



An under-construction house at Manikjowr Chhara village in Rangamati's Longadu upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

HELD BY DB 'IMPOSTERS' Couple traceless for four days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A couple, picked up by a group introducing themselves as members of the Detective Branch (DB) of police from their home in Melandah upazila under the district on Sunday, remained traceless as of yesterday evening.

Tuhin Sarkar, 22, son of retired store-keeper Mafiz Sarkar, 74, and Sultana Ferdousi, 60, of Madhyerchar under the upazila, and his four-month pregnant wife Nasrin Aktar Rumi, 20, were picked up by a group comprising 35 to 40 people including four women on Sunday afternoon, said the parents of Tuhin.

"The group coming on two blue coloured police vans, a white microbus and four CNG-run auto-rickshaws cordoned off the house around 4:30pm. As I asked who they were they replied that they were DB policemen," said Mafiz.

"As soon as Tuhin reached the house yard after saying the Asr prayers at the village mosque, they caught him and hurriedly took him onto the microbus. Within moments the female members of the group picked up Rumi when she was cooking inside the house. They declined to say why they picked up my son and his wife," he said.

"We contacted Melandah Police Station in person on Sunday and afterwards to know who picked up Tuhin and Rumi and why, but the police could not give any information about the matter. We are still in the dark about the couple's whereabouts," he added.

Contacted, Gazi Sakhawat Hossain, officer-in-charge of the police station, told this correspondent, "We have no specific information about the incident. We are looking into the matter."

Tuhin, youngest of four siblings, passed SSC from Bhabki GM High School near their home in 2014 but could not continue his college education as he had to maintain the family by looking after family agriculture after his father's retirement in 2015, said Tuhin's parents.

He married Rumi, daughter of late farmer Noor Mohammad of Jhawgora village under the same upazila, in 2016.

Talking with this correspondent, several neighbours of the victim couple said they never found anything doubtful in movements of Tuhin while his wife Rumi lives the life of a typical housewife.



Tuhin Sarkar and Nasrin Aktar Rumi

Longadu attack: Victims in hardship

ANVIL CHAKMA, Rangamati

Over a year into the arson attack, the indigenous families in Rangamati's Longadu are yet to get houses. They are still living at small huts beside their burnt houses near a jungle amid great hardship.

Construction of 176 houses is going on slowly. The work order for construction was given on May 5 and the contractor was asked to complete the construction work within 120 days but the houses are yet to be built.

On May 30, Diponkor Talukder, president of Rangamati district Awami League

(AL), laid foundation stone of Asrayan Project-2 to build houses for 176 families. But the victims are very disappointed that construction of the houses has not been completed.

During a recent visit to the affected villages--Tintila Para, Manikjowr Chara and Battye Para--, this correspondent found that many victims are still living in their wood and bamboo houses.

Suro Lal Chakma, 40, of Manikjowr Chhara village said his family members took shelter in the nearby jungle after the arson attack. The government started building new houses for them in May this year

but they are yet to be completed.

Sashi Ranjan Chakma, 35, of the village said the houses are being built with low quality bricks and cement. The winter season is knocking at the door and the administration should finish building the houses before the winter season considering the sufferings of the victims.

Muhammad Jahangir Kamal, contractor of the project, said due to rainy season and shortage of construction materials, they could not continue their construction work smoothly.

He further said building of the houses will be completed before December.

Longadu Upazila Nirbahi Officer Prabir Kumar Roy said construction work of 176 houses is underway. He hopes that the construction work will be completed soon.

On June 1 last year, the body of local Jubo League leader Nurul Islam Nayan was found four miles away from Khagrachhari Sadar on Dighinalana-Khagrachhari road.

The next day, Bangalees, carrying the body, brought out a procession from Battya Para. Later, some rowdy men vandalised and set fire to over 200 homes in three villages of Longadu, alleging that Nayan was murdered by some indigenous men there.



Students of Government Edward College in Pabna forms a human chain in the town yesterday, demanding arrest and punishment of the culprits who killed Ahmed Mishkat Mishu near the college on Tuesday night.

PHOTO: STAR

SEXUALLY HARASSED BY MADRASA PRINCIPAL Girl stops attending classes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A madrasa girl in Kulaura upazila has stopped attending her institution for over a week after allegedly being sexually harassed by the madrasa principal in the classroom recently.

Victim's family members claimed that the girl, a Class IX student at Jalalia Dakhil Madrasa, has stopped going to the madrasa out of shame.

Father of the victim recently submitted a written complaint against the principal of the madrasa to Kulaura Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Abu Layes recently and demanded stern action against him.

After getting the complaint, the UNO formed a committee led by the upazila assistant commissioner (land) to investigate the matter.

Fellow classmates of the girl, seeking anonymity, said the madrasa principal often sexually harasses the young girls whenever he gets an opportunity.

Mahfuzur Rahman, Kulaura upazila

correspondent of Bangla Daily Kaler Kantha, said after hearing of the incident they went to the institution for collecting information but the authorities concerned didn't allow them to enter the madrasa premises.

Victim's father said, soon after the incident his daughter informed the madrasa managing committee of the matter.

They were compelled to go to the UNO as the madrasa authorities did not take any steps regarding the matter, the father said.

While talking to this correspondent yesterday, the victim girl said, finding no alternative and fearing public humiliation, she had stopped attending classes for the last eight days.

Rejecting the allegation, madrasa Principal Maulana Md Abdul Shahid claimed that it is an evil attempt to malign his image.

UNO Abu Layes said, following a complaint by the victim's family he instantly formed a committee to investigate the incident and asked them to submit the report soon.

Man gets life for raping girl

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A court here yesterday sentenced a man to life imprisonment for raping a girl in 2007.

Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal Judge Alomgir Hossain pronounced the verdict in presence of the convict. The court also fined him Tk 10,000, in default, to serve four months more in jail.

The convict is Ashraf Sheikh, 34, of Dhuljuri village under Alfadanga upazila in Faridpur.

According to the case statement, Ashraf raped a girl on March 1 in 2007. Later, the girl filed a rape case with Alfadanga Police Station, accusing Ashraf, under Women and Children Repression Prevention Act.

7 cops among 50 sued on charge of extortion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Seven policemen among 50 people have been sued on charge of extortion and assaulting a woman in Sirajganj's Shahzadpur upazila on November 2.

The accused include Kamrul Islam, an activist of Shahzadpur upazila unit Swachhchasebok League, sub-inspectors Golzar Hossain Sachhu Bishwas, Samiul Islam, Motiur Rahman and Amzad Hossain and constables Moynul Haque and Sumon Sardar of Shahzadpur Police Station. Advocate Habibur Rahman of Shola Chapri village filed the case with the Judicial Magistrate's Court in Shahzadpur, accusing 50 people for assaulting his brother and the latter's wife. The court asked Assistant Commissioner (Land) Hasib Sarkar to investigate the incident, said court sources.

JAMI ACHHE GHAR NAI SCHEME

House for the poor in exchange for bribe?

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

The recipients of houses from the government's Jami Achhe Ghar Nai scheme under Ashrayan Project-2 in the district are happy at getting the houses, but they are also upset that they had to allegedly give bribe to public representatives and their men to get those.

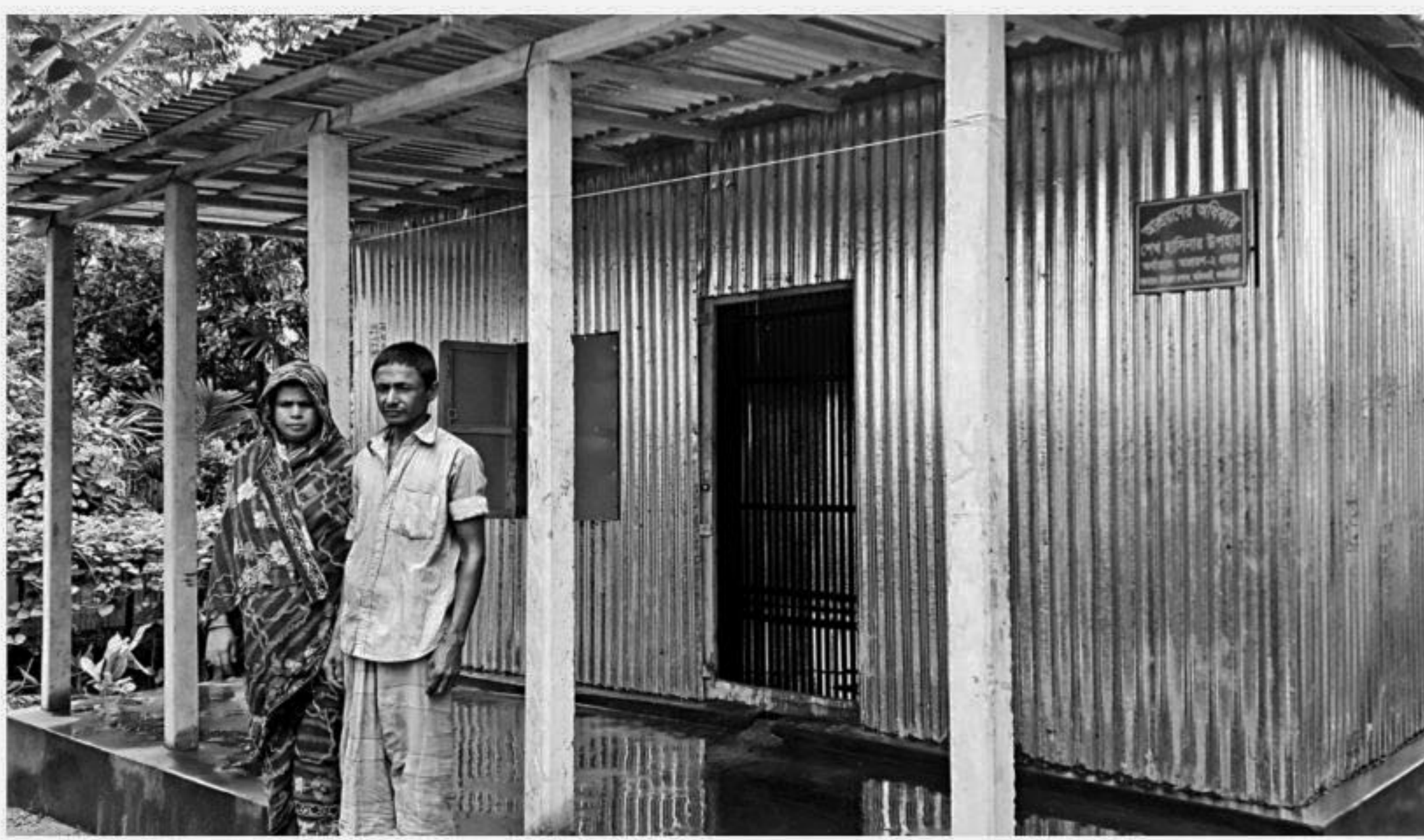
The houses are being distributed country-wide among people who have land but no house, with the slogan Ashrayaner Adhikar Sheikh Hasinar Upohar.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shafiul Arif said a total of 3,953 homeless families have already been given houses in the district's five upazilas. Each house cost Tk one lakh to build.

Rahima Bewa, 55, of Balapukur village in Saptibari union under Aditmari upazila alleged that a female union parishad (UP) member from a reserved seat took bribe of Tk 15,000 for giving her the house. Rahima added that she borrowed the money from a local moneylender.

"The UP chairman's aide Abdul Hamid took Tk 15,000 from me for giving me the house," said Abdus Salam, 50, of the same village. "I'm happy at getting the house, but unhappy at paying the bribe," he said. It was not possible to get a house without paying bribe, so he sold one of his two cows to get the money, he added.

Hashem Ali, 48, of Harati village in Harati union under Sadar upazila, alleged that his name was omitted from the list of beneficiaries as he could not pay the demanded Tk 20,000 to the UP chairman.



This homeless couple received the house under Jami Achhe Ghar Nai scheme of Ashrayan Project-2 after allegedly giving bribe to an aide of the union parishad chairman at Balapukur village in Saptibari union under Aditmari upazila of Lalmonirhat.

PHOTO: STAR

"Many well-off families were given houses after giving bribe, but homeless poor people are deprived as they cannot give bribe," he said. "The UP chairman told me he invested money for taking the project in his union so he will not give a house to

anybody without bribe," he alleged.

Abu Bakkar, 56, of Purbo Tongbhanga village under Hatibandha upazila said he has a straw house on three decimals of land, but he did not get a house as he could not give bribe.

Saptibari UP Chairman Rafiqul Islam Alam's close aide Abdul Hamid of Balapukur village said he took some money as transport cost from the beneficiaries, but it was not bribe. "UP chairman knows about the matter," he said.

Alam said the money taken from beneficiaries was returned to them and the upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) was informed. His aide Hamid did wrong by taking money for giving the houses, he said. Ninety homeless families in his union got houses, he added.

Aditmari UNO Mohammad Asaduzzaman told this correspondent that the Saptibari UP chairman assured him in writing that the money taken from beneficiaries was returned. "After hearing about the matter, I asked the UP chairman to give in writing that the money was returned," he said.

The female UP member declined to talk with the journalists in this regard.

Harati UP Chairman Rafiqul Islam said it is a conspiracy against him as he did not demand bribe from anybody in the name of giving house. He kept silent when told that a recording was made when he was demanding bribe.

DC Shafiul Arif said the administration will take prompt action if he gets complaint of bribe taking for giving the houses to the homeless poor people.

"The upazila administration finalises the list of those eligible to get a house from Jami Achhe Ghar Nai scheme after checking and cross-checking the information given by an applicant," the DC said.