

## Bid to steal baby from Bandarban hospital foiled

Man arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

A man was arrested on charge of trying to steal a baby girl from her mother at Bandarban Sadar Hospital on Wednesday morning.

Md Shahidullah, 50, of Cox's Bazar's Moheshkali area, was caught near the main gate of the hospital while he was fleeing with the four-and-a-half-year-old girl, said police.

Umme Salma along with her child Jannatul Naima had been in the hospital for the last few days as her elder son is being treated for appendicitis problem.

"I went to the bathroom keeping Naima in bed. When I came back, I saw my daughter missing from there," said Salma.

Hearing the mother's cry for her child, relatives of other patients at the hospital rushed to the main gate and started searching for the baby. Shahidullah was caught red-handed near the gate.

## Jubo League men assault Prothom Alo journalist

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Local Jubo League men allegedly assaulted a journalist of Bangla daily Prothom Alo yesterday while he was covering news of vote rigging at a polling centre during the by-election of Paharpur union parishad (UP) in Bijoynagar upazila of the district.

Locals and witnesses said supporters of AL-backed chairman candidate Abul Kalam Azad led by Kawsar Bhuiyan, joint secretary of Bijoynagar upazila unit of Jubo League, stormed into Shezamura Humayun Kabir Government Primary School polling centre around 10:00am and started stuffing ballot boxes.

"At one stage of vote rigging, Kawsar and his men swooped on me as I was covering the incident from a close distance," said Shahadat Hossain, district correspondent of Prothom Alo, who was injured by the attackers.

Shahadat said as he entered the polling centre Jubo League leader Kawsar asked him to leave the place immediately when suddenly Kawsar's uncle Kalam Mia, who was inside booth number 5, came out and started beating him and drove him out.

As he came out of the poling centre, Kawsar along with other ruling party leaders and activists chased him, Shahadat said, adding that at one stage he entered into a nearby house to save himself from their wrath.

Later, some 15 to 20 local journalists of different print and electronic media rushed to the spot and rescued Shahadat as Kawsar and his associates kept him confined at the house for quite some time.

Officer-in-Charge of Bijoynagar Police Station Ali Arshad said after hearing the news he went to the area, but he did not find anyone at the spot.



Heavy rain and onrush of water from the hills have badly damaged roads in eight upazilas of Sylhet and five upazilas of Moulvibazar, hampering communication. This photo shows Moulvibazar-Barlekha road in Kulaura upazila of Moulvibazar.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

## Cops' centre in aid of tortured women

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Police in Barguna have taken a different step to save women, who were tortured by their families, and over 300 victims have already got benefit through counselling in the last seven months.

They set up a counselling centre named 'Jagoroni Nari Sahayata Kendra', a help centre for tortured women, at the police office on November 12 last year.

Barguna District and Sessions Judge Md Hasanuzzaman and Judge for Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal Md Julfikar Ali jointly opened the centre in presence of local elites, lawyers, journalists and politicians.

Reshma (not her real name), 20, of Purbochila village in Amtali upazila was divorced by her husband over family feud, when she found out that she became pregnant.

She informed her husband about the matter but he refused to take her as his wife again.

Finding no alternative, Reshma went to the Sahayata Kendra and filed a complaint.

Sahayata Kendra arranged a meeting between both parties several times and finally her husband changed his

decision and they reunited.

"I am very grateful to Sahayata Kendra' as they solved my problem," said Reshma.

Another victim of Barguna Sadar, who was tortured by her addict husband, informed the Sahayata Kendra and filed a complaint.

Jannatul Ferdous, sub-inspector of Sadar Police Station, also coordinator of Jagoroni Nari Sahayata Kendra, called the husband of the woman and started counselling. After some days, the husband realised his fault and changed his behaviour towards his wife.

The Jagoroni Nari Sahayata Kendra is running under the supervision of an additional superintendent of police and an SI is serving there as a coordinator, while a five-member team receives complaints from victims, a source at Barguna police office said.

This different initiative taken by the police will play a vital role in reducing torture on women, said Nazma Begum, chairman of Barguna Mohila Parishad.

"In the last seven months, we were able to resolve 300 tortured women's problems following their complaints," said SI Jannatul Ferdous.

"We also filed nine cases with the court as we failed to solve the problems with counselling," she said.

## Flood-ravaged roads

542 km roads badly damaged in Sylhet, Moulvibazar

MINTU DESHWARA, back from Fenchuganj

Most of the roads in Sylhet and Moulvibazar have been badly damaged by flood, severely affecting communication.

According to the administrations of the two districts, people of at least 800 villages in eight upazilas of Sylhet and five upazilas of Moulvibazar are passing their days amid serious problems due to breakdown of communication caused by heavy rains and surge of water from the hills.

According to Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) and Roads and Highways Department (RHD) in the two districts, around 542 km of roads have been damaged by flood in the last two weeks.

During a visit to Fenchuganj, this correspondent saw villagers and school students walking across the broken roads amid risk of accident. The suffering of the people increases when rainwater fills the potholes. Movement of vehicles is also greatly hampered.

Md Humayun Ahmed, a student at MC College in Sylhet, said, "I come to college from Kulaura, and I have to suffer a lot as the road is unfit for use."

Munem Mia, an auto-rickshaw driver, said they have to suffer as many

roads have become unfit for use, adding that accidents often happen in the damaged places.

"I could not cook food for the last five days as my house has been flooded by the waves coming from the broken roads," said Monoara Begum, 45, of Bhularkandi village near the Hakaluki Haor in Barlekha upazila of Moulvibazar.

Juri Upazila Parishad Vice-Chairman Kishore Roy Chowdhury Moni said bricks of the roads have been washed away and deep holes have been created in some places, adding that earthen roads have been completely wiped out in many places.

Immediate relief, including food support from the government, is needed to mitigate sufferings of the affected people, said Azizur Rahman, chairman of Bhuksimul Union Parishad in Kulaura upazila.

Moulvibazar Water Development Board (WDB) Executive Engineer (EE) Bijoy Indra Sankar Chakrabarty said they have informed the higher authorities of the matter, and sought emergency allocation for repairing the roads and flood control embankments.

EE of RHD in Moulvibazar Mintu Ranjan Debnath said, 60.63 km of the

roads were damaged due to flood and 80.50 km were damaged by heavy rain. The loss could be around Tk 66.71 crore, he added.

EE of LGED in Moulvibazar Kamrul Islam said around 186 km of roads are still submerged in water, adding that the loss is estimated to be around Tk 34.51 crore.

EE of RHD in Sylhet Utpal Samanta said, "The water has not yet receded from the roads and the carpeting has sunk in many places. They will be repaired after the flood."

EE of LGED Sylhet ASM Mohsin said 216.19 km of roads in the district have been damaged, with Beanibazar upazila being the worst affected.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Moulvibazar Tofail Islam told this correspondent that water level has risen in Rajnagar, Moulvibazar Sadar, Juri, Kulaura and Barlekha upazilas. Around 2,65,369 people in 314 villages have been affected, he added.

DC of Sylhet Md Rahat Anwar said the flood-affected areas are Fenchuganj, Golapganj, Dakkhin Surma, Beanibazar, Osmaninagar, Balaganj, Companyganj and Jakiganj upazilas. Around 1,38,755 people in 466 villages have been affected, he added.

## Man slips from running train, dies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A man died when he slipped under a running train while trying to get on it at Birampur Railway Station in the district yesterday.

The details of the 50-year-old deceased were not available, said Government Railway Police (GRP).

Police, quoting witnesses, said the man boarded the Dhaka bound Drutojan Express Train in Dinajpur station. He got down at Birampur station for having tea.

As the train started moving, the man tried to get on it but accidentally slipped and went under the train. He died on the spot.

GRP at Hakimpur outpost sent the body to M Abdur Rahim Medical College Morgue in the district.

Police found a Dinajpur-Natore ticket in his pocket.

Nobody claimed the body, said Monirul Islam, officer-in-charge of Parbatipur GRP Station.

The accident happened due to carelessness, the OC said.



Like many others, houses at Kina Moni Ghona area of Rangamati, destroyed during the catastrophic landslides on June 12, are yet to be rebuilt.

PHOTO: STAR

## Landslide fear haunts victims

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

One month into the landslide tragedy in the district, most of the victims are living at shelter centres as they cannot afford to rebuild their damaged houses to make those usable.

Besides, there is fear of fresh landslides.

After heavy rainfall stopped one week ago, only a small number of victims returned to their own places.

"My father and five other people were killed due to the landslide on June 12. We 22 families living in the area are still living at a shelter centre. We come to our damaged houses at day and go to stay at shelter centre at night," said Amar Moni Chakma, 45, an inhabitant of badly damaged Kina Moni Ghona area.

"My house was totally destroyed. But I could not repair it yet. We have heard that the administration will shift us from this shelter," Jibon Bosu Chakma, said still we are living at Vedvedi Pouro High School shelter centre.

"But we don't want to go to any other centre because it will be difficult adapt there. Moreover, schooling of our children will be affected," he added.

Sorpa Chakma, a Class IX student of Vedvedi Pouro High School, said, "Our examination is going on. If we have to shift to another shelter centre, there will be problem to adjust with the new situation and it will affect my examination."

Sonali Chakma and Rupali Chakma, two sisters, and their three children died together at Bipula Chakma house at Vedvedi Jubo Unnoyon area in the landslide.

Prakash Kanti Chowdhury, additional deputy commissioner (Revenue) of Rangamati, said the administration is looking for land to rehabilitate the victims.

About 18,500 families were affected by the tragedy that destroyed 1,200 houses completely and 9,500 houses partially in Rangamati district.

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