

One to die, six get life in murder case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A Kishoreganj court yesterday sentenced one man to death and six others to life-term imprisonment in a farmer killing case in 2008.

Second Additional District and Sessions Judge Mohammad Abdur Rahim delivered the judgment, said Kishoreganj Court Inspector Toufiq Ahmed.

After examining witnesses and evidence, the court handed down the verdict. Eight other accused in the case were acquitted as the charges brought against them were not proved.

The death penalty convict is Jillu Mia of Bheiarikona village in Tarail upazila of Kishoreganj.

The lifers are Ishaq Mia, Towhid Mia, Badal Mia, Chand Mia, Hadish Mia and Ali Akbar, of the same village.

The case statement said the convicts killed farmer Reaz Uddin of the village on June 16 in 2008.

Victim's younger brother Sharif Uddin Khokon lodged a case with Tarail Police Station, accusing 16 people, on the day of occurrence.

Police pressed a charge-sheet against 15 people on August 12 in 2012.



All the gates of Teesta Barrage in Hatibandha upazila of Lalmonirhat have remained inoperative for over two weeks as the newly installed automatic machine went out of order in a fire incident on October 15.

BURNT AUTOMATIC MACHINE OF TEESTA BARRAGE

52 sluice gates inoperative for 2 weeks

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

All the sluice gates of the Teesta Barrage, country's largest irrigation project, on the Teesta river at Dowani in Hatibandha upazila have remained inoperative since its automatic machine went out of order in a fire incident on October 15.

People living in nearby areas said due to the closed sluice gates water from the upstream keeps hitting the

barrage all the time and it might cause a serious disaster if the flow of water from the upstream in India sees a sudden increase.

Water Development Board (WDB) completed the process of automation under the project Teesta Barrage Automation Scheme at a cost of Tk 7 crore last year.

First Com Service and Vision Comtel, a Bangladesh-India joint venture company, started the installation work in

February 2017 and handed over the project to the authority concerned in December the same year.

Gaddimari Union Parishad (UP) Chairman Atiar Rahman said "The automatic machine was burnt after only ten months of installation due to use of substandard electric cables, circuits and other electrical accessories in the setups."

In-Charge of Dowani Police Camp Sub-Inspector Afwazul Islam said on the

night of October 15 he suddenly saw fire in the barrage automatic machine and WDB employees were trying to douse it.

WDB officials and staff, however, brought the blaze under control after over an hour of hectic efforts, locals said.

Executive Engineer (Mechanical) of Dalia Teesta Barrage Mohammad Shamsuzzoha said all the 52 sluice gates of the barrage became inoperative after the automatic machine went out of order in a fire that originated from an

electric short circuit.

As the project is under 18-month warranty period coverage the construction firm concerned should take the responsibility to repair it, the engineer said.

Golzar Rahman, a representative of the joint venture company, said his office has already started the work of reinstallation of the burnt cables and other accessories to make the machine operative soon.



Farmers harvest early variety Aman at Chadkhana village in Kishoreganj upazila of Nilphamari.

PHOTO: STAR

Early variety of Aman helps better cropping pattern

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Harvesting of early variety of Aman paddy has begun in the district, facilitating farmers to follow a new cropping pattern as they get the time to cultivate four crops in a year.

They first harvest Aman, then Robi crops, Aus and Boro in a cycle, instead of the traditional three crops, for getting more profit and creating job opportunity for marginal farm workers.

The Bangla months of Ashwin and Kartik (mid-September to mid-November) are regarded as monga period as farm workers sit idle after transplanting Aman paddy saplings. As a result, they have no scope to earn money to maintain

their families.

Nilphamari Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) Additional Deputy Director Md Sirajul Islam said early variety of paddy developed by Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) takes only 100 to 110 days to ripen after transplantation, while traditional varieties need 140 to 150 days.

"Farmers are now inclined towards cultivating early paddy to get good price in the lean period and also get scope to follow a new cropping pattern of four crops a year," he further said.

Sub Assistant Agriculture Officer (SAAO) of district DAE Arif Rabbani said Aman was cultivated on about

1.13 lakh hectares of land this year in the district. Early variety of paddy like Bina-7, BRRI Dhan-33, BRRI Dhan-39, BRRI Dhan-57 and hi-breed varieties have been cultivated on 15,000 hectares with a target to produce around 70,000 tonnes of rice.

On a visit to Laxmichap, Ramganj, Sukhdhon in Sadar upazila, and Chadkhana, Putimari, Nitai in Kishoreganj upazila, this correspondent found that farmers were happy and passing busy time in cutting and threshing early paddy.

Sabuj Ali, 50, of Chandkhana said he cultivated early variety of hi-breed Hira Dhan on four bighas of land. He got 72 maunds of paddy that he sold for Tk 50,000, making good profit.

Sree Sitanath Roy, 55, a farmer of Sukhdhon village, said he completed harvesting early variety Bina-7 paddy a week ago and was preparing the land to cultivate potato, followed by Aus and then Boro.

Razek Ali of Nitai village, who also rears cattle, said this year's scanty rainfall caused a scarcity of grass, but he has no problem now as he got sufficient straw by harvesting early paddy.

"Farmers are now aware of their own benefit and adopting new cropping patterns. Inclination towards early variety paddy is an example of this trend," said Nilphamari DAE Deputy Director Md Abul Kashem Azad.

SEARCH FOR MISSING SCHOOLGIRL

Hindus face eviction threat by UP chairman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

All the twenty-five Hindu families at Kanarbazar village in Hatibandha upazila are passing days amid fear as a union parishad (UP) chairman is allegedly threatening to evict them from their ancestral land after failing to trace the whereabouts of a missing schoolgirl.

Meanwhile, due to a tense situation, many parents have sent their young daughters to relatives' houses in other nearby villages considering the security of the girls.

On October 24, one Lalit Chandra Roy, on behalf of the villagers, filed a case with a Lalmonirhat court accusing 12 people, including Barakhata UP Chairman Abu Hena Mostafa Jaman Sohel in this regard.

Earlier, on October 20, UP Chairman Sohel along with local police conducted a search operation in all the Hindu houses of the village in the name of rescuing a missing schoolgirl of Purbo Sarodubi village.

Lalita Bala, 62, widow of late Gopal Chandra Roy of the village, alleged that Sohel, also a cousin of local Awami League

Lawmaker Motahar Hossain, vandalised their fences and gates and abused them verbally in presence of police.

"The chairman threatened us saying that he will pick our daughters if the missing girl is not traced," Sobita Rani, 30, wife of Babul Chandra Roy, alleged.

Housewife Laxmi Rani, 45, of the village, said her son Prodip Roy, 17, who has been staying out the house for the last three months, was made accused in the case filed by the missing schoolgirl's father on October 26.

Barakhata UP Chairman Sohel said he went to the village along with a police team when he came to know that the missing girl was staying there.

"I didn't hurl any abusive words and neither had given threat to any Hindus," Sohel said.

On secret information, they raided the village in search of the missing schoolgirl, Officer-in-Charge of Hatibandha Police Station Omar Farooque said, adding that Barakhata UP Chairman Sohel was accompanying the police team as the victim girl is the daughter of one of his neighbours.



Facing threat allegedly by the local union parishad chairman, a Hindu woman amid some worried people of the community weeps at Kanarbazar village of Fakirpara union under Lalmonirhat's Hatibandha upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

SSC examinee kills self

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

An SSC examinee allegedly committed suicide at Mozatipara village in Sadar upazila under the district on Wednesday night.

The deceased was Monir Hossain, 16, son of Mantaz Ali of the village.

Family members said Monir took his life by hanging himself from the ceiling of his room around 8:00pm.

The reason behind the suicide could not be known immediately, said police.

An unnatural death case was filed with Thakurgaon Police station.



CALLOUSNESS UNFORGIVABLE: Waste materials from a leather manufacturing factory at Uttara Export Processing Zone in Nilphamari Sadar upazila are dumped in a ditch near Fultola High School, causing health hazard.

PHOTO: STAR

UP chairman arrested on extortion charge

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

A union parishad chairman was arrested on Wednesday night on charge of demanding money from his rivals.

The arrestee is Md Hanif Khan, chairman of Kadamtala Union Parishad (UP) in Sadar upazila.

Some UP members had obstructed Hanif from giving rice meant for the genuine fishermen to some fake fishermen.

Five UP members came under attack, allegedly by Hanif's men, in his parishad office on October 22 as he had a conflict with some of them over distributing rice allotted for the fishermen during the 22-day ban on catching fish, said Pirojpur Sadar Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) SM

Ziaul Haque.

Md Sohel Khan, one of the UP members, was hacked mercilessly and is undergoing treatment in Dhaka.

Sohel's father Md Jafar Ali Khan filed a case on October 26 against 20 identified and five to seven unidentified men, with Hanif as the main accused.

To avoid arrest, Hanif took interim bail from High Court recently.

On October 31, Hanif demanded Tk 5 lakh from Jafar for fighting the case filed against him (Hanif), the OC said.

Jafar filed another case with the police station against five named and five to seven unnamed men the same day, making Hanif the main accused.

"After arresting Hanif, we produced him before a court that sent him to jail," the OC said.