

Motorcyclist found dead in toilet

Row over motorbike sale was behind the murder, say police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

A motorcyclist was found dead inside a toilet in Nesarabad upazila of the district yesterday.

The deceased was Milon, 22, son of Shahadat Hossain of Uttar Pashchim Sohagdal village in the upazila. He used to drive motorbike on rental basis in the area.

Police arrested the victim's friend Tajim, 19, and his mother Rehana Begum, 40, of the same village in this connection.

Md Shahidul Islam, officer-in-charge of Nesarabad Police Station, said Milon and Tajim engaged in an altercation over selling a motorbike on Saturday.

At one stage, Tajim hit Milon on the head with a hammer, leaving him dead on the spot. Tajim, his mother and some relatives hid the body inside a toilet.

As family members did not find Milon, his father filed a general diary with Nesarabad Police Station the following day.

As bad smell came out from the toilet yesterday morning, locals informed police about the matter. Police later recovered the body from there.

A murder case was filed, accusing Tajim, his mother and some other people, said the OC.

The body was sent to Pirojpur Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy, said the police official.

Rooftop gardening for greener cities

SHYKH SERAJ

Rooftop farming is expanding throughout the country very fast. Two and a half years ago, the initiative of featuring rooftop farming on the television was taken by Channel i's Hridoye Mati O Manush (Soil and People in Heart). In fact, this was my second attempt to expand rooftop agriculture across the country. During the late 80's, I worked with rooftop gardening in Bangladesh Television's Mati O Manush. At that time, many people raised orchards to grow Kazi guava on their rooftops. Cultivation of other fruits and flowers on rooftops also started. Many housewives and working people used to find self-satisfaction by growing fruits and vegetables on rooftop gardens. The work was very much out of passion. Later on, I did many TV programmes that featured even poultry farms on rooftops. Raising chicken on rooftops and balconies spread rapidly afterwards. Many unemployed youths, housewives, even service-holders and businessmen started investing in poultry industry. I mentioned those stories in different articles and TV programmes. A huge expansion of rooftop farming followed countrywide.

Today, more and more people are becoming interested in rooftop garden-

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Shykh Seraj with Sheikh Al Ahmad Nahid at the latter's rooftop garden in Chittagong.

PHOTO: HRIDOYE MATI O MANUSH

I have seen that retired government and private service holders, businessmen and industrialists have made their leisure time productive by getting involved in rooftop agriculture. It gives them peace, they say. Even a section of people who don't have their own house or roof, convince their house owner and do gardening in one side of the roof or even in balcony. It also provides nutrition for the family. Besides cultivating fruits and vegetables and raising chickens, pigeons, turkeys etc, some are cultivating fish in drums set on roofs. This might sound strange, even goats, sheep and cows are being raised on rooftops.

I have seen an inspiring scene recently. Sheikh Al Ahmad Nahid, assistant professor of Fisheries Department of Chittagong Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, established an integrated rooftop agriculture research centre on the roof at their campus quarters. Many students successfully do research there. Along with vegetables and fruits, there is a reputable research centre for aquarium fish reproduction. He is finding new technologies to spread rooftop agriculture nationwide. This is a great milestone for our rooftop farming mission.

Those who are building a new home can take advice from experts to make the roof suitable for small-scale agriculture. Those who don't have their own home can do it by persuading their house owner or do it in the balcony. I have seen people of different cities becoming interested in rooftop agriculture. To lessen the pollution of the city and increase the oxygen in the air, rooftop agriculture can be a nice solution. In this case, the government has a role to play. For example, they can make it mandatory to arrange solar panel and greenery while constructing a building or house. Everyone will make their roof green. I hope that the day is not far when every city including Dhaka will have a layer of greenery.



The century-old bridge over the Teesta river in Badarganj upazila of Rangpur was damaged 12 years ago but has not been repaired as yet.

Century-old risky bridge

The bridge has been lying damaged for 12 years, locals demand new one

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A century-old bridge over the Teesta river has not been repaired since it was damaged 12 years ago due to its age and movement of heavy vehicles over it.

People of Badarganj upazila of Rangpur have been using the bridge at the risk of their lives as it connects nine villages of Kalupara union with the upazila headquarters.

"It has now become a death trap," said Md Forhad Hossain of Uttar Kalupara village. Eighty percent of around 24,000 people are dependent on the century-old bridge built for communicating with the upazila headquarters, he added.

Villagers urged the local engineering office several times to repair the bridge, but the officials paid no heed, Forhad said.

No vehicle, light or heavy, can cross the bridge, said Abdul Gaffar, a rickshaw-van puller, adding that most people prefer to walk across it.

The situation has become worse as the middle span of the bridge was damaged during the last rainy season. The bridge was repaired temporarily using logs, but that did

not last long.

People are taking a 4-km detour to go to their destinations, said villager Abdus Sattar. He urged the government to build a bridge on the river considering the suffering of the villagers.

"God knows what will happen in the coming rainy season," the elderly man said.

Farmer Al Mizan said they are deprived of getting fair prices for their crops as they cannot take those to nearby markets, adding that ambulance drivers often refuse to go to many villages to take patients to the upazila health complex.

"Students and government officials are also sufferers," he added.

Engineers of the upazila Local Government Engineering Department came several times to take measurements of the damaged bridge, but nothing happened, locals said. Villagers have given up hope of getting a new bridge, said Rafiqul Islam of Kalupara village.

Badarganj Upazila Engineer Md Abu Taleb said he visited the spot and filed a written request to the higher authorities for constructing a new bridge there.

For refusal to accept verbal divorce

Husband stabs woman to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A rickshaw puller allegedly stabbed his wife to death in Dhamoirhat upazila of Naogaon on Tuesday night, following a row over his extramarital affair and 'verbal divorce'.

The victim, Parvin Begum, 35, fell into the wrath of her husband Abdur Rahman, 40, son of Kobad Munshi of Doulatpur village under Dhamoirhat upazila, as she rejected his verbal divorce, said family sources.

"Abdur Rahman, who has been working as a rickshaw puller in Dhaka for long, developed an extramarital affair with a woman there. He recently came back home and recited talak (divorce) three times to his wife. As the woman rejected it, the husband stared torturing her," Md Sanowar Hossain, officer in charge (OC) of Dhamoirhat Police Station, quoted family members as saying.

"Rahman was keen to marry the woman in Dhaka. Earlier on February 6, he attempted to kill my daughter," said Ayub Ali, father of the slain woman.

"On Tuesday night the couple with their two daughters had their supper and went to bed, keeping their two daughters in another room. As Parvin fell into deep sleep, her husband gagged her with a piece of cloth and stabbed her with a knife.

"Hearing her scream, her elder daughter Zannatul Ferdous rushed to the room and found her lying in a pool of blood. The husband fled the spot.

"The girl cried for villagers' help to take her mother to hospital in a bid to save her, but the victim died shortly," he said.

Informed, police went to the spot and sent the body to Naogaon General Hospital for autopsy.

The slain woman's father Ayub Ali filed a murder case with Dhamoirhat Police Station accusing Abdur Rahman.

"The alleged killer husband went into hiding after the murder. Police have already conducted several raids and continued drives to arrest the accused," said OC Sanowar Hossain.

14 hurt over land dispute in Habiganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

At least fourteen people were injured, four of them with rubber bullets, during a clash over land dispute in Bahubal upazila of Habiganj yesterday.

Bullet-hit Idris Ali, 60, was admitted to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital, and the three others -- Jewel Mia, 45, Abdul Mia, 35, and Habib Ullah, 27 -- were admitted to Habiganj Sadar Hospital.

They hail from Sundratiki village in Bahubal upazila, said Resident Medical Officer of Bahubal Health Complex Babul Kumar Das. He said the others took primary treatment at the complex.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Md Jasim Uddin said the clash ensued around 1:00pm between Rampur Tea Garden authority and residents of Sundratiki village over ownership of 17 acres of land leased by the tea garden.

Police said they fired rubber bullets and tear gas shells to disperse the clashing people, leaving four with wounds caused by rubber bullets.

Dashmina seed farm under erosion threat

Over 400 acres of land, cyclone shelter, road washed away in 4 years

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The country's largest seed production farm, covering 1,044 acres of land, in Dashmina upazila of the district is under threat of erosion by the Tentulia river.

Over 400 acres of land of the Dashmina seed production farm set up by Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) have already been washed away by the river in the last four years. Cultivation of crops is also greatly hampered as saline water from nearby Tentulia river regularly floods the area due to absence of flood control embankment.

"We have sent several letters to the authorities concerned, seeking immediate steps regarding the problem, but in vain," said Dashmina seed production farm's Deputy Director Kishore Kumar Biswas.

"We sent a letter to them on August 24 in 2017 as many establishments, including office buildings, godowns, mosques, roads and space for drying seeds have already been devoured by the Tentulia river, while many other establishments are under threat," he said.

The main office building is now only about 300 feet from the river, he said, adding that the situation will become worse if necessary steps are not taken immediately.

The project, meant for producing

salinity tolerant and hybrid varieties of crop seeds, covers 1,044. 36 acres of land in Char Botham, Char Fatima, Char Hyder, Char Shahjalal, Char Saimon, Char Borhan and Char Bashbaria in Dashmina upazila, Kishore said.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina formally inaugurated the Tk 250 crore, four-year project on March 19

in 2013. It is funded by BADC, which will run it when the tenure of the project ends. Godowns, offices and residential buildings for employees have been built and many tools have been purchased, but they are all under threat of being washed away.

Farmer Abdul Mannan Hawlader of Bashbaria village said erosion has become serious in the last few years,

and huge areas of land have gone into the Tentulia river.

"We are very worried as the whole farm is facing extinction," he said, adding that flood control embankment, sluice gates and culverts should be built to check the erosion.



Dashmina seed production farm in Dashmina upazila of Patuakhali is under threat of erosion by the Tentulia river.

PHOTO: STAR