

Shameless act

Youth held for uploading objectionable video clip of his wife on Facebook

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

A youth was arrested in a case for uploading an objectionable video clip of his wife in social media as his in-laws refused to pay him dowry.

Police arrested Ali Ahsan Mujahid, 30, son of Saiful Islam of Chawkhopa village in Naogaon's Manda upazila, from his house on Monday night. He was later produced before a court that sent him to jail.

In the case, the housewife mentioned that her husband videoed the scene secretly on November 20 last year after their marriage.

Mujahid lately started torturing his wife for Tk 5 lakh dowry. But her parents refused to pay the money.

At the refusal, Mujahid became furious and threatened that he would upload the video clip on Facebook if his demand was not met.

He finally helped the clip with the help of two friends.

A case was filed with a court, accusing three people, including Mujahid.

The other accused are Nabab Ali, son Motiur Rahman of Kharadanga village, and Md. Khatun Rahman, son of Ehsad Ali of Nurullahabad village in the upazila.

The police are trying to arrest the other two. It goes without saying that the beat in season is a tourist magnet. "I brought my family here," says one visitor, Marif Bappu from Dhaka. "The



Children pluck water lilies at the wetland, widely known as Lal Shapla Beel, at Baghda in Agailjhara upazila of Barisal.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

A slice of heaven Barisal's water lilies paint the landscape with joy

SUSHANTA GHOSH with ANDREW EAGLE

Pink and more pink, as far as the eye can see! When Barisal district's water lilies bloom, the naturally occurring spectacle could not be finer. While water lilies are to be found throughout Bangladesh and indeed much of the world, the annual display at the wetland known as Lal Shapla Beel, at Baghda in Agailjhara upazila and Satla in Uziupur upazila, can only impress, as its many thousands of flowers light the landscape.

It goes without saying that the beat in season is a tourist magnet. "I brought my family here," says one visitor, Marif Bappu from Dhaka. "The

scenery is really charming!" "We visited the area a week ago," says motorcycle company executive Md Nasiruddin.

"I'd heard how beautiful the beel is, so of course I wanted to see it. I only wish there was a place to stay nearby."

According to locals, between five and ten tourist groups arrive to witness the floral spectacle each day, with double that number at weekends. "This year at least five hundred tourists have visited the beel so far," says Agailjhara shopkeeper Dinu Biswas.

To make the most of the beel's tourist potential however, some tourist facilities might help. "We hope to set up a rest

house and restaurant soon, along with a boat service to cater to tourists," says Barisal's deputy commissioner Md Habibur Rahaman.

For neighbouring villages meanwhile, the beel is not only a source of delight but an important source of income. Communities rely on harvesting and selling water lilies for six months of every year.

"In the beel area we can only grow one rice crop per year," explains Kailas Halder from Baghda village. "The rest of the year we rely on water lilies for daily income, and in the autumn season when the plants burst into flower and dramatically change the whole landscape, the beel is popular

with tourists too."

Native fish species and carp as well as types of grass around the beel also contribute to local incomes, adds another villager, Bipul Halder.

"Water lilies are a popular vegetable in the locality," says Agailjhara's agriculture officer Nasiruddin. "They have some medicinal properties too, and can be useful in treating diseases including dryness, calcium deficiency, skin conditions, urinary and liver infections, as well as diabetes."

Water lilies serve as a sought-after ingredient for curries; while children in particular often enjoy eating the stem and fruit even while it is raw.

People suffer as bus strike on

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Passengers in the southwestern and northern regions are suffering immensely as the indefinite transport strike, called by bus owners and workers of the district, continued for the second consecutive day yesterday.

Thousands of passengers to or from Kushtia could not reach their destinations as a large number of passengers intending to travel to different districts had to return home from the bus terminals after a long wait.

"I have been waiting to go to Jessore since this morning, but no bus is leaving from Kushtia or com-

ing from other districts," said Akbar Mridha, a trader in Kushtia town.

Many women and children were also seen suffering at the bus terminal.

Tanjin Khatun, a student of Rajshahi University, said she came to Kushtia on Friday. "I have to reach the university today (Wednesday) as a viva voce exam will be held tomorrow (Thursday)," she said yesterday.

Kushtia district Bus Owners Workers Oikya Parishad enforced the strike from Tuesday, protesting arrest of the conductor of a passenger bus after drugs were seized from the vehicle by Rapid Action Battalion in Kushtia last Thursday.

According to different law enforcement agencies, inter-district routes in the region are a safe way to transport drugs, and some transport workers are involved in it.

Kushtia Transport Workers Association President Mahbub Alam rejected the allegation that transport workers were involved in drug transportation.

"How we will identify who is a smuggler and who is not in a passenger bus?" he asked.

Mahbub said he wants assurance that law enforcers will not arrest any transport worker or owner if anything suspicious is found in a bus.

This correspondent tried to talk

with Asgor Ali, president of Kushtia Bus Owners Association, also general secretary of the district Awami League.

Asgor asked the correspondent to talk with the leaders of the Transport Workers Association. "The strike has been called by transport workers," he said.

"The district administration has nothing to do regarding the arrest as the matter is in court now," Kushtia Deputy Commissioner Zahir Raihan said.

"We have requested the bus owners-workers to withdraw the strike considering the sufferings of the people," he added.

Classes under open sky

The Jamalpur primary school was devoured by the Jamuna

ABM AMINUL ISLAM, Jamalpur

A government primary school in the district's Sarishabari upazila has been holding classes under the open sky as the schoolhouses along with the land were eroded by the Jamuna river during flood in late July.

Two buildings of Dakatia Menda Government Primary School, which was established in Dakatia Menda village in 1938 and nationalised in 1973, were eroded on July 25, and the land followed a few days later, resulting in suspension of classes for 216 students for a week, teachers said.

"We were able to start taking classes in a rented house on August 1, which was also washed away after two weeks," said assistant teacher Anif Hassan.

The school managing committee (SMC) failed to find another house where they could take classes, he added.

Finally, they started holding classes under the open sky on August 20 on land belonging to a mosque so that the kids, especially examinees of Primary School Certificate, whose exams begin on November 20, could continue their lessons, Anif said.

"Three teachers have been conducting

classes in two shifts," said acting headmaster Muhammad Selim Badsha, adding that this is hampering the education of the kids.

"A number of students, particularly primary to Class II, remain absent due to the sun or rain, as a result, they are lagging behind in learning their lessons," Badsha said.

The headmaster told this correspondent that he wrote to the district primary education office over two months ago seeking money to build a tin-shed on 33 decimals of land, which is expected to be donated by SMC President Mahr Uddin, a farmer.

"The school has been contributing much to educate children of disadvantaged families living in the Jamuna basin areas for 80 years, but erosion has left our children's education in uncertainty," Mahr said.

"I am ready to give the land free of cost for construction of a school whenever the authorities want, but they have not yet registered the land for the school," he added.

"We have arranged the money and hope to go ahead after getting the land registered," district Primary Education Officer Shahidul Islam said.

Police suspect

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stealing a mobile phone.

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The primary investigation of police has now found that Azizah received her lost mobile phone from Azizah's "boyfriend", a shop after her friends, took compromising photos of her and then threatened to publish those photos. She also robbed her of her valuables.

Police arrested her "boyfriend" Ruman and his two friends Sujeon and Rezaul on Monday and also claimed to have recovered the lost mobile phone of Azizah. On Tuesday, the trio gave confessional statements at a Narsingdi court.

But police are yet to confirm whether it was a suicide or murder, saying that the matter would be clarified after the arrest of one Rubel, Azizah's father Sattar, and Rezaul. It was Rubel who was accused of having a house and tied her to the tree.

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Exam this year

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Hearing the incident, Shital Chandra Dey, head of Narayanganj Girls High School and College, gave them the new question papers. The students spent an extra hour that elapsed after the beginning of the exam, but the teacher refused, said the guardians and students.

"As we talked to the head of the institution, he admitted the fault and assured us of solving the problem. But at one stage, he disappeared," said Ferdous Ara, a mother of an examinee.

Both the candidates and guardians expressed concerns over the results as they did not get proper time to give the answers.

Contacted, Shital Chandra claimed that they changed the question papers several minutes after they came to know about it and the examinees were given the time they lost for getting the wrong question papers.

Rezaul Bari, additional deputy commissioner (education and ICT) of Narayanganj, said it was difficult to hold a fresh examination as the exam was held across the country.

This year, 24,68,820 class-VIII students from 28,628 schools and madrasas have registered to sit for the exam under eight general education boards and a madrasa one.



Students of Dakatia Menda Government Primary School in Sarishabari upazila of Jamalpur attend classes under the open sky as their school was washed away by the Jamuna river during the flood in July.

PHOTO: STAR