Road, keeping a huge amount of construction materials on the road. Chairman of the firm Gazi Saiful Islam Chowdhury said they have no alternative, and they cannot stop the construction even if it causes sufferings to commuters. Bogra Municipality Mayor Mahabubur Rahman said the municipality has served notices asking the owners and construction firms not to keep the materials on the roads. Bogra Real Estate Association President Anwarul Karim said the association has also requested the owners and firms to stop keeping construction materials on the road, but to no avail.

25 hospitalised with mass hysteria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Many villagers at remote Toimatai village in Guimara upazila were attacked by mass hysteria disease from Monday morning. At least 25 patients were admitted to Khagrachhari Sadar Hospital in the last two days. Hearing about the matter, some people went to the village on Monday afternoon. Priyabani Tripura, a member of the team, said there are 48 families in the village and 41 men and women were affected by mass hysteria. The team admitted 15 patients to the hospital. A patient in the hospital said he felt dizzy and had palpitations and his body seemed to be burning. Khagrachhari Sadar Hospital sources said 15 patients were admitted on Monday night and another 10 patients were admitted yesterday morning. Resident Medical Officer Nayan Moy Tripura said the patients will recover in two or three days. Meanwhile, a medical team lead by Civil Surgeon Abdus Salam went to the village and brought 10 patients to the hospital.

WATERMELON CULTIVATION IN PIROJPUR Virus attack cuts farming

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

Cultivation of watermelon has decreased this year in Nazirpur upazila of the district due to virus attack last year. Moazzem Sheikh of Fakirchar has been growing watermelon for around 17 years, but he has not cultivated the fruit this year as his field was attacked by virus last year and he did not get any support from the agriculture department to overcome it. Maniruzzaman said they used medicine according to the prescription of agriculture officers, but in vain. Farmers said they spend around Tk 20,000 to cultivate watermelon on one bigha of land and get over Tk 50,000 if the crop grows normally, so it has been cultivated in the area for the last 30 years. Farmers said they cultivated watermelon this year only to meet their family needs, not to sell it, adding that most of the watermelon fields of the

village have turned into paddy fields. "Like me, many farmers of our village have lost interest in growing watermelon and are growing paddy and other crops as there is little risk," said Sobhan Sheikh. No one from the agriculture office helped them when they faced trouble in growing watermelon, he added. Rejecting the allegation, Nazirpur Upazila Agriculture Officer Dighbijoy Hazra said the fields are being attacked by virus because of continuous cultivation of watermelon. He said it is very difficult to check the virus if it attacks a watermelon field. According to the Pirojpur agriculture office, watermelon has been cultivated on 258 hectares of land this year, of which 130 hectares are in Nazirpur. Watermelon was cultivated on 377 hectares of land last year, of which 260 hectares were in Nazirpur. Average production from one hectare was 48 tonnes last year.

Three polybag shops fined

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

A mobile court here fined three shop keepers for keeping illegal polythene bags. Sunil Saha and Sukanta Saha of Dudhbazar were fined Tk 20,000 and Tk 10,000 respectively, while Subrata Saha of Kanchabazar was fined Tk 5,000 for keeping and selling the bags. Executive Magistrate Sanjida Shanaj led the court, while Inspector Tuhin Alam of the Department of Environment (DOE) imposed the fines. Later, 32 kg of polythene bags recovered from the shops were destroyed.



Construction materials occupy a large portion of Shaheed Abdul Jabbar Road (popularly known as VIP road) in Bogra town, causing nuisance for commuters and pedestrians on the important thoroughfare.

PHOTO: STAR