



**CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:** Artisans give finishing touches to the idols at mandops on Ram Babu Road in Mymensingh town, Purbo Adalatpara in Tangail town, and Nabintari village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila ahead of the Durga Puja that will begin on October 15.

PHOTO: STAR

## To avoid early marriage

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Fifteen-year-old Marium, who mysteriously went missing from her Kalapara house on September 18, has been rescued from Dhaka, thanks to the sincere efforts by police.

"Marium, daughter of late Babul Mallik, also a Class IX student at Mohipur High School in Patuakhali, told us that she fled from home to save herself from early marriage," Superintendent of Police (SP) Mainul Hasan told journalists in presence of the girl around 1:00pm yesterday.

"Police found Marium working at a garments house in Dhaka on Wednesday and she was brought to Patuakhali town this morning," he said.

Earlier Marium's mother Nur Jahan, 40, said she went to bed with her two children Marium and Hamim, 3, after having meal on September 18 night.

In the morning she saw some bloodstains on the floor while Marium was missing.

Informed by villagers, police went to the spot and found a bloodstained knife there.

Police interrogated family members and some relatives but failed to trace Marium.

"After a few days, a phone call from an unknown number came to Marium's mother's mobile and she recorded it. Later police identified that the voice was Marium's and the call was made from Mugda area in Dhaka," the SP said.

"Then police started working in the area and finally found Marium working at the garments house named Runa Fashion.

"Marium said she slaughtered a goose and put its blood on the floor and fences. Then she went to Kalapara town at night and from there got on a Dhaka-bound bus the next morning.

"Later, with the help of a relative she managed the job. We will send her to the court and her statement will be recorded tomorrow [Sunday]," the SP said.

## DURGA PUJA BEGINS OCTOBER 15

# Idol making at the final stage

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Idols makers are passing busy hours to complete the orders as preparations to welcome the Hindu goddess Durga ahead of Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the Bangalee Hindus.

The festival will begin on October 15 with Maha Sashthi and end with Bijaya Dashami on October 19 with the immersion of the idol.

Our Tangail Correspondent reports: This year, Durga Puja will be held at 1,162 mandops in 12 upazilas of the district, said Prodip Kumar Goon Jhantu, secretary of the district's puja celebration committee.

Visiting different areas of Sadar and Delduar upazilas, this correspondent saw idol makers passing busy time to complete their work at mandops in Boro Kalibari, Sabalia, Thana Para, College Para, Registry Para, Paradise Para, Bajitpur, Anayetpur, Sakrail, Santosh, Palpara, Baghil, Karatia, Pathrail areas.

Artisan Asim Paul was seen painting earthen statues of goddess Durga for seven puja mandops in Tangail, including the one at Purbo Adalatpara, the largest

mandop in the town.

"Idol making is my ancestral profession," he said.

Sanjit Kumar Roy, superintendent of police in Tangail, said they will arrange three-tier security measures to ensure safety in the puja mandop area.

Our Correspondent, Mymensingh: Artisans in the district famous for making quality idols get orders from other districts including Netrakona, Jamalpur, Sherpur, Gaibandha, Pabna and Sirajganj every year, said workers at Dharmashala Temple in Jubilee Ghat area of the town.

"I have already completed the statue structures and the painting work is going on. The business is better this year," said Shambhu Das, proprietor of Sanjeeb Mrittika Shilpalaya in the town's Rambabu Road.

Workers at the farm, Sanjit Kuamr Pal from Jamalpur and Kartik Pal from Tarakanda upazila of Mymensingh said they engage in the work for four months every year and get a good profit.

"We hope a reasonable earning as the number of puja mandops and the rate for idol making have increased this year," said Joyonta Kumar Ghosh, a leading artisan in

Mymensingh.

"There are some 200 workers at different farms in and outside the town. A worker is paid Tk 10,000 to Tk 15,000 per month for making idols," he said.

Local people said most colourful puja mandops are set up at Aloka-Nodi Bangla Complex, Thanar Ghat, Dalpatti, Jilapipatti, Biswanath Mandir and Raghunath Jeur Akhara of the town.

A total of 765 puja mandops will be set up in the district this year, said Shankar Saha, organising secretary of district puja celebration committee.

Our Lalmonirhat Correspondent reports: The craftsmen in five upazilas in the district are having a busy time to make the clay images of Durga and other deities who will be worshipped in the temples by the devotees.

Craftsman Kartik Chandra Barmon, 35, at Nabintari village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila said his three-member team was making different images at eight temples in different areas of the district.

"A team of three to five people need eight to ten days for making a big image and five to six days for smaller images. Our charge varies from Tk 20,000 to Tk 35,000 exclud-

ing the supply of materials and other expenses," said Narayan Chandra Roy, a craftsman at Saptana village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

"In the district, 417 puja mandops are being set up this time. Like previous years, the well decorated mandops and the best artisans will be awarded," said Hiralal Roy, president of district puja celebration committee.

Our Jhenidah Correspondent adds: All preparations have been taken to ensure smooth celebration of Durga Puja at 450 mandops in six upazilas of the district, said Jhenidah Puja Uddhayan Committee secretary Prafulla Sarkar.

"Bamboo, straw, nail, thread, earth, lime, ornaments, saree and colour are needed to make Durga idols. We have to pay Tk 50,000 to the sculptor for making two idols at Kaliganj," said Panchanan Biswas, vice chairman of Nishchintapur puja celebration committee in Kaliganj upazila.

"Our four-member team is making six idols this year. Of them two in Kaliganj and the rest two are in Jashore. Around 80 sculptors are busy in making idols in Jhenidah," said sculptor Arabindu Paul.

# Yaba worth Tk 20cr seized in Patuakhali

## Two drug peddlers arrested with two pistols and four bullets

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-8) in a drive detained two alleged drug peddlers and seized 6.77 lakh pieces of Yaba tablets worth over Tk 20 crore from Kalapara upazila of the district early yesterday.

The arrestees are Mohammad Ibrahim, 25, son of Mohammad Yunus of Pashchim Pankhali village, and Mohammad Alam, 30, son of Abul Hossain of Balukhali area in Ukhia upazila of Cox's Bazar.

The law enforcers also seized two pistols, four bullets and four mobile

phone sets from their possession, says a Rab press release.

According to Rab, the elite force members, acting on a tip, conducted a drive on Patuakhali-Kuakata road near Sheikh Kamal Bridge in Kalapara upazila around 3:30am and detained two suspected drug peddlers from there.

Later, the Rab team seized 6.77 lakh Yaba pills, two pistols and four bullets after searching their bags.

The duo used to bring Yaba from Ukhia to Kalapara by trawlers and later send those to Dhaka by microbus, Rab claimed.

## Farmer killed in Habiganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moultribazar

A farmer was killed by criminals at Bualjur village in Nabiganj upazila of Habiganj on Friday night.

The deceased was Wahid Mia, 50, son of Chand Mia of the village, said Nabiganj Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Sheikh Mohammad Suhel Rana.

The criminals hacked him near his house around 6:00pm, the OC said.

The attackers managed to flee the scene, leaving Wahid injured.

Police took Wahid to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College and Hospital where the on-duty doctor declared him dead.

## Jamaat leader arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Police arrested a local Jamaat leader from Gobindaganj municipality of the district early yesterday.

They also seized Islamic revolutionary books and leaflets from the spot.

The arrestee is Mominul Master, president of Gobindaganj poura ward unit of Jamaat.

Police said on secret information, they raided the house of Mominul and arrested him with the books and leaflets when he was holding anti-government meeting there with his party men. However, the rest managed to flee.



PHOTO: STAR

Trucks parked on both sides of the road at Chutlia intersection on Jashore-Kushtia Road near Jhenidah town.

# Illegal parking makes Jhenidah roads risky

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Chutlia intersection, which is three kilometres from the district town, is an extremely risky curve on the Jashore-Kushtia road.

Jhenidah Roads and Highways Department Executive Engineer Mizanur Rahman said the most risky curved roads in the country were identified in 2015 for taking action to make them safer. Chutlia intersection was identified as one of the riskiest and most accident prone.

In January, 2016, Tk 2.96 crore was allocated to expand the curved area to 800 feet in length and 120 feet width to make it less risky. The work was completed in June in 2017.

Recently, trucks have started parking on both sides of the road at night and fatal accidents might occur due to

this, said Jhenidah Bangladesh Road and Transport Authority Assistant Director Bilash Sarkar. Around 15,000 vehicles from Dhaka, Rajshahi, Sylhet and Chittagong ply the road in 24 hours, he added.

Visiting the spot on Tuesday, this correspondent saw trucks from distant places parked on both sides of the intersection. Drivers cannot see any vehicle coming from the opposite direction due to the parked trucks. Consequently, fatal accidents might occur there.

Akbor Ali, 72, of Chutlia village said auto-rickshaws, motorbikes and human hauliers often meet with accidents here due to illegal parking.

Aziz Uddin, a truck driver from Kushtia, said they park and take rest at the intersection as there is a lot of space.

Driver Arman Ali of Jashore said vehicles from northern districts ply the road. It is a busy road connecting Khulna and Rajshahi divisions. "We cannot see ahead as the road is very curved. Besides, a good number of vehicles are parked on the curved side, which may cause fatal road accidents," he added.

Jhenidah Traffic Inspector Krishnapada Sarkar said no vehicles park at Chutlia intersection during the day. He cannot do anything if vehicles park there at night as traffic police do not duty at night.

Jhenidah Fire Service Station Officer Dilip Kumar Sarkar said they find it difficult to perform their professional duty if there is a long line of vehicles on both sides of the road. It is not right to park vehicles on both sides of the road, he added.



Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-8) in Barishal with 6.77 lakh Yaba tablets worth over Tk 20 crore, seized from two illegal drug traders during a drive in Patuakhali's Kalapara upazila early yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR