



A woman sees the photo of his suicide victim husband in Pabna's Chatmohar upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY TODAY

# 'Better mental health to prevent suicide'

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

While World Mental Health Day is being observed with the main theme "suicide prevention", the menace of taking own life remains a major concern in the country as well as around the world.

Tapan Kundu, 50, son of Bishwanath Kundu of Chatmohar Natun-Bazar, hanged himself at his shop on July 1 this year amid depression following losses in business for few years.

"My husband, once a solvent businessman, had become frustrated thinking about maintenance of family and social status. Now I and my two daughters are living with the help of relatives and locals as there is no other income source in the family," said Shilpi Kundu, wife of Tapan.

For Tapan's mother Bithika Kundu, it was a second blow of the kind as her elder son Debashish Kundu also took his own life over three decades ago when he was 25 years old.

"After failing to get sufficient money as capital for business from his father, Debashish got angry and one day he committed suicide. After bearing the pain for long years, now I have lost my younger son Tapan in the same way," Bithika said.

According to World Health Organization, a life is lost to suicide every 40 second, the figure being over 800,000 a year.

Against the backdrop, the World Federation

for Mental Health (WFMH) has decided to make "suicide prevention" the main theme of World Mental Health Day this year, said Dr Alberto Trimboli, president of WFMH.

"Suicidal behavior has existed throughout human history, but due to several complex factors, it has increased gradually in all parts

of the world and, in the past few decades, has reached alarming statistical levels," he said in a message marking the day.

### MENTAL CONDITIONS BEHIND MOST SUICIDE CASES

Researches and case studies about suicide show that mental health conditions are behind over 90 percent of suicide or suicide attempt cases.

In different ways people are affected with mental conditions like depression, drug addiction, chronic schizophrenia, personality crises, crises in adjustment in life, anxiety disorder and chronic wrong lifestyle, said Dr Masud Rana, senior consultant of Pabna Mental Hospital.

"Over 90 percent suicide around the world can be prevented by improving mental health situation. In most cases a suicide victim has a tendency to take own life. If we can identify the risk factor and solve the problem for specific patient, suicide can be prevented," said Dr Masud, also acting director of the country's lone specialized hospital for patients with mental disorders.

"When a patient is admitted to mental hospital, we take his or her history and assess the suicide risk and arrange proper treatment. When the patient gets release we give guidance to the family how to handle the patient at home," he added.

"Dissatisfaction in life and social and family troubles are often behind suicide cases. Measures should be taken at family, society and state levels to ensure the basic needs in life, which will help to prevent suicide," said Prof Dr AKM Shawkat Ali Khan, head of social science department of Pabna Edward College.

Meanwhile, 1037 people died by suicide in Pabna in last four years, according to the record of the district police administration.

"Of them 242 people died in 2016, 301 in 2017, 301 in 2018 and 193 from January to June this year. Most of the suicide victims were women and young people," said Md Rafikul Islam, superintendent of police in Pabna.



# A nuisance at school playground

KM REZAUL HOQUE, Gaibandha

Obstructing outdoor games, the headmaster of a high school in Gaibandha's Fulchhari upazila has been cultivating black lentils on the school playground for the last two years.

Students of Udakhali Adarsha Girls' High School, an institution under the MPO (Monthly Pay Order) system, alleged that the 60 decimals of schoolground is being cultivated, leaving very little room for assembly and outdoor games.

"We have not been able to play for a long time as the whole ground is covered with lentil plants," said Anowara Begum, a seventh grader of the school with 250 students.

Office assistant of the school Abdur Rahman said, "Last year, I requested the head teacher not to cultivate crop on the playground, but he did not listen to me."

Headmaster Noni Gopal said, last year, the schoolyard was filled with earth to prevent floodwater accumulation.

"The soil on the ground was not compact, so we cultivated plants to stop wash out of the top soil," he said, not detailing what he plans to do when the plants are ready for harvest.

Though Noni insisted that all 14 teachers of the school are involved in the venture, a number of teachers refuted his claim.

Rafiqul Islam, a teacher of the school, told this correspondent that the decision to cultivate lentil on the schoolground was the headmaster's alone.

"Last year, the headmaster, simply out of curiosity, sowed some lentil seeds in a small portion of the ground, but the plants did not bloom as the soil was sandy soil."

"This year, the whole ground other than the assembly space is being cultivated," he said.

"I came to know that the headmaster of the school cultivated pulse on the ground, which is not desirable at all, instead he could have planted grass and make the ground suitable for play," said Anower Hossain, chairman of Udakhali union parishad.

President of the school governing body Abdul Baki Sarker said, the decision of pulse cultivation on schoolground was not taken in the school governing body meeting.

The head master individually cultivated lentil on the ground, the president said, adding that they recently asked the headmaster to plant grass to make the ground fit for play.

District education officer Enayet Hossain said, measure is being taken to stop any such crop cultivation on schoolground, which should have been levelled for outdoor games and other activities.



The playground of Udakhali Adarsha Girls' High School in Gaibandha's Fulchhari upazila sees cultivation of lentil.

PHOTO: STAR

# Man gets life term for murder

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Multibazar

A Habiganj court yesterday sentenced a man to life term imprisonment for killing a boy.

The lifer is Rayhan Mia, son of Abdul Hye of Dharmapur village in Habiganj's Lakhai upazila.

Judge SM Nasim Reza of Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court also fined him Tk 5,000. In default, he is to suffer another five years in prison.

According to the prosecution, Rayhan abducted Rubel Mia, 9, son of Shamim Mia of Dharmapur village, from the area on August 8 in 2003 and took him to a boat in a water body nearby and tried to abuse

him sexually.

When Rubel resisted Rayhan, he got angry and killed him and dumped the body in the water body.

Informed by locals, police later recovered the body from the water and sent it to a hospital morgue for autopsy.

The victim's father then filed a murder case with Lakhai Police Station against Rayhan.

After investigation, police submitted charge sheet against Rayhan on October 5 in 2005.

After examining witnesses and evidences, the judge found Rayhan guilty and pronounced the verdict, said Additional Public Prosecutor Abdul Ahad Faruque.



# 'Arms trader' held with 12 pistols, 40 bullets

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested an alleged arms trader with firearms and ammunitions from Dhope Pukur area in Shibganj upazila of the district on Tuesday night.

The arrestee is Al Amin Khandokar, 25, son of Hafizur Rahman of Ishwardi upazila in Pabna.

On information, a team of Rab-5 raided

the area and arrested Al Amin from a truck. They also seized the vehicle.

The elite force also recovered 12 pistols, 13 magazines and 40 bullets from his possession, said Additional DIG Mahfujur Rahman, battalion commander of Rab-5, Rajshahi.

Rab then handed the arrestee over to Shibganj Police Station and filed a case in this connection.

# Killing of housewife Bithi sparks protest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Local people formed a human chain at Ramchandrapur village in Pabna Sadar upazila yesterday protesting the killing of a housewife for dowry.

Victim Bithi Khatun, 25, daughter of Babul Hossain of the village, was tortured to death over dowry at her husband's house on October 5, said speakers.

Later, an unnatural death (UD) case was filed with Sujannagar Police Station in this connection.

The deceased's father Babul at the programme said Bithi married Milon Hossain of Char Dulai village in Sujannagar upazila last year.

Since their marriage, Milon and his family members used to torture Bithi for dowry.

"My daughter was tortured to death at her in-laws' house and later they hung her body from the ceiling to show the incident as a case of suicide," said Babul.

The father also demanded justice for Bithi.

Activists of different women rights organisations in the district also joined the human chain.

They also demanded exemplary punishment of the culprits.

A UD case was filed in this connection, said Md Bodrudzoa, officer-in-charge (OC) of Sujannagar Police Station.

On information, police recovered the body and sent it to Pabna General Hospital for autopsy, said the OC.

It would be clear whether it was murder or suicide after getting the autopsy report, said the police official.

# BRING ABRAR'S KILLERS TO BOOK



Above, students accompanied by locals form a human chain in front of Firoj Jahangir Chattar in Mymensingh city on Tuesday demanding punishment of the killers of Buet student Abrar Fahad. Below, similar programmes were held in front of Munshiganj Press Club and Chapainawabganj Government College yesterday demanding the same.

PHOTO: STAR