



Sixty-year-old widow Hoshney Ara, surviving on her late husband's monthly pension of Tk 6000, wonders how much struggle still awaits her as her mentally imbalanced sons Khairul Kabir alias Rono (above right) and Shafikul Kabir alias Sumon have to be kept locked, being provided food from outside. The photo was taken from in front of their house in PTI area of Pirojpur town.

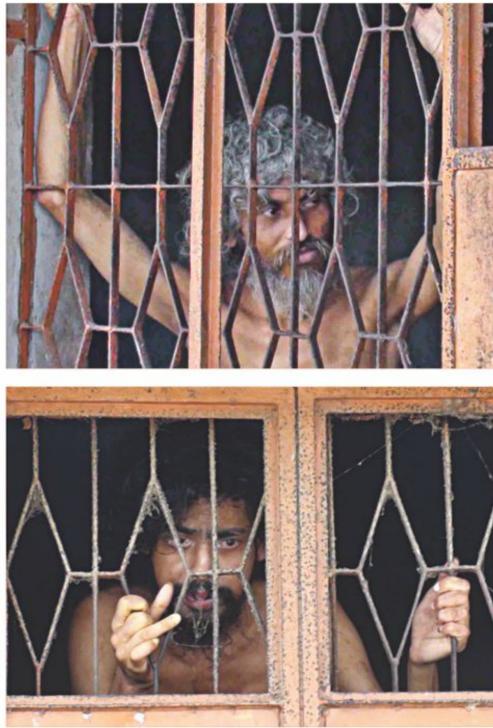


PHOTO: STAR

Govt decision protested

Second time medical admission seekers form human chain

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Second time medical admission seekers yesterday formed a human chain in the town demanding withdrawal of a government decision of deducting five marks from their total marks in the test.

Students under the banner of "admission seeker general students" held the rally.

Speakers said admission test for MBBS and BDS for 2017-2018 sessions is scheduled to be held next month, but the ministry concerned suddenly decided to deduct five marks for the second time admission seekers, which will destroy dreams of many to be a doctor.

The health ministry recently decided to deduct five marks from the test marks of second time admission seekers in medical and dental colleges.

Tk 2.71 CR MISAPPROPRIATED 2 PSTU engrs sued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Two superintending engineers of Patuakhali Science and Technology University (PSTU) were sued on charge of misappropriating over Tk 2.71 crore.

The accused are Md Eunus Sharif and Abdul Motalab Khan.

Gazi Motiur Rahman of Muradia village in Dumki upazila filed the case with Patuakhali Senior Special Judge's Court on Monday, said advocate Nesar Uddin, lawyer for the plaintiff.

According to the case statement, the two engineers called separate tenders of nine development projects between June 21 to December 31 last year and issued work order to selected bidders by taking financial benefit, misappropriating Tk 2,71,72,608.

In tender number 1, M/S Abdur Rashid Mia was the lowest bidder for construction of first and second floors of TSC (Teachers and Students Centre) building as the firm bid Tk 2,64,67,703.80 but both accused issued WO to another bidder M/S Star Light Service, which bid Tk 3,26,61,975.21. The government had to count loss of Tk 51,94,271 in the tender.

In tender number 2, construction of first and second floors of university's central mosque and M/S Abul Kalam Azad was the lowest bidder as he bid Tk 1,53,15,050.70 but WO was issued to M/S Anik Trading Corporation which bid Tk 1,66,44,370. The government lost Tk 13,29,319.30 in the tender.

In this way, the accused misappropriated a total of Tk 2.71 crore from six tenders including the aforementioned ones.

One of the accused, Eunus Sharif, said "We issued WO as per Public Procurement Rule and no corruption took place here."

Mother stands for comfort, but who will comfort mother?

Pirojpur widow struggles to care for two mentally ill sons

HABIBUR RAHMAN with ANDREW EAGLE

It's natural for mothers to worry about their children. But Hoshney Ara, 60, a widow originally from Anuraag village in Jhalakathi's Nalchity upazila, who survives on her late husband's Tk 6,000 monthly pension, has greater reason for concern about her sons than most. Her two sons Khairul Kabir Rono, 35 and Shafikul Kabir Sumon, 33, are mentally unwell; as the years have passed looking after them has grown increasingly difficult.

"Rono's illness began when he was in Class nine," Hoshney says. "Sumon was alright up until he passed his Higher Secondary Certificate exam. If only one of my sons was well I could have no sorrow."

Hoshney has spent a good deal of money on

doctors and local healers. "I took Sumon to Pabna mental hospital once," she continues. "After three months they sent him back." Due to her sons' erratic behaviour Hoshney has no choice but to keep them locked inside the house. Rono has a habit of standing naked before the windows. Sumon likes to hide in another room.

"The neighbours have helped me a lot," says Hoshney, whose relatives rarely visit. "They used to help me bathe them." For the last three years that too has not been possible. "Because they are older, neither the neighbours nor I dare to enter the house, fearing assault." She prepares two meals a day for her sons, passing the food through the windows.

Wife of a food officer, the late Abdur Rab Mia, Hoshney currently lives in the primary teachers'

training institute area of Pirojpur town, where the family bought a home the year before her husband died from stroke. She also has a daughter, Dipa, who is married and lives in the town.

"Dipa is the only one who visits me regularly," says Hoshney.

"We feel very sorry for Hoshney Ara Aunty," says a neighbour, Piara Begum. "We try to help her, as we can."

For Hoshney, it's not only the day to day management of her sorrowful household that has her worried. She is even more concerned about what will happen to her sons after she is gone. "How can I leave them?" she says, her voice choked with pain.

Now she has an additional cause for worry. "A neighbour is claiming possession of my house and I don't know what to do about it," she says.

Woman's wit saves abducted boy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhalakathi

Cleverness and presence of mind of Momtaz Begum, a middle-aged woman in Nalchity upazila of the district, has saved a five-and-a-half-year-old boy from the clutch of his abductor.

Victim Shakib, son of Jashim Uddin of Kalapar village in Brahmanbaria Sadar upazila, also a Class I student at a local primary school, was handed over to his family members yesterday, said Jhalakathi Superintendent of Police (SP) Jubaidur Rahman.

Police also arrested Md Hossain, 25, alleged kidnapper of the boy, with the help of Momtaz and locals.

Police said Hossain picked up Shakib while he was playing near his house in Brahmanbaria on Sunday evening and then took the boy to Barisal by a launch the next day.

On Monday morning, Hossain

entered Momtaz's house in Riapur area beside Barisal-Khulna highway and asked for some food from Momtaz to feed the boy.

The little boy burst into tears when Momtaz asked him about his mother and other family members. As the boy was looking a bit drowsy, Momtaz fed him a green mango.

Being suspicious, Momtaz again asked Hossain about the identity of the boy but Hossain failed to give any satisfactory answer.

Later, taking the boy in her lap, Momtaz went to adjacent Battola Bazar and informed the villagers about her suspicion.

Villagers caught Hossain and later handed him over to the police.

"Courageous and intelligent Momtaz has helped us to get back our abducted son and I will always remain grateful to her for this", said Jashim, also a firefighter at Brahmanbaria fire station.

People living in hills in panic

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

People living atop or beside hills in the district are passing days in panic, especially after Achhia Begum, 35, and her daughter Fahmida Begum, 13, were killed in a landslide on a hill slope at Dimai village of Barlekha upazila under the district early Sunday.

Earlier tragic death of scores of people in landslides in Rangamati and Chittagong districts triggered panic among the people living in hill areas of greater Sylhet region including Moulvibazar.

"I felt shocked when I saw the news and scenes of Rangamati landslides on television. This could have happened to me and my family members too as we live on a hill," said Moina Mia, 45, a resident of Boditila village in Moulvibazar.

Kishore Roy Chowdhury, vice chairman of Moulvibazar's Juri upazila said they are warning thousands of locals to take shelter in a safer place.

"We also try to prevent cutting hills, which cause landslides. However, some influential people of these areas often cut hills during night," he said.

"During the rainy season last year, at least six people were injured and fifty houses were affected by landslide at Montoil and Goshorong in Joyfarnagar union. He said, such incidents happen due to hill cutting by influential people," said Masum Reza, union parishad chairman.

Nurul Muhaimin Milton, general secretary of Moulvibazar Paribesh Sangbadik Forum, said, "We are conducting awareness campaign against destroying hills but influential people continue the callous act."

Two arrested with 8 pipe guns in Bogra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Armed Police Battalion (APBN) of Bogra arrested two people with arms, ammunition and electrical equipment from Shakpala area under Shajahanpur upazila of the district yesterday.

The arrestees are Shaju Mia, 36, son of Sharif Uddin, and Sultan Mia, 18, son of Shajahan Ali of the area.

APBN sources said, acting on a tip-off, a team of police conducted a drive in the area and seized eight pipe guns, three bullets, three cartridges of pipe gun, one drill machine and an electric lathe machine from the house of Shajahan Ali of the area.

Assistant Superintendent of Police of Bogra APBN Farhad Hossain said a case under the arms act will be filed against them with Shajahanpur Police Station.

Jhalakathi safer with CCTV cameras

M JAHIRUL ISLAM JEWEL, Jhalakathi

The police administration has set Closed Circuit TV (CCTV) cameras on important spots in the district headquarters, upazila towns and highways ahead of Eid, making people feel safer in all four upazilas of the district.

About 150 cameras have already been set up in Jhalakathi Sadar, Rajapur, Nalchity and Kathalia upazilas under the district. No robbery occurred after setting CCTV cameras in Jhalakathi Sadar around a month ago," said Md Jubaydur Rahman, superintendent of police (SP), Jhalakathi.

Various crimes have also decreased in three other upazilas after setting of the cameras there two weeks ago, he said.

"Now we don't feel any discomfort in the market as the eve-teasers are not seen after setting the CCTV cameras," said Nadira Aktar who came for shopping with her families at Rajapur Bazar.

"We always noticed some youths on the way to our college but now they are not seen," said Tania Aktar, a student of Jhalakathi Government Women's College.

Several girls who came to Kaporpatti market in Jhalakathi Sadar said they are now enjoying Eid shopping without any fear of harassment.

Female students of different schools and colleges of the upazila towns said they now feel safe thinking that there are cameras to watch movement of people.

"I have to keep some furniture outside the

restaurant during Ramadan. Last year some furniture was stolen at night but this year CCTV cameras saved me from theft," said Arun Chandra Shil, a restaurant owner of Rajapur Bazar.

"Our business houses and traders are operating their business without any fear during this Eid shopping rush, thanks to the setting of the CCTV cameras," said Md Mahub, president of Jhalakathi Chamber and Commerce.

"We can carry passengers till night ahead of the

Eid as highways seem safe with the cameras," said Barkot, a rented bike rider of Rajapur Bagri area.

Seeking unanimity, a few youths at Rajapur said during Eid shopping rush, they usually teased the young girls for fun at markets but now they do not go to market without need as they are afraid due to monitoring through CCTV cameras.

Most of the roads of the district will come under the purview of the modern technology-based monitoring within six months, the SP said.



The road leading to Madhabkunda waterfall in Barlekha upazila of Moulvibazar caved in on Monday night, posing high risk for locals as well as visitors.

PHOTO: STAR

Large cracks appear in Madhabkunda

Tourism becomes risky ahead of Eid holidays

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Cracks have developed again in Madhabkunda waterfall area of Barlekha upazila under the district on Monday night, making the favorite tourist destination in the district highly risky ahead of the Eid holidays.

The incident, like the development of similar cracks in the area on May 17, 18 and 20 last year, has created fresh panic among the locals as well as visitors.

"Around a 40-foot-long area on the road leading to Madhabkunda waterfall caved in by two feet on Monday night, following heavy rain for the last few days. The area is now highly vulnerable to serious accidents," said SM Abdullah Al Mamun, upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of Barlekha.

Noor Alam, a local shopkeeper, said they heard an unusual sound on Monday night and later discovered a crack in the area, which gradually

expanded.

Abdul Karim Kim, general secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon's Sylhet chapter, said, "Some people cut big trees in Madhabkunda forest areas to make plantations of banana, chili etc. But such small trees and plants can't hold the soil tightly. The situation increases the possibility of repeated landslides and cracks."

Barlekha UNO SM Abdullah Al Mamun said, "To save Madhabkunda forest, a guide wall must be built in the area immediately. The forest department should take urgent action in this regard."

RFM Monirul Islam, divisional forest officer of Sylhet Forest Division, said, "Local Government Engineering Department is conducting development work in the area. The work is being interrupted due to rain. It will resume as soon as possible."

Woman stabbed dead by husband

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

A young housewife, who was stabbed allegedly by her husband at Hajipur village in Magura Sadar upazila on Monday night, died on her way to a hospital in the capital early yesterday.

The deceased was Achhiya Khatun, 20, daughter of Mukul Munshi of Pashchim Bariwala village in the upazila.

Quoting locals, police said following a case filed by Achhiya over dowry, they arrested her husband Anwar Hossain, 35, about two months ago and he was behind bars since then.

Anwar, son of Lal Mohammad Sheikh of Palita Beruiei village, and former Imam at Fulbari-Laxmikal Mosque, came out from the jail on bail two days ago.

On Monday, Anwar entered his in-law's house when none of the male members of the family were present and stabbed Achhiya with a knife around 10:00pm, said Officer-in-Charge Illias Hossain of Sadar Police Station.

Villagers took Achhiya to Magura Sadar Hospital, from where she was referred to Dhaka for better treatment. Achhiya died on her way to the capital around 3:00am.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Magura Sadar Hospital for autopsy.