

# Three rapists get RI for life

Culprits were also fined Tk 1 lakh each in C'nawabganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj  
A court here yesterday sentenced three people to rigorous imprisonment for life for raping a girl in the district. The court also fined them Tk 1 lakh each, in default, to suffer one more year in jail.

Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-2 Judge Ziaur Rahman, also Additional District and Sessions Judge, pronounced the verdict in presence of one convict. The two other convicts are absconding.

The convicted are Sohel, 24, son of Kosimuddin, Dabir Ali, 25, son of Bishu Kholifa and Aminul Islam, 20, son of Foring Biswas of Chunakhali village in Sadar upazila.

According to the prosecution, Sohel got to know the girl, a resident of Debottor village in Shibganj upazila, over mobile phone. He called her on June 6 in 2015 and told her to meet him to get married. When the girl came out of her house Sohel, Dabir and Aminul took her to an orchard in Hossaindanga area in Sadar upazila and raped her.

Hearing the girl's screams, locals rushed to the spot, caught the criminals and handed them over to police.

The victim filed a case under Women and Children Repression Prevention Act with Sadar Model Police Station the next day.

After completion of investigation, Investigation Officer of the case Sub-Inspector Dulal Uddin of the police station pressed charges against them on June 30 the same year.

After examining the case records and witnesses, the judge found them guilty and pronounced the verdict.



Unusually large number of easy-bikes (battery-run three-wheelers) has become a nuisance in Dinajpur town, as they create nagging traffic jam, besides fleecing the passengers with high fares.

PHOTO: STAR

# Baishabi celebration begins today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

A three-day celebration marking Baishabi festival will start on Rangamati cultural institute premises in the town today.

Former state minister for Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs Dipankar Talukder will inaugurate the programme jointly organised by Rangamati Hill District Council and Khudro Nri Ghosti Sangskritik Institute.

A colourful rally will start on Rangamati College gate premises around 4:00pm.

Hill people are in festive mood on the occasion.

The New Year festival called Baishabi is the prime festival in the CHT region.

The three-day programme will be observed through holding of different events like Ful Vajana, Ghila Khela, Boli Khela, etc. The events will be held at Rangamati Chinghal Mong Mari stadium.

A water festival, one of the most popular events of Marma community during the season, will take place in Narikel Bagan area of Rangamati town on April 16.

# Anything but easy

Excessive number of easy bikes causing havoc in Dinajpur town

KONGKON KARMAKER with ANDREW EAGLE

Almost a decade ago, when motorised three-wheeler easy bikes first appeared on the streets of Dinajpur town, residents were pleased. The vehicles promised superior comfort and speed in comparison with rickshaws. Now, with rickshaws all but gone, an ever-burgeoning fleet of easy bikes is causing frustrating traffic jams and a rising number of accidents often caused by inexperienced easy bike drivers.

"Easy bike congestion has made it difficult to walk anywhere in town," says Rafiqul Islam from Chhotogurga. "In the past, getting about was cheap but many

easy bike drivers charge high rates. The vehicles are dangerous. Many easy bike drivers turn off their lights at night to save power. Many don't follow the traffic rules. In the last five years three people have been killed in Dinajpur town due to easy bikes, and many more injured."

According to Dinajpur municipal authorities, the number of rickshaws in town reached its peak of around 5,000 at some time before easy bikes first took to the streets in mid 2009. Since then, the number of easy bikes has grown exponentially.

"It would be hard to find even 100 rickshaws in town nowadays," observes Abul Kalam Azad, convener of community

organisation Nagarik Udyog.

"I used to ride a rickshaw," says Mehdi Hasan from the Ramnagar area. "But for the last three years I have driven an easy bike instead. I can earn at least Tk 450 per day, which isn't possible with a rickshaw."

Selim Mia, 51, from Baluadanga meanwhile has continued with rickshaws. "I have been riding a rickshaw for twenty years," he says. "Many rickshaw drivers switched to easy bikes but I prefer rickshaws because it's much less likely to be involved in an accident."

Amzad Hossain, the president of the Easy Bike Driver Welfare Society says the number of easy bikes in the municipality is 7,000. Others estimate the actual fleet size

is as high as 18,000.

Mayor Syed Zahangir Hossain states that only around 4,000 easy bike licences for operation in the town area have been issued. "Many of the vehicles are unlicensed," he says.

"We don't have any specific instruction regarding easy bikes," says traffic sergeant Sadakul Bari. "But the vehicles are not only an issue in the town area. They are also being plied rampantly on regional roads and highways."

Regardless of their actual number, what is clear to many Dinajpur residents is that the ever-growing easy bike fleet is causing quality of life to decline, day by day.



A man rescued this abandoned newborn in Tangail's Mirzapur upazila yesterday while a stray dog was trying to drag the baby boy into a roadside bush.

PHOTO: STAR

# Saved from dog's jaw

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

An abandoned newborn was rescued in Mirzapur upazila when a stray dog was trying to drag the baby boy across a village road yesterday.

Mohammad Humayun Kabir of Korra Kawaljani village saw a dog dragging away the newborn, wrapped in a polythene bag, into a bush when he went for a walk around 5:45am.

Humayun, a teacher of Korra Kawaljani Dakhil Madrasa, immediately

drove away the dog and rescued the baby unhurt.

"I used to go for morning walk since I had bypass surgery recently," Humayun said.

"After walking around 500 yards I saw a dog dragging a polythene bag across an earthen road of the village," Humayun said, adding, "When I was about to cross the place, I heard a mild crying sound and turned around to see what was going on."

"Spotting the infant there, I ran back to my house and told the

matter to my wife Sanjida and aunt Masuda, who rescued the baby and started taking necessary care," he said.

"The baby became normal after my younger brother's wife Sumona breastfed him," he said, adding that after informing police of the matter they took the infant to a hospital for treatment.

Officer-in-Charge of Mirzapur Police Station SM Mizanul Haque said the newborn is now undergoing treatment at Kumudini Hospital under police care.

# 'Try killers of Jubo League leader'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Speakers at a human chain in the town yesterday demanded speedy trial of a Jubo League leader murder case.

Villagers of Sohata in Sadar upazila organised the programme in front of Brahmanbaria Red Crescent Bhaban.

The deceased was Nurul Alam, 45, a member of Ramrail union unit Jubo League in Sadar upazila.

Shahalam Bhuiyan, elder brother of the victim, Shibbir Ahmed, former member of Ramrail Union Parishad, and Al-Amin, joint convener of Brahmanbaria municipality unit Jubo league, spoke at the rally.

The speakers also demanded immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of the killers of Nurul.

On February 23, some drug peddlers killed Nurul in front of his house.

The killers continued giving threat to the victim's family members to withdraw the case, they said.

After the human chain, Farzana Alam, wife of the victim, submitted a memorandum to the home minister through the deputy commissioner.

# JAMALPUR SCHOOLGIRL GANG RAPE Key accused still at large

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

The key accused in a schoolgirl gang-rape case filed with Jamalpur Sadar Police Station on January 28 are yet to be arrested.

The girl, 16, only daughter of a poor widow of Dewanipara village, was gang-raped by a group allegedly led by Sabbir Hossain Akanda Setu, 23, president of Jubo League's ward No-3 unit of Kendua union, and son of Abdul Mannan Akanda of Kendua Gopalpur village, in Sadar upazila on January 26 night.

Two other accused, who are still at large, are Babu, 24, son of Golam Mostafa, and Shakil, 19, of Dewanipara village.

The girl, 16, then an SSC candidate, attended a religious gathering at local Hafjia Madrasa ground along with her mother and a cousin on the night.

A gang led by Setu caught the two girls when they went to buy snacks from a makeshift shop near the religious gathering around 11:00pm.

"The cousin managed to free herself while the gang took the victim to a desolate place at Abirerchar, over half a kilometre away. They raped her, leaving her unconscious," said Inspector Tariqul Islam, also investigation officer (IO) of the case.

"Some people returning after the funeral took her to her home and she received treatment at Jamalpur General Hospital. Her mother filed a rape case accusing five named youths and four to five unnamed people on January 28," he said.

Of the named accused, Rifat, 20, and Minhaj, 19, of Dewanipara village were arrested on February 4. We are continuing drives to arrest the others including the key accused," he said.

The union Jubo League expelled Setu for his alleged involvement in the gang-rape, said Farhan Ahmed, general secretary of the district Jubo League.

Demanding arrest of the key accused, the victim's mother said, "Meanwhile, some local influential people are pressing me to settle the case through arbitration."

# One of five missing deer found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A dead deer was found floating in the Payra river in Tatulbaria area under Taltali upazila of Barguna on Tuesday.

Men of Nolbungia forest office recovered the three-year-old deer's body. It might have come from Tenragiri reserve forest, locals said.

Nolbungia forest Beat Officer Dilip Kumar said they recovered the dead deer from the river after locals informed them.

The Taltali upazila livestock officer examined the deer yesterday, Dilip said, adding that they buried it in the office ground.

"We think that it is one of the five deer that went missing from Tenragiri forest last August when their cage was badly damaged by tidal surge," he said, adding that it might have jumped into the river to escape from people trying to catch it.

The authorities have not been able to find any of the missing deer till now.

The dead deer might be one of them, the beat officer said.

# Boys of indomitable will

16 visually impaired students attend HSC exams in Pabna

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPI, Pabna

Sixteen visually impaired students are appearing in the ongoing HSC examination in the district, thanks to the initiative of Manob Kollan Trust, a humanitarian organisation.

The sixteen students are Sihab Uddin Bhuiyan and Md Abdullah Pramanik of Narsingdi, Abdullah Al Amin and Abul Kalam Azad of Tangail, Ikhteyar Mridha of Gopalganj, Golap Mallik of Jamalpur, Shahadat Hossain of Brahmanbaria, Md Rokon Uzzaman of Panchagarh, Md Abdul Aziz of Dinajpur, Imran Hossain of Kurigram, Md Moniruzzaman of Rajshahi, Md

Mozammel Hossain of Mymensingh, Mohammed Ali of Joypurhat, Humayun Kabir of Barishal, and Monirul Islam of Pabna district.

"All of them had left study due to visual problem and poverty. Later Manob Kollan Trust arranged their schooling. They are appearing in the HSC examinations through private registration," said Prof Abul Hossain, chairman of the trust.

"The visually challenged youths took their lessons through Braille method. With permission from the education board, they are appearing in the HSC examinations with the help of dictation writers through a special

arrangement in the examination centre," Prof Hossain said.

"We are lucky enough to continue study despite the challenge. The special facility offered by the organisation inspired us to go forward with academic career so that we can do well in future," said Monirul Islam, one of the examinees.

Under the arrangement of Pabna Manob Kollan Trust, 72 blind students are receiving schooling through the Braille. Established in 1994, the organisation has given the opportunity to pursue academic career for a number of students with different challenges across the country.



Sixteen visually impaired students, all appearing at the ongoing HSC examinations in Pabna, pose for a photograph.

PHOTO: STAR