

Teacher's sexual harassment protested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Demanding punishment of a teacher for sexual harassment and talking against religion, students of Government PC College yesterday confined the principal to his room from 11:00am to 2:45pm.

They left after the principal assured them of taking action in the matter.

The students said head of the Bangla Department Prof Manoj Chandra Mondal sexually harassed some students. They said he claimed himself to be an atheist and talked against religion.

Principal Avijit Basu said they got an application from the students against the teacher and formed a five-member probe committee .

Bagerhat By-Election Habibun Nahar lone candidate

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Awami League (AL) nominated candidate Habibun Nahar is the lone candidate in Bagerhat-3 constituency by-election as no other aspirant submitted nomination till yesterday.

Thursday, May 24, was the deadline for submitting nomination papers to contest the Bagerhat-3 parliamentary by-election scheduled to be held on June 26. District Election Officer Md Ruhul Amin Mollik said.

Habibun Nahar, wife of newly elected Khulna City Corporation (KCC) Mayor Talukder Abdul Khalek, submitted her nomination paper to Returning Officer, also Regional Election Officer in Faridpur, at Bagerhat Election Office yesterday noon.



Farmer Naimuddin of Sahadev Barogachha village in Sadar upazila of Nilphamari looks gloomily at his Boro crop as harvesting has been delayed due to adverse weather. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR

Thunderbolt fear hampers Boro harvesting

Day labourers reluctant to go for harvesting in Nilphamari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Farmers in the district are passing their days in anxiety as excessive rain, storms and lightning are damaging and killing the ripe Boro paddy in the harvesting season that started one month ago.

Moreover, day labourers are reluctant to go to the Boro fields for harvesting as they are afraid of being struck by lightning, which has killed several people in the open fields.

Sub-Assistant Agriculture Officer of the district Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) Sanarul Islam said the district had

200 mm of rainfall accompanied by hailstorm and lightning in May, severely affecting agriculture.

"Due to continuous natural calamities and unavailability of day labourers, only 60% of the paddy has been harvested so far, though it is supposed to be 80% by this time," he added.

Storm and hail caused damage to Boro paddy on 12,036 hectares of land out of a total of 84,360 hectares cultivated in the district, and threat of further damage is still there, Sanarul said.

"My house yard is supposed to be filled with paddy at this time,

but it has not happened this year as I cannot harvest the paddy due to scarcity of day labourers, who are unwilling to go to the fields for fear of lightning," said farmer Hamidar Rahman of Jigabari village in Dimla upazila.

"Misfortune never stops haunting us as neck blast disease caused much harm at the fag end of the cultivation season. Now delay in harvesting is ruining the crop," lamented farmer Pran Roy of Ramnagar village in Sadar upazila.

"We do not want to harvest paddy in the rain as thunderbolts usually strike open fields, causing

deaths, although farmers offer high pay," said Solaiman Ali, a day labourer of Khalisha village in Saidpur upazila.

According to newspaper reports and information revealed by the district health department, 10 people, mostly day labourers, were killed by lightning during this Boro season.

"Farmers should not delay in harvesting ripe Boro paddy to prevent ruining of the crops. We encourage farmers to use family labour to overcome the labour crisis, said district DAE Deputy Director Abul Kashem Azad.

Freed Raza back to family after 20 yrs

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinajpur

Acquitted from a murder charge, Azaher Ali Raza, who was freed from jail on Wednesday after 20 years of confinement, is passing a busy time as relatives, neighbours and locals thronged at his Uttar Joydebpur village home in Dinajpur Sadar upazila.

"My daughter Ajmira Khatun was an 11-month-old girl when I went to jail in 1998. Now she has met me with her 15-month-old daughter Rekha," Raza told this correspondent when the latter went to his home on Wednesday.

"My sisters, brothers and daughter were little when I went to jail in 1998. Now I can hardly recognise them. My mother met me several times in last 20 years when I was in jail, but my other relatives never went to jail to meet me," he said.

"It's really a wonderful moment for us," said Raza's sister Rehana.

Raza's wife left him after he went to jail, being arrested in a murder case in 1998.

"Dinajpur has changed a lot in last 20 years. There were a few high-rise buildings in the town, but I saw many high-rise buildings here on Wednesday. The road to my home is carpeted and wide. Unlike the



Raza's daughter Ajmira Khatun, holding her kid, is in tears as she meets her father for the first time in 20 years.

PHOTO: STAR

earlier time, most of the village houses are now brick-built," Raza said.

Raza, who studied up to Class V, used to run a small shop at Kishanbazar area in Dinajpur Sadar upazila, near his home.

Raza, then 20, was arrested in a murder case in mid 1998. The Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court-2 of Dinajpur awarded him death sentence in 2005. Later, the High Court acquitted him of the charge in

2010. The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court (SC) in 2012 stayed the acquittal order.

After hearing, the SC finally acquitted him and issued order for his release from jail, but the letter never reached Dinajpur jail in last six years.

Recently, Dinajpur jail authorities brought the issue to the notice of the SC and the apex court again issued the letter that arrived at Dinajpur district court on Wednesday,

leading to the release of Raza from Dinajpur jail.

"Some precious years of my life have been wasted. Now I am not fit to do any laborious job," said Raza, expressing hope that the government will help him run the rest of his life smoothly.

"Raza's life is ruined. His brothers and sisters are also poor. I urge the government to help him start a new life," his mother Monsura Khatun said with tearful eyes.

Cops pick up expat on drug peddling charge

Magrib Ali returned home from Qatar recently

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kustia

Family members of a man, who recently returned from Qatar, alleged that plainclothes Detective Branch (DB) men of Meherpur picked him up from his house yesterday.

The arrestee is Magrib Ali of Koromdi village in Gangni upazila of Meherpur.

DB officials said he was a listed drug trader and accused in five cases.

Magrib's wife Shaheda Khatun alleged that five or six plainclothes armed men stormed into their house at about 6:30am yesterday. They introduced themselves as DB men and looked for her husband, who was sleeping.

The DB men picked up Magrib and asked Shahida to meet them at the DB office.

Shahida admitted that her husband was involved in drug trading five years ago.

"My husband went to Qatar in June of 2015 to escape arrest," Shahida said.

Magrib returned home after two years and started farming and beef fattening, but he did not go back to drug dealing, she said.

A DB team arrested Magrib and sent him to jail in October 2017, a week after he returned from Qatar, Shahida said, adding that he was released on bail after two months.

Meherpur DB Police Officer-in-Charge (OC) Shahin Uddin said Magrib was a listed drug dealer in Gangni upazila and five Yaba tablets were recovered from him during the arrest.

"Magrib was accused in five cases, including one for robbery and four for drugs," the DB OC said.

Magrib will be produced before a court after interrogation, the police official said.

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Three electrocuted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Three workers died of electrocution and five others were injured while erecting an electric pole in Madhya Dariabad area in Islampur municipality yesterday.

The deceased, Taher, 20, Obaidur, 22 and Hasan, 25, were residents of Saghata upazila of Gaibandha.

Islampur Police Station Sub-inspector Rafiqul Islam said some workers were putting up an electric pole when it fell on an adjacent electric line. A live wire was torn off and fell to the ground, which was covered with water and became electrified.

The workers, who were standing on the ground, were electrocuted, the SI said.

Rubel was undergoing treatment at Islampur Upazila Health Complex while Helal, Jewel, Shafiqul and Mithun were admitted to Jamalpur General Hospital, added the SI.

Slain rape victim yet to be identified

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Nine months into the incident, police are yet to identify the girl who was murdered after rape.

Law enforcers recovered the body of an unidentified girl from a pond near Pathorghata College in Barguna on August 10 last year.

Two days after the incident, police filed a case with Pathorghata Police Station, accusing unidentified people.

Detectives are investigating the case.

After three months, police learnt that the girl was killed after rape with the help of the night guard Md Jahangir Hossain of the college. Police arrested him on November 11.

The following day, the night guard gave confessional statement to the Senior Judicial Magistrate's Court in this regard.

Based on his statement, police later arrested four local Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) men. They are Ruh Anan Danial, president of Pathorghata College unit BCL, its secretary Saddam Hossen Chotto, organising secretary Mahidul Islam Rayhan, and Md Mahmud, assistant secretary of Pathorghata upazila unit BCL. On November 14, central BCL expelled all the arrestees over the matter.

Jahangir was recently freed from the jail following an order of the High Court while others are still in Barguna Jail.

Inspector of Barguna DB police Md Bashir Uddin, also the investigation officer of the case, said they are trying their best to identify the victim.

Abducted teen found murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Over two months into his abduction, a teenage boy was found murdered at Keshoreganj Bazar in Phulbaria upazila yesterday.

Victim Mehedi Hasan Babu, 15, son of Shahjahan Ali of Shibpur village, got GPA-5 in this year's SSC examinations. He went out of his house on March 6 and remained missing since then.

The following day, Minara Khatun received a message from her son's mobile phone demanding Tk 6 lakh for his safe return and not to disclose the matter to others, the mother said, adding that since then Babu's phone was found switched-off.

Later, a general diary was filed with Phulbaria Police Station. Police then detained HSC examinee Mohammad Tushar, 19, for his alleged involvement in the abduction and took him on a two-day remand.

During police interrogation, Tushar admitted that although he and Babu traveled to Dhaka together in the same bus, Babu got down from the vehicle in Kuril Biswa Road area in the capital, said Officer-in-Charge of Phulbaria Police Station Sheikh Kabirul Islam.

Tushar was later released on bail on April 1 and the case was transferred to Detective Branch (DB) of police, said the OC.

On suspicion, a team of DB police arrested Tushar on Tuesday in another murder case. During primary interrogation, Tushar confessed to killing Babu following an altercation over love affair. The body was dumped at Keshoreganj Bazar.

Tushar's friend Al Amin was also arrested in this connection, said detectives.

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