

Indigenous woman murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

An indigenous woman was found murdered at Mushahar village in Birganj upazila of the district yesterday afternoon.

Police arrested four people including the victim's husband in this connection.

The deceased was Bhusani Rishi, 50, wife of Keshori Rishi of the village, said Saidur Rahman, sub-inspector of Birganj Police Station.

Informed by locals, police recovered the body from a maize field around 1:00pm and sent it to M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police suspect that criminals stabbed and strangled the woman.

Four people, including the victim's husband Keshori Rishi and his second wife Sakina Rishi, were arrested, said Abu Akkas, officer-in-charge of Birganj Police Station.

Fake or genuine!

204 demand restoration of names in freedom fighters' list

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Speakers at a press conference yesterday demanded immediate cancellation of all the activities of freedom fighters' verification in Sadar upazila.

Two hundred and four freedom fighters arranged the conference at a kindergarten school in the town.

They also demanded punishment of District Muktijoddha Sangsad Command's Commander Mezbah Uddin Ahmed, who headed the five-member FF verification committee for two months from February.

These 204 freedom fighters in Sadar upazila have been omitted from the FF list following recommendation of the verification committee.

Retired joint secretary Krishno Gopal Roy of Baruya village said he is a genuine freedom fighter. In spite of having all documents, he has been omitted from the FF list by Sadar upazila FF verification committee.

The FF verification committee, led by Mezbah Uddin, did business in the name of verifying FFs' genuineness, he alleged in the press conference.

Mojibur Rahman of Kulaghat village alleged that Mezbah Uddin demanded Tk 2 lakh bribe from him for keeping his name in the FFs' list and he has been omitted from list as he failed to pay the money.

"Interesting thing is that I have been omitted from the FFs' list following recommendation of Mezbah, who recommended giving me the government's red-green house last year," he said.

Mezbah Uddin said they conducted the verification activities in presence of freedom fighters.

"We just recommended after verifying papers and interview, but the decision will be taken by the ministry concerned," he said.



People pass long tiring hours at Aricha ferry terminal for Dhaka-bound buses, and inset, passengers throng to get a 'prized seat' as a bus arrives there yesterday.



Punish masterminds who derailed our sons

Appeal parents of 2 killed militants on first anniversary of Holey Artisan massacre

MAMUN-UR-RASHID, Bogra

Parents of two Bogra militants, who were killed during the raid by law enforcers after the massacre at Holey Artisan Bakery in the capital on July 1 last year, are waiting to see the punishment of the masterminds who diverted their sons to the wrong way.

The two killed militants were Shafiqul Islam Uzzal, son of Bodiuzzaman Sarkar Bodi of Baniyajan Chollishpara village under Gosaibari union in Dhumat upazila, and Khairul Islam alias Payel, son of Abul Hossain of Brikustia village of Chupinagar union under Shajahanpur upazila in the district.

"I was surprised that my son was diverted to the destructive path. We are yet to know who the masterminds were and how they tempted my son. I hope no parents lose their son in this way. I want exemplary punishment of the masterminds of

the heinous crime before my death," said Bodiuzzaman, former general secretary of local ward No 5 of Awami League.

After completing BA (Pass) from local Gosaibari Degree College, he got himself admitted to Government Azizul Haque College and finally left for Dhaka. There he got job in a kindergarten at Uttara. We could not know with whom he mixed and who derailed him," said Uzzal's mother Achhiya Begum.

"Seven months' before the Holey Artisan Bakery attack, Uzzal was left home, saying that he was going to a tablig jamaat for four months. Later we heard that our son was killed as he became a militant. I want punishment of those who had derailed him," she added.

Bodiuzzaman and Achhiya, who live in a tin-shed house on their remaining nine decimals of land, after losing 30 bighas of land to the

Jamuna river, said they are passing days through hardship with two other sons and a daughter.

Ailing parents of madrasa student Khairul Islam alias Payel alias Badhan are also passing bad days with their two daughters in a tin-shed house at Brikustia village.

"Our son went to Dhaka with his neighbour Hakim, who is now in Rab custody. Later he got involved in militancy. I want punishment of those who led my son to misinterpreted way of Islam," said Payel's mother Piyara Begum.

Arifur Rahman Mondal, additional superintendent of police (Crime) of Bogra, said police, Rab and other law enforcement agencies are working to contain militancy and masterminds like Tamim Chowdhury, Rajib Gandhi and several other militant leaders have been arrested so far.

Woes of Eid returnees

Bus shortage, exorbitant fare add to passengers' suffering at Aricha, Paturia

ZAHANGIR SHAH, Manikganj

A large number of passengers, including women and children, are badly suffering at Paturia and Aricha ferry terminals as they have to wait for hours and pay much more than the usual fare for going to different places including capital Dhaka.

The passengers from south and south-western districts started returning to their workplaces as the Eid holidays ended yesterday.

They are coming to Aricha and Paturia by launches, ferries, speed-boats and shallow engine-run boats for going to different places including Nabinagar, Savar and Dhaka by road from there.

The transport owners and workers are taking double or more than the usual fare from the passengers. Local buses of Dhaka-Aricha and Dhaka-Paturia routes are collecting up to Tk 200 from each passenger for travelling to Savar, Nabinagar and Gabtali

from Aricha and Paturia and Tk 100 for travelling on the roof, although the usual fares are between Tk 60 to 70.

Drivers of pickups are realising Tk 150 to Tk 200 and those of microbus Tk 300 to Tk 400 from each passenger on the routes.

"I came to Aricha around 11:30am but still waiting to get on a bus," Khairul Hassan, a Dhaka-bound passenger, said at 4:00pm yesterday.

Abdur Razzak came to Aricha from Nagarbari at 11:00am but he could not get into a bus for going to Nabinagar as of 4:00pm.

Meanwhile, the people coming by launches have to stay at Paturia terminal for hours for their scheduled coaches.

"I took a coach that landed me at Daulatdia ferry terminal. Then I crossed the river by a launch and got on Paturia terminal. But I have to wait here for long to get a bus for going to Dhaka," said Dhaka-bound passenger

Shariful Islam.

The transport owners and workers sold many more tickets than their accommodation capacity, alleged several passengers.

Around 350 buses belonging to Jatriseba, Nabinbaran, Padma Line and BRTC regularly ply Dhaka-Aricha and Dhaka-Paturia roads, said bus owners' sources.

At the end of the Eid holidays, the number of passengers suddenly increased on the roads and buses of other routes entered there and a section of people are collecting Tk 200 to Tk 500 from each of the buses, using the names of fake owners-workers' organisations.

"After getting complaints of taking extra fare, I called the transport owners and workers in the morning. I warned them that mobile teams will take legal action if they continue doing so," Kamal Mohammad Rashed, Shibalaya upazila nirbahi officer, said yesterday.

Land grabbers uproot chilli plants

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A group of land grabbers felled chilli plants on .22 decimals of land of a poor farmer at Ulla-Sonotola village in Shaghata upazila of the district yesterday.

Local land grabbers Abdul Wahed, Suja Mian and Belal Hossain came to the land with some hired goons and started uprooting and cutting down chilli plants, alleged land owner Jasimuddin.

He suffered loss of Tk 50 thousand, said the victim.

When Jasimuddin resisted the miscreants, they beat up him.

Following a case filed by the affected land owner, the accused went into hiding, said Shaghata police.

Kheya is only means

People of 33 villages depend on boat to cross Darchira river to go to workplaces

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The people of 33 villages in Rangabali upazila in the district have been suffering as they are to cross the Darchira river by boats locally called *kheya* to go to their place of work.

Over 26,000 people of the villages of Borobaishdia union depend on only two *kheyas* that run from 6:00am to 10:00pm daily.

The locals said people's suffering will decrease if a bridge is constructed over the river.

During a recent visit, this correspondent saw a large number of people, including students, teachers, government and non-government employees, using the *kheya* to cross the river, which is very risky in the rainy season due to high waves and rough weather.

Rangabali island was made upazila on February 25 in 2015 with five unions -- Rangabali, Borobaishdia, Chotobaishdia, Chalitabunia and Char Montaj.

The river separated Borobaishdia from the Rangabali upazila town.

"We have to make the risky crossing every day. The risk increases when the weather becomes rough. I am late for office when the *kheya* is late," said Mahtab Hossain, headmaster of Abdul Hakim High School.

NGO worker Ashraf Hossain said he crosses the river with his motorbike by the *kheya*, risking life.

Jiad Hossain, a student of Rangabali Degree College, said the people will be greatly benefited if a bridge is built over the river.

Union Parishad Chairman Abul Hasanat Abdullah said people in the area are suffering due to lack of a bridge on the Darchira river. "We have sent several letters to the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) to construct a bridge considering the people's interest," he added.

Executive Engineer of LGED in Patuakhali Abu Saleh Md Hanif said they have taken up a plan to build a bridge on the river and the work will start very soon.



People of Borobaishdia union have to cross the Darchira river by country boats as there is no bridge over the river in Rangabali upazila of Patuakhali.

PHOTO: STAR



People of a former enclave at Banshpochai in Kulaghat union under Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila face difficulties in their daily commuting due to lack of a bridge over a canal on a damaged road.

PHOTO: STAR

Former enclave people cry for a bridge

S DILIP ROY with ANDREW EAGLE

The former enclave of Banshpochai in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila's Kulaghat union is in dire need of a concrete bridge to bring smooth transport connectivity to the area. Around 1500 people from 450 families continue to experience daily commuting difficulties for the lack of a bridge. Although the bridge has been asked for many times the government has, as yet, taken no steps.

"For a long time there was no authority to request for a bridge," says Naimuddin Miah, 58 from Banshpochai. "Now we are Bangladeshi citizens so we have raised the issue. Government officials have visited our village several times but we still have no decision."

"Around one hundred metres of roadway was destroyed by floodwaters eight years ago," says Nazmul Islam, 45, another resident of the enclave who, along with his neighbours, became a Bangladeshi citizen at midnight on 31 July 2015. "Since the road was damaged we have endured risk while travelling every day. Due to the lack of a

bridge we can't take our agricultural produce to market by rickshaw van which makes it difficult to sell. We are not enclave dwellers anymore but we still live like we are in an enclave because we haven't a bridge."

"In the enclave period we had to build our own bamboo bridge at our own expense," says another local, Abdu Samad, 65. "But now we shouldn't have to. The government has promised to develop the former enclaves."

According to Kulaghat union's chairman Idris Ali, the local government engineering department has visited the site and already initiated a process for the construction of a concrete bridge there.

The department's engineer in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila Mokhlesur Rahman says a 135 metre bridge is slated to be constructed at a cost of Tk 6 crores and 61 lakhs during the 2017 - 2018 fiscal year. "A tender process for this project will be undertaken from the first week of July," he says, anticipating that construction can begin once the process is complete.

JMB man arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Police arrested an active operative of banned militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) from Atrai upazila of Naogaon yesterday.

The arrestee is Shahidul Islam, 45, son of Sahad Ali of Jamgram village.

Being informed, a team of Atrai Police Station raided the railway station in Atrai upazila and arrested Shahidul.

He had been on the run since the then army-backed caretaker government cracked down on militants. He returned home to celebrate Eid and was arrested when he was leaving.

Officer-in-Charge of the police station Bodrudozza said Shahidul was a close aide of Bangla Bhai.