



Alleged grabbers have built shops on land belonging to Kuakata Sreemangol Bouddha Bihar in Kuakata of Patuakhali.

PHOTO: STAR

# Market on Rakhine temple's land

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A portion of land belonging to Kuakata Sreemangol Bouddha Mandir (locally known as Kuakata Rakhine Mandir) is allegedly being grabbed by some local influential people.

Some community leaders, led by the secretary of the temple committee Ucho Mong, have built structures on the land.

Luma Rakhine, finance secretary of the temple committee, submitted a written complaint to Patuakhali Deputy Commissioner (DC) seeking recovery of the land from the alleged occupiers.

According to the complainant, the temple was set up in 1924 in a tin-shed for the local Buddhist community. A statue of Gautam Buddha was also erected there. Later on, 2.44 acres of land was given to the temple by the revenue department of the then government on March 24 in 1924 through Deed No 16337.

Tourists from home and abroad visit the temple when they come to Kuakata.

Water Development Board (WDB) acquisitioned a portion of the land and some community leaders allegedly grabbed some land on the north side of the temple.

The alleged grabbers have built structures (at least 10 shops) on the land and give them on rent, creating problems for the Rakhine people in offering their prayers.

"I urge the DC to recover the temple's land and hand it over to the temple committee," said Luma Rakhine.

Ucho Mong built the shops after grabbing the land and gave rent to local businessmen, but the land is not personal property, she alleged.

Ucho Mong said, "I and my father have been taking care of the temple for years. I built shops on our personal property. Some community people are spreading propaganda against me and my family."

DC Dr Md Masumur Rahman said if anybody has grabbed the temple's land, legal steps will be taken against him after investigation.

# Man kills wife over extramarital affair

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A man killed his wife following a feud over the latter's alleged extramarital affair with one of her neighbours in Moulvibazar's Kulaura upazila on Tuesday.

The deceased was Nasima Begum, 28, wife of Rafique Miah, 35, of Brahmanbazar village in the upazila.

Police detained Rafique early Wednesday and produced him before a court the same day.

After recording Rafique's confessional statement, the court later sent him to jail, said Binoy Bhushan Roy, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Kulaura Police Station.

Rafique's father Tajul Mia said there had been a quarrel between the couple over Nasima's extramarital affair with one of her neighbours.

According to the case statement, Rafique swooped on Nasima with a sharp weapon while she was asleep at her parents' house at Adampur village around 9:00pm and slit her throat.

Rafique also stabbed Nasima's mother Sonajan Begum and sister Sonia Begum when they tried to resist him, leaving the duo severely injured.

On information, police recovered the body and sent it to the hospital for autopsy.

# MURDER OF PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED MAN Youth sentenced to death in Bagerhat

A CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

A court here yesterday handed death sentence to a youth for killing a physically challenged man on May 31 in 2014.

Judge Zakaria Hossain of Bagerhat Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court-2 announced the verdict at noon in presence of the convict. He also fined him Tk 20,000.

The convict, Jahid Sheikh, 38, is son of Mokammel Sheikh of South Sannasi village in Mallikerbar union under Rampal upazila of the district and stepgrandson of the victim.

The victim was Abdul Khaleque Sheikh, 59, son of late Ahmed Ali of the village.

Additional Public Prosecutor advocate Sita Rani Debnath said Khaleque was physically challenged, adding that he received a monthly allowance from the government, which Jahid used to take away forcibly.

Jahid often beat Khaleque and threatened to kill him when he expressed his unwillingness to give the money, she said, adding that Jahid killed him on May 31 in 2014.

Ali Akbar Sheikh, son of the deceased, filed a case with Rampal Police Station, accusing Jahid, the following day.

Police arrested Jahid from Dhaka three days later, the additional public prosecutor said.

Jahid gave a confessional statement under Section 164.

Rampal Police Station Sub-Inspector Imarat Ali submitted the charge sheet against Jahid to the court on August 20 the same year.

# Municipality staff hacked by UP member dies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

An official of Sarishabari municipality died at National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (Nitor) in Dhaka yesterday, over a month after he was hacked allegedly by a local UP member.

The deceased was Maruf Hossain, 38, a license inspector of the municipality, and a resident of Mendarber village.

As the death news spread, angry locals torched the house of Mobarak Hossain Raja, a member of Awna Union Parishad.

They also vandalised four houses of Raja's relatives, said Rezaul Karim Khan, officer-in-charge of Sarishabari Police Station.

On September 20, Raja hacked Maruf, leaving him seriously injured over previous enmity.

Maruf was rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital and then shifted to Nitor where he succumbed to his injuries yesterday morning.

Soon after the attack, police arrested Raja, the OC said.

# Flash flood maroons 5000 families

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

Last week's incessant rain and the onrush of water from the Gumti river intensified a flash flood from Debidwer to Daudkandi along both sides of the river, marooning around 5,000 families in six unions of the upazilas.

Water flooded low-lying areas of the upazilas, and flowed into Muradnagar upazila two or three days ago.

Haradon, 50, of Jatrapur village said heavy rain in the last two days caused the flooding. "Water from the Gumti river started to enter our home from yesterday," he said.

Muradnagar Sadar union Chairman Mustaq Ahmed Masud said floodwater overflowed both sides of the Gumti dam, inundating Muradnagar and Homna upazilas, leaving around 5,000 families marooned.

Road communication between Muradnagar upazila headquarters to Saliakandi, Paharpur, Babutipara Jahapur, Dhamghor, Dharora unions has been snapped.

Last week's heavy rainfall damaged crops and winter vegetables, and the rising water level washed away fish from the fish farms.

No relief has reached the affected people, but some voluntary activists are giving some relief to the affected residents.

The district administration has not taken any initiatives to give relief to the people of the affected areas, locals said.

# Bogra flood takes toll on bananas

A CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Nearly 100 hectares of banana orchards in the district have been badly damaged following the flood in August this year, adding to the woes of banana growers in eight upazilas of the district.

About 1,500 banana farmers in eight upazilas have to count losses of Tk 10 crore as the flood hit their orchards badly.

Farmers in the district have cultivated banana on 1,000 hectares of land, sources said.

According to officials of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in Bogra, about 100 acres of banana orchards in Shibganj and Sonatala upazilas have been completely destroyed while another 150 acres have been partially damaged in the other six upazilas.

The government announced a Tk 58.77 crore incentive for the flood-hit farmers, who faced setback on 10 major crops like wheat, maize, peanut, mustard, lentil, pulses and BT Brinjal, across the country.

On the other hand, banana growers, who also counted huge losses due to the recent flood, were not included in the list of the beneficiaries.

DAE Deputy Director (Horticulture) Mohammad Abdur Rahim said the government allocated incentives for short-term Rabi crop farmers so that growers affected by the natural disaster could recover quickly.

"Banana is not a Rabi crop as it takes quite some time to bear fruit," he added.

Grower Mithu Sheikh of Hayatpur village in Sonatala upazila said he spent Tk 30,000 for cultivating bananas on his 40-decimal orchard, but the floodwater damaged all the bananas a few days before harvesting.

Mithu said he took loan from Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank and is now facing uncertainty about how to repay the installments.

Khwaja Sardar of Milkipur village in Shibganj, an area known as the largest producer of bananas in Bogra, said nearly 200 bighas of banana orchards were badly affected by the flood and about 80 to 90 farmers of the village faced a major setback.

Generally, growers of main crops affected by natural disasters receive incentives from the government, but there is no incentive or rehabilitation programmes for the banana cultivators, said Deputy Director of DAE in Bogra Pratul Chandra Sarker.



Hit by the recent flood, a completely destroyed banana orchard at Milkipur village in Bogra's Shibganj upazila. Inset, another garden partially damaged in Sonatala upazila.

PHOTO: STAR



Students are the worst sufferers as the only concrete road that connects Tangail's Basail and Mirzapur upazilas was devoured by the river Jhinai on Monday.

PHOTO: STAR

# River erosion devours Tangail key road

Engineer says it is not in their jurisdiction

Our Correspondent, Tangail

When thousands of people are suffering as some portions of a road have been devoured by the Jhinai river, the authorities concerned said it is not in their jurisdiction to repair it.

Two large portions of the only concrete road that connects Basail and Mirzapur were devoured by the Jhinai on Monday, disrupting road communication between the two upazilas.

Erosion by the river, a tributary of the Jamuna, started about a week ago and it took a serious turn due to incessant rain from Friday, devouring large portions of the road in Bilpara Bazar area of Basail and Adabari in Mirzapur upazila, locals said.

Thousands of people of the two upazilas have been using the road as shortcut. Students of several educational institutions are the worst sufferers.

Indiscriminate sand lifting from different

places on the river by using dredgers might have caused increasing erosion, said local people.

"We have to use the road every day for different purposes," said Abdul Mazid of Kanchanpur village in Basail, adding that they are now facing serious troubles as the road has gone into the river".

"The collapsed road is our only way for communication," said schoolteacher Anwar Hossain of Adabari village in Mirzapur.

Basail upazila engineer Abdus Sattar said he cannot say anything about it as the collapsed part of the road is out of their area.

It does not matter whether it is responsibility of the authorities of Basail or Mirzapur upazilas, the important road should be repaired immediately considering woes of the local people, said Mohammad Rubel Miah, a rights activist in Basail.

# Make study a priority

Rangamati DC urges students

OUR CORRESPONDENT, X Rangamati

Students should study regularly for achieving quality learning, Rangamati Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Manzarul Mannan said at the Class VII students' scholarship programme organised by Rangamati Hill District Council (RHDC) yesterday.

Teachers and parents should remain alert so that the young learners do not go astray, especially against the backdrop of widespread drug abuse in Chittagong Hill Tracts region, he said, speaking as the chief guest at the programme held at the hall room of Rangamati Cultural Institute.

Uttam Khisa, district education officer, delivered the welcome speech at the function where RHDC member Ruhul Amin Sarkar, also convener of district education council, Mohammad Jahangir, additional superintendent of police, Rangamati, Aungchu Prue Chowdhury, commander of Bangladesh Navy's Kaptai Upazila Range, also principal of Bangladesh Navy School in Kaptai, and Anjulika Khisa, former district education officer, attended.

RHDC Chairman Birsho Ketu Chakma presided over the programme.

About 150 students from different schools in Rangamati district were given scholarship and certificate at the event.