

## Man gets life for killing brother

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A Naogaon court on Tuesday sentenced a man to life imprisonment for killing his brother in Patnitola upazila in 2001. The convicted is Ayzul Haque, 50, son of Ayaz Uddin of Patiamrai village in the upazila. Additional District and Sessions Judge Mohammad Mozibar Rahman also fined the convict Tk 10,000. In default, he is to suffer one year more in jail. According to the case statement, Ayzul engaged in an altercation with his elder brother Sirajul Islam over a family feud. At one stage, Ayzul hit Sirajul on the head with a bamboo, leaving him critically injured. Family members took Sirajul to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

# School on wetland!

### Playground remains under water 8 months a year

MINTU DESHWARA, back from Beanibazar

The playground of a primary school in Beanibazar upazila of Sylhet remains under water for seven to eight months a year as the building of the educational institution has been set up on a wetland. The children of the school have been deprived of playing for years. Tilpara Government Primary School was built over a wetland next to Chandarpur road and near the Sylhet-Bianibazar road, leaving very little open space for the students to play. Besides, a mosque has been built just in front of the school recently, obstructing sunlight from entering the classrooms. Shopkeeper Moin Uddin told this correspondent that he passed Class V from the school in 2010. "I have seen from my childhood that the school ground goes under water for seven to eight months a year," he added. Moni Begum, a student of Class IV, said the school has been affected by flood triggered by heavy rain and the onrush of water from the hills. Villager Abul Hasan said the students of

the school attend classes like birds in a cage. As there is no scope for playing during tiffin hour, kids are sometimes reluctant to go to school, he added. Acting headmaster Halima Begum said students cannot play in the ground as it is covered by floodwater. Many guardians requested the authorities concerned to make playgrounds for the students. They pointed out that buildings are sometimes built on open spaces of most of the government primary schools to accommodate the increasing number of students, which leads to loss of open spaces. Guardian Mosabbir Ali said a playground for the students can be built if Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid wants. Upazila Assistant Primary Education Officer Md Masum Mia said like Tilpara Primary School four to five other school buildings in the upazila are used as flood shelter centre. The schools are constructed on the wetlands in the upazila. Sylhet Primary Education Officer Nurul Islam said playgrounds are necessary in all primary schools for proper physical and mental growth of the students.



Tilpara Government Primary School in Beanibazar upazila of Sylhet remains under water for seven to eight months every year, depriving students of playing facilities.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

# Age-old bamboo artianship tradition lives on

MOHSIN MILON with ANDREW EAGLE

In Rishipara, a family is hardly a family if at least some of its members aren't engaged in making bamboo goods. From morning until evening, year-round, the area in Ityah village, in Kishimnagar union of Jessore's Monirampur upazila, is busy with artisans from around two hundred families hard at work. Dali, topa, khalai, kula: trays and baskets of all sorts, for household and agricultural use, are crafted. The traditional cottage industry has spanned many generations. "My parents worked with bamboo and cane," says Sri Dipak Kumar. "Now there are five people in our family, including my wife and daughter, who do the same. Demand for bamboo wares may have reduced a little in general, due to competition from plastic and aluminium products, but with burgeoning vegetable,

rice and fish cultivation across the region, demand for vessels designed for agriculture has increased." The peak fishing season is particularly busy, when fish basket sales are robust. Then, the villagers hardly need take their wares to market. Buyers arrive with regularity at their doorsteps. "Bamboo, our raw material, is more expensive than it was," Sri Dipak notes, "but it hasn't caused us great harm since the selling prices for our finished products have kept pace." "I learnt to make bamboo items from watching my husband," says another local, Mamta Rani. "At my father's house they also do it, but before marriage I never learnt. At first I used to end up with swollen hands and feet by the end of the day but it's not a problem anymore. To make a basic wedding tray costs about Tk 1.5 in bamboo; it sells for around Tk 6."

The traditional craft isn't only a livelihood. It's also a social activity. Residents often sit together in the shade while preparing bamboo strips and weaving. They chat, watch TV or listen to songs on their mobile phones as they work. Whole families are often involved, with youngsters keen to participate when they arrive home from school. It's unsurprising when bamboo artianship is more-over a sentimental link to their ancestry. "All the families in Rishipara have at one time or other relied on making bamboo goods for a livelihood," says the chairman of Kishimnagar union council, GM Ahad Ali. "It's hardly possible for anyone to be idle. But the industry lacks capital. If the government promoted small interest loans through local banks they could do even better. Already many families are self-sufficient, day to day, thanks to crafting bamboo."



An artisan is busy with making bamboo goods at Rishipara in Monirampur upazila of Jessore. The photo was taken a few days ago.

PHOTO: STAR

## College girl hacked dead by husband

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A female college student was hacked to death allegedly by her husband following a family feud at Ratanpur village in Madhabpur upazila of Habiganj on Tuesday. The deceased was Rifa Akther, 20, daughter of Liakat Ali of Sultanpur village in the upazila, and a degree pass course student of Syed Uddin Degree College. Police said Jahir Uddin, 30, son of Chabu Mia of Ratanpur village, married Rifa two years ago. After a year of their wedding, Jahir often beat Rifa over trifle matters, said family members. On Tuesday night, Jahir attacked Rifa with a sharp weapon, leaving her dead on the spot following a family feud, said the victim's father Liakat Ali.

## Pregnant 7th grader beaten, hospitalised

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A pregnant seventh grader, who was beaten by her alleged rapist and his family members on Monday night, is now undergoing treatment at Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital. The victim, 14, a Class VII student of Mohadevpur High School, is a resident of Pahardanga Udgar village in Sadar upazila. Meanwhile, following a case filed by the victim's father with Thakurgaon Police Station on Tuesday night police detained Rabiul Islam, 22, son of Umir Uddin of the village. According to the girl's family, about six to seven months ago Rabiul, a cousin of the victim, developed a relation with the girl, following a love affair and used to rape her frequently. A few days ago, as the girl become pregnant and was facing various complications she disclosed the matter to her family. After knowing the matter, the girl's family went to Rabiul's house on Monday evening for a discussion to resolve the matter, but Rabiul's family declined to sit with them. Later on the same night, Rabiul's family called the victim to their house and physically harassed her, alleged the victim. Failing to settle the matter through village arbitration all day on Tuesday, the girl's family admitted her to Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital the same night as her condition was deteriorating. On information, Thakurgaon Superintendent of Police Farhad Ahmed visited the girl at the hospital the same night and assured her of all kind of support.

## 100 banana trees felled over enmity

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhalakathi

Over 100 banana trees at an orchard were felled over previous enmity at Indrapasha in Rajapur upazila of the district on Tuesday. Freedom fighter KM Nurul Haque, owner of the banana garden, said his neighbour Sarwar felled the trees over previous enmity. Nurul's son Boni Amin said they planted around 100 banana plants four months ago. The bananas would have been sold in the market within a short time but their hope was dashed as Sarwar cut down the trees, he said. When this correspondent went to Sarwar's house for his comment but the latter left the spot seeing him. They will take action after getting complaint, said Rajapur police.

## 30 injured as villagers clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

At least 30 people were injured in a clash between two groups of villagers over establishing supremacy in the area at Amura village in Sadar upazila. Police and locals said there was a longstanding conflict between village leader Shaukat Mollah and Jamal Hossain. An altercation took place between Rajab Ali and Toakkel Hossain on Tuesday evening, Rajab is a supporter of Shaukat and Toakkel is a supporter of Jamal. Shaukat group, equipped with local weapons, attacked Jamal group yesterday. During the clash, 30 people were injured and 10 houses were vandalised. Twenty-one of the injured were sent to Magura Sadar Hospital. Neither Shaukat nor Rajab could be contacted as their cellphones were switched off. Officer-in-Charge of Sadar Police Station Ilias Hossain said they have arrested 18 people.

## Bogra rape victim, mother return home

A CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A rape victim college girl and her mother returned home yesterday after spending three months under safe custody in Rajshahi. The victim was in a safe home and her mother was in a victim support centre. The girl's father petitioned the Bogra Juvenile Court 1 on October 30, praying for their release. Judge Emdadul Haque fixed November 8 for hearing. After the hearing yesterday, the judge granted the petition in presence of the girl and her mother. Earlier, the court sent the girl to Rajshahi safe home and her mother to victim support centre on August 7. On July 17, Tufan Sarkar, suspended convener of district unit Sramik League, lured the girl with promise of getting her admitted to a reputed college. He then raped her. In an attempt to hush up the incident, Tufan and his associates tortured the girl and her mother and shaved their heads on July 28. The mother of the victim filed a case against 10 people, including Tufan, his wife Asha and her elder sister ward councillor Marjia Hasan Rumki. Police submitted charge sheet on October 10. Assistant Superintendent of Police (A circle) Sonaton Chakraborty told this correspondent that if the victim and her mother feel insecure at home, police will provide necessary security.

## 'Bring criminals to book'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

People at a human chain in the town yesterday demanded arrest and exemplary punishment of the culprits who tortured a schoolteacher for dowry in Sadar upazila. The victim is Nurun Nahar Tanjila, 28, a teacher of Dangapara Government Primary School in Atwary upazila of Panchagarh. Under the banner of Sammilita Nari Samaj in Thakurgaon, different women's rights organisations organised the rally. Speakers at the rally said though several days have passed, most of the accused, including prime accused Tanjila's husband Anwar Hossain, a lecturer of Pirganj Government College, are still at large. The offenders are even giving threats to Tanjila's family to withdraw the case. District Mahila Parishad General Secretary Suchorita Dev and Director of Sononi Nur Banu Begum spoke at the rally. A week after their wedding, Tanjila's husband Anwar started torturing Tanjila for dowry. On October 27, Anwar and his family members beat Tanjila mercilessly and at one stage, hit her with a sharp weapon in the head, leaving her seriously injured. Later, police arrested Anwar's father Helal Uddin and brother Md Faruk Ahmed.

## Oral saline factory fails to start in 11 yrs

### Construction of the building began in 2006 and was completed in 2012

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

The building that was constructed for an oral saline factory five years ago is yet to start functioning due to negligence of the authorities concerned. It was built at a cost of nearly Tk 1 crore is getting dilapidated due to carelessness and negligence of the authorities concerned. Civil Surgeon (CS) Dr Rasheda Sultana said former BNP lawmaker and then president of the Standing Committee on the Ministry of Health Mashiur Rahman took the initiative in 2004 to build an oral saline factory in the district. Construction of a building started in 2006 in this regard and was completed in 2012 at a cost of Tk 98,39,680. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the factory in Madan Mohonpara in the district town on October 8 in 2013, but it has not started functioning yet, Dr Rasheda said. The building has started getting dilapidated, she said, adding that doors and windows are broken and electric fans and lights are getting rusted and damaged. Locals said anti-social elements and criminals gather in the building and take drugs there. Sacheton Nagorik Committee (Sanak) district unit President Abu Taher said the factory has not started operating till now due to negligence of the health ministry. Dr Rasheda said around one lakh packets of oral saline are needed in the district every month, which are brought from Jessore. She said if the factory starts functioning, the demand from nearby districts would have been met. She said they have not received any equipment as no manpower has been appointed. Dr Rasheda said she has sent a letter to the authorities concerned to appoint a manager, chemist and 53 employees.



The building was erected for an oral saline factory in Madan Mohonpara in Jhenidah five years ago. The factory has not started functioning yet.

PHOTO: STAR