



Students of Mirganj High School in Jaldhaka upazila of Nilphamari yesterday offer prayer for salvation of the departed souls of their fellows, who were killed in an accident at a Cumilla brick kiln early Friday. **Right**, the school authority hoist black flag on the institution premises to mourn their death.

PHOTO: STAR

Clique lured schoolboys to work in brick kilns

Jaldhaka schools mourn death of Cumilla tragedy victims

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Teachers and students of Mirganj High School in Jaldhaka upazila yesterday offered prayer for salvation of the departed souls of the students, who were killed when a coal-laden truck flipped over on their makeshift shed at a brick kiln in Cumilla early Friday.

The school authority also hoisted black flag on the school premises for three consecutive days since Saturday to mourn their death.

Being allured by some local syndicate members, the adolescent boys went to Cumilla as brick kiln workers after completion of their school annual examinations, locals alleged.

Headmaster Mostafizur Rahman said five regular students of his school—Class IX students Tarun Chandra, 16, and Biplob Chandra, 15, and Class X students Proshanto Roy Dipu, 16, Amit Chandra, 19, and Selim Hossain, 15,—were killed in the accident.

Black flag was also hoisted on the premises of neighbouring Shimulbari SC High School on Saturday in honour of its two killed students Monoranjan Roy, 17, and Mrinal Chandra, 15, both of Class X,

Headmaster Jyotish Chandra said.

Locals said, of the 13 victims, 10 were current and former students of the two schools, and the rest three Ranjit, 30, Bikash, 32, and Kanak, 40, of Nijpara village used to allure local adolescent boys to work in distant brick kilns.

Kamol Roy, 50, of Nijpara village, alleged that deceased Ranjit, Bikash and Kanak used to collect labourers from the northern districts for distant brick kilns in exchange of a handsome commission.

"As my son had a fascination for touch phone our neighbour Ranjit lured him to work at the Comilla brick kiln so that he could buy a phone of his own," Dipu's mother Gita Rani said.

Tarun's mother Sandha Bala alleged that her son went to Cumilla after being influenced by Kanak, who paid Tarun Tk 1,000 in advance.

Jaldhaka Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mohammad Sujaudoula said he will ask all the union parishad (UP) chairmen concerned to make a list of the syndicate members in the next upazila coordination committee meeting so that he can take action against the culprits.

Illegal sand lifting from Kumar river poses threat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Illegal sand lifting from the Kumar river in Char Durgapur area under Ishan Gopalpur union of Sadar upazila poses a threat to agriculture and the people living along the river.

During a recent visit, this correspondent saw workers extracting sand from the riverbed with a diesel-run dredger. The sand is brought through plastic pipes to raise the level of lowland beside Ambikapur-Double Bridge road 50 metres away. The river banks on both side of dredging area are being devoured due to this.

Rezaul Sheikh, 39, a worker

engaged in the sand lifting, said Kader Sheikh of Char Durgapur village has been lifting sand from the river.

"The dredger has been lifting 2,000 square feet to 2,500 square feet of sand daily from the riverbed. The dredger has been hired at the rate of Tk 2.30 for lifting one square foot of sand. We have been extracting sand for the last 15 days and another 10 days will be needed to fill the land," Rezaul added.

"Kader Sheikh's land is being devoured, but we will suffer during rainy season," said Hachen Fakir, 70, a resident of Char Durgapur village.

"We protested when they

started sand lifting, but the workers told us our land would not be devoured," said Salma Begum, 37, of the same village.

"We are lifting sand to raise the level of lowland as we will build our house there, but we did not get any permission from Water Development Board (WDB) for lifting sand from the river," Shamsu Sheikh, son of Kader Shaeikh, said.

"We did not give any permission for lifting sand from the river at Char Durgapur area. We shall take steps against illegal sand lifting," said district WDB Executive Engineer Sultan Mahmud.



A dredger lifting sand illegally from the Kumar river at Char Durgapur area under Ishan Gopalpur union in Sadar upazila of Faridpur, posing a threat to agriculture and the people living along the river.

PHOTO: STAR

Madrasa makes permanent Shaheed Minar at own cost

Criminals ransacked makeshift memorial there last year

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Authorities of Dakkhin Muradia Mohila Fazil Madrasa in Dumki upazila constructed a permanent Shaheed Minar on its premises to pay homage to the martyred Language Movement heroes of the country.

Madrasa authorities completed the construction of the memorial on January 24 after unknown criminals vandalised a makeshift Shaheed Minar on the madrasa premises on the night of February 20 last year.

Earlier the same day, students and teachers of the institution built a makeshift banana tree structure, symbolising the memorial for the martyred Language Movement heroes.

Moreover, the unidentified gang painted the word mohapap (great sin) on one of the temporary stairs of the ransacked structure.

Hearing the news, Dumki Upazila Nirbahi Officer Rayhan Ahmed and Officer in Charge of Dumki Police Station Dibakor Chandra Das went to the madrasa premises the following morning and later offered their homage to the Language Movement martyrs after repairing the Shaheed Minar.

The Daily Star published a report on the incident, titled 'Audacity unthinkable' on February 22 last year.

Mohammad Billal Hossain, a lecturer of political science department of the institution, said now they will be able to observe the International Mother Language Day properly.

Madrasa Principal Kazi Shah Jalal said they built the Shaheed Minar with their own fund so that people can pay their homage to the martyrs of the Language Movement.

Two innocent lives cut short

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on the right. The truck dragged them a few metres ahead," Alimuzzaman Rony, an engineer, told The Daily Star.

People on the spot tried to catch the truck but it sped up. It was finally found abandoned by a police team near Dhaleshwari toll plaza. The driver and the helper had both managed to escape.

The bodies were immediately taken to Sir Salimullah Medical College Morgue from where they were later sent home for burial.

As the news spread, hundreds of students of the school took to the street around 12:30pm protesting the deaths. The Dhaka-Mawa highway was blocked for 40 minutes before they called off the blockade on assurance of getting justice.

The protesters also

demanding that trucks stop plying the road during school time.

Mohammad Sentu, an uncle of the deceased, said his nephew and niece were bright students. "Fatima passed PSC exam securing GPA 5 recently and her parents wanted her to be an engineer."

ACCIDENTS AROUND

In another tragic incident, an iron rod-laden truck veered off the road onto a footpath on Airport Road in the capital killing a youth and his brother-in-law in the early hours of yesterday.

Dalim, 18, along with his newly-married brother-in-law Mobarak, 30, came to the capital on Sunday from Narsingdi to see off his elder brother Rubel, who had a flight scheduled to leave for Saudi Arabia yesterday afternoon.

They boarded at a hotel near the Airport area. At night, Dalim and

Mobarak came out of the hotel to see the airport. As they were walking near the Airport entrance, suddenly a recklessly-driven truck ran them over and rammed them into the police box.

"Now what I will say to my sister? How will I board the plane?" an emotional Rubel told reporters after the incident.

Standing in front of the Dhaka Medical College Morgue yesterday afternoon, Ataur Mia, Dalim's father talked to Rubel over the phone while he waited for his youngest son's body.

"She had married Mobarak just 16 days ago," Ataur, a farm labourer, said about her daughter's misfortune.

Airport Armed Police Battalion's Additional Police Superintendent Md Alamgir Hossain said the truck first rammed a microbus near the airport crossing and then ran over

the two men while trying to flee.

Police seized the truck and arrested its driver and helper.

Besides, six others were killed in four separate roads accidents in the city's Khilkhet, in Shyampur, Mymensingh and Rajbari on Sunday and yesterday.

In Shyampur, one Abbas Ali, 55, was killed as he was run over by the truck he was on at Jurain Railgate yesterday. Abbas, a truck helper, was hanging from the gate of the truck, when the driver suddenly braked after hitting an auto-rickshaw. The sudden jerk made Abbas lose his balance and he fell on the road, police said quoting the driver.

In Khilkhet, a youth was killed and two others injured in a road crash on the 300-feet road in Dhaka's Khilkhet area early yesterday.

Mostafizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Khilkhet, said the three young men were found critically injured inside a damaged a CNG-run auto-rickshaw around 4:00am. But it could not be known how the accident occurred.

Meanwhile in Rajbari, a motorcycle rider and his pillion rider were killed when a truck hit the motorbike at Bus Terminal area on Rajbari-Faridpur regional road on Sunday night.

Elsewhere in Mymensingh, truck-driver Mohammad Al Amin, 22, and his helper Hafizur Rahman, 20, were killed when their truck collided with a Bhaluka bound bus in Signboard area on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway in Trishal upazila, police said.

Fifteen others were injured in different accidents. Of the injured, 11 were taken to

Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, said OC of Trishal Police Station Azizur Rahman.

Such fatal accidents have been taking place at a time when the fortnight-long traffic discipline campaign has been ongoing in the city. The campaign comes following the countrywide student movement for road safety in August last year after the death of two students.

According to passengers' welfare body Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity, at least 7,221 people were killed and 15,466 others injured in 5,514 road crashes across the country last year.

It found that almost 20 people got killed on an average every day last year, mostly because of reckless-driving, risky-overtaking, faulty roads, unfit vehicles, unskilled drivers and a general lack of awareness among road users.

RAPE OF 2 GIRLS

School peon gets life term

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

A court here yesterday sentenced a peon of Bandarban Para Government Primary School to life term imprisonment for raping two girls of the school in 2016.

The convict, Aung Thui Prue Mamma, 35, of Madhyam Para of the district town, is in jail.

The court also fined him Tk 50,000, said Public Prosecutor Md Zainul Abedin.

In July 2016, Aung Thui raped the second and fourth graders in a school room several times and he was arrested after mother of a victim filed a case.



Boigari Punjee Government Primary School in Satiajuri union under Chunarughat upazila of Habiganj remains closed most of the days, as two officially appointed teachers of the institution allegedly skip duty. As a face saving act, the teachers pay a local mosque imam for arranging classes at his home for 17 ethnic children enrolled with the institution, said locals.

PHOTO: STAR

COUPLE MURDER IN SAIDPUR

Six arrested, 'clue' found

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Police arrested six people in connection with the murder of a couple at Balapara village in Saidpur upazila early Sunday.

The victims were Nazrul Islam, 65, and his second wife Salma Khatun, 45, of the village.

The arrestees are Aslam Hazi, 65, his sons Labu, 40, and Sajal, 30, domestic help Rahima Khatun, 35, and neighbours Rashidul Islam, 40, and Azizul, 28.

Assistant Superintendent of Police Ashoke Kumar Paul said they have got important information regarding the sensational killing and they will launch drive to arrest main culprits.

Criminals, equipped with sharp weapons, killed the couple in their cattle farm they set up a few years ago after taking lease of two bigahs of land from arrestee Aslam Hazi.

Lone employee of the farm Abdul Razzaque, 28, also came under attack. He was rushed to Saidpur 100-bed Hospital and then shifted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital as his condition worsened.

The deceased hailed from Dinajpur's Parbatipur upazila and Razzaque looked after the farm in their absence. The couple came to visit the farm four days ago and since then they were staying there.

During investigation, police found that after the demise of his first wife long ago, Nazrul married Salma. The couple has two sons. Of them, one lives in Saidpur town and another in Bagherhat.

Nazrul has six sons and daughters from his first wife. They had no connection with their father after his second marriage.

Locals said Nazrul had feud with land owner Aslam Hazi as the latter wanted to cancel the lease agreement before expiry but Nazrul refused to hand over it.

Nazrul's son Sohel Islam, 28, filed a case, accusing land owner's son Sajal and Razzaque and a few other unknown people.

Man hacked dead by wife

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A man was hacked to death allegedly by his wife at Tattuli village in Kulaura upazila on Sunday night.

The deceased was Abdul Muslim, 40, husband of Rima Begum, 35, of the area. The couple have four children.

Family members said Rima hacked Muslim dead in front of their children over a family feud around 11:00pm.

Muslim's sister-in-law Montaj Ali said following a phone call from the victim's elder daughter Sadia Begum, 10, she rushed to the spot and found him in a pool of blood.

He was taken to the upazila health complex where on-duty doctor declared him dead.

Muslim's brother Mokhles Mia said all of a sudden Sadia saw Rima hacking her father in his sleep. As she screamed, Rima left the scene with her three-year-old son Shahid. Earlier in the evening, the couple locked in an altercation over a family issue.

Muslim often tied his wife and two daughters and beat them mercilessly, said Mokhles.

"The body was sent to Moulvibazar Sadar Hospital for autopsy. A case was filed and drives are on to arrest the accused," said Shamim Musa, OC of Kulaura Police Station.