



Goalkhola Satata Jubo o Krira Sangathan, a local social organisation, held a boat procession on the Titas river in Brahmanbaria yesterday to create awareness against corruption, early marriage, dowry and drugs with the slogan "The drug makes mother weep." The colourful procession of 30 boats started from Bhadughar Bazar ghat on the Titas river and ended at Ananda Bazar ghat in Brahmanbaria town.

PHOTO: MASUK HRIDOV

JOURNALIST SHIMUL MURDER 7 more accused sent to jail

The charge-sheeted men appeared before Shahjadpur court

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Seven charge-sheeted accused in the case for killing journalist Abdul Hakim Shimul were sent to Sirajganj jail through a court after they appeared before it and sought bail yesterday.

The accused -- Md Abdur Razzak, 40, Saiful Islam, 45, Azizul Haque Apon, 55, Abu Haniif, 45, Shahan Ali, 45, Humayun Ahmed, 47, and Mahabubul Alam alias Sohel 36, hailing from different villages in Shahjadpur upazila went into hiding after the killing of journalist Abdul Hakim Shimul.

Shimul, Shahjadpur correspondent of the daily Samakal, was shot during a factional clash of Shahjadpur upazila Awami League near Shahjadpur municipality mayor's house on February 2 this year. He succumbed to his injuries on the way to Dhaka the following day.

His wife Nurunnahar Begum filed a case with Shahjadpur Police Station the same day, accusing 25 people, including Shahjadpur municipality mayor Halimul Haque Miru and his brother Habibul Haque Mintu. After three months' investigation, police submitted charge sheet against 38 people including mayor Miru.

Police arrested Miru and 17 other accused in different drives after the incident.

"The seven accused went into hiding after the incident. They appeared before the Court of Senior Judicial Magistrate Hasibul Haque at Shahjadpur and sought bail today [Tuesday]. The court sent them to jail, rejecting their bail prayer," said Khaza Golam Kibria, officer in charge of Shahjadpur police station.

Kid gang-raped in Gopalganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A 13-year-old schoolgirl was gang-raped by some local youths in Kotalipara upazila of Gopalganj on August 15.

The victim's father said they could not file any case as the culprits threatened them of dire consequences if they lodge any complaint in this regard.

The victim's father alleged that Anik Baidya, 19, son of Khokon Baidya of Suagram village in the upazila, and his three cohorts waylaid his daughter while she was returning after visiting Suagram Temple in the area around 11:00pm on August 15.

The criminals later took the Class VII girl to a nearby sawmill and raped her there, said the victim girl's father, adding that they rescued her from the spot around 2:00am.

Kotalipara Police Station Sub-Inspector Shahadat Hossain said after hearing the news he went to the victim's house and asked them to file a case.

But they are yet to file any complaint as of filing of this report around 5:30pm yesterday, he said.

Body found in police station pond!

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

The decomposed body of a youth was found floating in the pond in Brahmanbaria Sadar Police Station compound yesterday.

The identity of the victim, aged about 35, could not be known immediately.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Brahmanbaria Sadar Model Police Station Md Nabir Hossain said police recovered the body after getting information.

The body was sent to Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital morgue, said the OC, adding that the cause of death will be known after autopsy.

Dying Ichamati gets flow as swelling Padma sends water

People celebrate, demand revival of the traditional river

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

The nearly dead Ichamati river passing through the district town sees flow due to the pressure of the water from the mighty Padma during the ongoing rains.

Delighted over the matter, locals joined boat processions and rallies separately organised by the district administration and 'Ichamati river protection movement' in the town yesterday morning.

They demanded adequate steps to free the river from occupiers and bring back its natural flow by proper dredging.

The 10-km portion of the 52-km-long Ichamati river, flowing through the district town, serves as a link between the Padma and Jamuna rivers, but it turned into a narrow canal due to

indiscriminate occupation and lack of proper maintenance during the last three decades, said locals and experts.

"We are happy to see boat movement on the river after a long time," said journalist Abdul Matin Khan.

Md Rezaul Karim, executive engineer of Pabna Water Development Board, said, "As the mighty Padma continued to swell, we opened sluice gates of the flood protection embankment at Sadhupara in Pabna town last week and so, the rushing water from the upstream brought flow in the dead Ichamati."

"The flow in the dying Ichamati, however, seems a temporary matter. It will return to its usual position when the water level in the Padma recedes

after the end of the rainy season," he added.

Pabna Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rekha Rani Balo along with the local elite as well as a large number of common people joined a boat procession on the Ichamati river yesterday morning.

"We have arranged the programme to create awareness for saving the river. Responding to people's demand, the district administration is working to save the river," the DC said.

Earlier, on Monday, lawmaker of Pabna-5 constituency Golam Faruk Khandaker Prince joined a boat rally at Sadhupara point of the Ichamati river, highlighting the importance of saving the river.

"We have a plan to undertake a mega project to save the river," the lawmaker said.

Tiffin money for flood victims

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

There is a noted saying "There's an opportunity in every crisis of life".

This time, some children's little help puts smile on flood victims' faces.

Raising fund by saving the money they got for their tiffin, schoolchildren of Dinajpur's Birganj and Rangpur's Badarganj upazila came forward to feed the flood affected people of different shelters around their homes.

After torrential rain, a devastating flood hit Dinajpur on August 12.

The following day, floodwater inundated the entire district, but eight of 13 upazilas have been badly affected.

At least 30 people have been killed in floodwater, around 1.55 lakh families affected by the flood, 59299 houses and cropland of 1.21 lakh hectares were damaged, and 41,650 people have taken shelter at 218 centres and fishes of 12,000 ponds swam away.

Due to scanty relief supplies from the government, affluent people, different business and socio-cultural organisations have come forward to stand beside the flood-hit people, said locals.

Even the schoolchildren are not sitting home idle as the misery of the affected people has touched their hearts.

Sumaiya Sowmika, Puja Saha, Mahfuza Islam Moon and Saida Afroz,

Class X and VIII students of Birganj Girls' School in Dinajpur, decided to help the children of local shelter houses.

On the first day, their collection was Tk 1,580, said Sumaiya.

"We bought biscuits and distributed it among the children of flood affected people who took shelter at the school," she said.

Later, their parents and schoolteachers also started contributing, said Puja.

"We have distributed biscuits and other foods of Tk 5,000 among the affected children," said Puja.

In the recent flood, Rangpur's Badarganj, Gangachara and Kaunia upazilas were affected badly.

In Badarganj, students of Kholahati Cantonment Public School and College in Dinajpur's Parbatipur raised funds from school tiffin money and distributed three kg of rice, three oral saline and Tk 100 to 330 to each flood affected family in Badarganj.

Principal of the institute Lt Col Imrul Kayes distributed those among the affected people on Friday.

Mozuna Begum, 50, of Kachabari village said she got relief after five days just for the kindness of these schoolchildren. "I bought salt, onion and green chilli with the Tk 100," said a smiling Mozuna.



People join a boat procession organised by the district administration on the Ichamati river in Pabna town yesterday as the ongoing rains brought back flow in the dying river, much to the delight of the locals. Inset, a scene of the nearly dead river, taken in the last dry season.

PHOTO: STAR



Smiling kids of flood affected families in Dinajpur's Birganj upazila show biscuit packets distributed by schoolchildren on Sunday.

PHOTO: STAR

Headmaster beats kid

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

The headmaster of a primary school here beat up a Class 1 student on Monday as she could not write properly in the Bangla examination script.

Suraya Yasmin, 7, student of Sreepur Government Primary School, is now under treatment at Kamalganj Upazila Health Complex.

Suraya's guardian said Headmaster Nurul Islam wanted to know why Suraya could not write properly and started beating her indiscriminately.

Kid's uncle Sikandar Ali submitted a complaint against the teacher to the upazila education officer, demanding his punishment.

The headmaster could not be contacted despite repeated attempts.

Deer poachers active in Sundarbans

A CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Poachers have recently become active in the Sundarbans and adjacent areas of the world's largest mangrove forest.

The poachers are hunting deer indiscriminately in collusion with local influential people, and selling the venison, hides and horns at high prices, people of Mongla and Sharankhola upazilas said, adding that the venison is sold in various secret markets in Sharankhola, Mongla, Chila, Satkhira, Koyra, Paikgachha, Terokhada, Dumuria, Tala, Chuknagar and adjacent areas of the Sundarbans.

There are some active groups of poachers, numbering 12-15 in each group, who poach about 30-35 deer a month and sell those to the fish traders, they said.

The Coastguard's West Zone (Mongla) Operations Officer Lt Commander M Fariduzzaman Khan said members of the Coastguard of the zone recovered 140 kg of venison, heads and skins of deer, boats and traps during drives in July, but the poachers managed to evade most of the drives.

They have 12 stations under the zone that patrol the Sundarbans and adjacent areas for six hours daily to check poachers, forest robbers, and illegal netting of fish using poison, he added.

On July 6, the Coastguard in a drive recovered two deer heads, skin and 80 kg of venison in a boat at Katlar Khal in Sharankhola upazila. No one was arrested as the poachers managed to flee the scene sensing the presence of the law enforcers, he added.

On July 4, in a joint drive, the Coastguard and Department of Forest recovered 60 kg of venison and a boat from Manik Khali area of Pathorghata upazila of Barguna district, he further said.

On July 7, two boats with deer traps were seized from Jholakhali area during another drive, but no one was arrested, the operations officer said.

Divisional Conservator of Forests Amir Hossain Chowdhury said although they have shortage of manpower, they are taking special measures to check poaching in the Sundarbans.

Girls pledge against early marriage

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Hundreds of female students yesterday took oath against early marriage and talking at a programme in Trishal upazila.

Police organised the programme at Trishal Mahila College auditorium, participated by around 800 girls with Principal Selimul Haque Tarafder in the chair.

The speakers urged the students to come forward to building a nation free from all evils, including early marriage, stalking, militancy and drugs.

Senior Assistant Superintendent of Police (Trishal Circle) Mohammad Al Amin, Trishal Police Station Officer-in-Charge Zakiur Rahman and Vice-Principal Shafiqul Ferdous spoke at the occasion.