

## FF Ismail buried without state honour over false letter

Second wife claims at press conference, demands punishment of conspirators

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The second wife of deceased freedom fighter Ismail Hossain at a press conference yesterday claimed that he was deprived of state honour after death due to a letter falsely attributed to him.

"I demand that the government find out and punish the people, who were involved with the conspiracy that deprived state honour to my freedom fighter husband," Ismail's second wife Morzina Begum said at a press conference at Bochaganj Upazila Parishad Bungalow in Dinajpur.

Mosaddeq Hossain, son of Ismail and Morzina, read out his mother's written statement there.

"My husband never told me anything about the letter, which claims rejection of the state honour," said Morzina, who lived with Ismail at a rented house at Setabganj Bazar (Masterpara) in Bochaganj upazila.

The ailing freedom fighter was taken to Bochaganj Upazila Health Complex on October 20 and later shifted to M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital in Dinajpur the next day, where he died on October 23.

"The body was forcibly taken to his home village Jugbari in Dinajpur Sadar upazila and buried there the next day without state honour. My husband's first wife and their children, including Nur Islam, had not inquired of him for a long time," said Morzina.

"I demand that the government pay state honour to my late husband," she said.

Morzina, however, failed to give any satisfactory answer when asked why she raised the issues after quite a few days of her husband's death.

Ismail's son Nur Islam, working as a daily pay-basis driver of Dinajpur Sadar upazila AC (Land) office, was sacked on October 9.

According to Nur's claim, his father on October 22 wrote a letter addressed to local lawmaker M Iqbalur Rahim, saying that he would not receive state honour from the officials who made his son jobless.

Ariful Islam, the AC (Land), then told the media that Nur Islam was sacked as he was a drunkard and his driving was rough.



A group of hired labourers are seen engaged in harvesting Aman paddy. The photo was taken from Gouripur village in Thakurgaon Sadar upazila recently.

PHOTO: STAR

## KILLING OF GAIBANDHA SANTALS Next hearing Dec 23

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A court here yesterday fixed December 23 for the next hearing on no-confidence petition against the charge sheet in connection with the killing of Santal men and torching and looting of Santal houses during an eviction drive at Shaheganj cane farm in Gobindaganj upazila in 2016.

Senior Judicial Magistrate Partho Bhadra fixed the date for the hearing. Lawyer of the Supreme Court Minhazul Islam Chowdhury, advocate Abdur Rafique Siraji and advocate Sirajul Islam Babu moved the petition.

On July 30, Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) in Gaibandha submitted a charge sheet against 90 people for killing three Santal men and torching and looting of Santal houses during the drive at the cane farm.

But names of main accused -- former lawmaker Abul Kalam Azad and Sapmara union parishad chairman Sakil Ahmed Bulbul -- have been excluded in the charge sheet.

On November 6 in 2016, three Santal men -- Shaymol Hembrom, Mongal Murdi and Ramesh Todu -- were killed and many others injured during an eviction drive at Saheganj sugarcane farm.

Police and locals also torched their houses and looted valuables, said the leaders of Santal community at a meeting in the upazila.

On November 16 the same year, Swapan Murmu filed a case on behalf of the community against 33 people, including the former lawmaker and UP chairman Bulbul.

Philimon Baske, president of Shaheganj-Bagda Farm Bhumi Uddher Sangram Committee, presided over the meeting at Gobindaganj Shaheed Miner premises yesterday.

## Low Aman price upsets growers in two northern districts

Existing market price of the paddy is not even close to what was spent for its production, say farmers

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After a bout of loss over Boro paddy, farmers in two northern districts are now counting losses with Aman too as existing market price of the early varieties are not even close to what they spent during production.

One maund of Aman paddy is on sale at Tk 400 to Tk 430 at different local markets whereas the production cost was no less than Tk 500, said farmers in Thakurgaon and Lalmonirhat.

Boro season spreads over four months from the end of February every year while Aman season starts in August. The harvesting process is currently on.

Ill-fated farmers are in a soup as most of them had taken loans with an aim to recoup the losses they had incurred in recent past over Boro.

Satyandranath Barman, a farmer of

Farabari village in Thakurgaon Sadar upazila, laments, "I lost my savings during the last two Boro seasons. Later, I cultivated Aman by taking loans with a hope to make profit. But I am incurring loss this time too."

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in Thakurgaon, this season Aman paddy was cultivated on about 1.37 lakh hectares with a production target of 4.38 lakh tonnes.

The cost has been assessed by counting expenditures for labourers, fertilisers, pesticides and other farming tools.

"Taking these factors in, we can say that a farmer has to spend over Tk 500 for producing one maund of Aman paddy," Thakurgaon DAE Deputy Director (DD) Mohammad Aftab Hossain said.

While visiting different markets in the district recently, this correspondent found farmers selling their produces at Tk 400 Tk

430 per maund.

"I cultivated Aman paddy on two bighas. I had spent Tk 500 to Tk 550 to produce each maund. But I sold the produce at Tk 350 to Tk 380 a maund about two weeks ago," said Hekmat Ali, a farmer of Dakkhin Boikanthapur village in Sadar upazila.

Mohammad Asaduzzaman, a paddy trader at Motherganj Haat in the upazila, said, "We are buying Aman paddy at Tk 400 per maund."

Similar grim picture was found in Lalmonirhat. Aman paddy were sowed on 85,290 hectares of land with a target of getting 3,88,422 tonnes of grains this season, according to Lalmonirhat DAE office.

Of the land, 15 percent was used for the early varieties that are in the harvesting phase at present.

"Farmers had to spend Tk 486 to produce each maund of Aman paddy,"

Lalmonirhat DAE DD Bidhubhushon Roy said.

Visiting different local markets, our Lalmonirhat correspondent found farmers selling each maund of Aman paddy at around Tk 350.

Farmer Azahar Ali of Dalgram village in Kaliganj upazila said, "I had to spend around Tk 480 for each maund. But now I have to sell them at Tk 350."

"Prices of fertiliser, pesticides and labourers have increased greatly while paddy prices are on the decline. We are upset and frustrated," he told this paper.

DAE DD Bidhubhushon said, "Farmers are upset as they are incurring huge losses. They might lose interest in paddy cultivation in near future if situation continues like this."

Our Thakurgaon and Lalmonirhat correspondents contributed to the report.

## Elderly woman killed over land dispute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

An elderly woman was killed by rivals over a dispute land at Uttar Rauha village in Satoria upazila of the district on Sunday.

The deceased was identified as Josna Begum, 60, wife of Abdul Latif of the village.

Quoting family members and locals, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Satoria Police Station Motiar Rahman said there was a longstanding conflict between the brothers of Josna's husband and her over the land.

As a sequel to the conflict, they engaged in an altercation on Sunday night, leaving Josna injured.

Later, locals rescued Josna in critical state and sent her to Satoria Upazila Health Complex, where doctors declared her dead.

Two persons were arrested in connection with the incident, the OC said.

## Two found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Two people, including a housewife, were found dead in different upazilas of the district on Sunday and the day before.

Police recovered the body of a listed drug peddler from Khoriala village in Ashuganj upazila on Sunday afternoon.

The deceased, Sumon Mia, 30, son of Yusuf Mia of Khoriala Madanpara village in the upazila, was accused in at least seven cases filed under the Narcotics Control Act.

Officer in Charge of Ashuganj Police Station Masud Alam said locals spotted Sumon's body at a field and informed the police, who recovered the body and sent it to Brahmanbaria General Hospital for autopsy.

The deceased's body bore several marks of injuries, the OC added. Meanwhile, law enforcers recovered the throat-slit body of a middle aged woman from Birampur village in Sadar upazila on Saturday.

The deceased, Chandtara Begum, 45, wife of Khalil Mia of the village, was mother of three children.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Brahmanbaria General Hospital for autopsy. Officer in Charge of Sadar Model Police Station Muhammad Selim Uddin said, adding that they detained Khalil and his daughter for interrogation, suspecting their involvement in the murder.

## 3 of a family electrocuted in Barguna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Three members of a family, including an elderly woman, died from electrocution in Barguna's Patharghata upazila yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Delwar Hossain Hawlader, 65, a farmer of Khastabok village, his nephew Rasel Hawlader, 18, and sister-in-law (Rasel's mother) Hamida Begum, 55.

Quoting the victims' family members, police said Delwar came in contact with a snapped live electric wire while working at his garden at the village around 8:00am.

Rasel and his mother also got electrocuted when they came forward to save Delwar. Officer in Charge (OC) of Patharghata Police Station Mohammad Sahanuddin said.

Locals rescued the trio from the spot and took them to Patharghata Upazila Health Complex where the doctors declared them dead, the OC said.

Patharghata Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Mohammad Humayun Kabir said following requests from the deceased's relatives, all the bodies were handed over to their family members without conducting autopsies.

Later, they were all buried at their family graveyard in the same afternoon, the UNO added.



Local ruling party men cut earth illegally from the Shibbaria river with excavators in Patuakhali's Kalapara upazila. The photo was taken on Saturday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Illegal earth cutting puts flood control dyke under threat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Two ruling party men cut earth illegally from the Shibbaria river with excavators, leaving the flood control dyke and a number of riverside croplands and dwelling houses in Kalapara upazila under threat of erosion.

Md Jamal Hossain, vice president of Mohipur upazila unit of Sramik League, and Md Eusuf Farjee, former vice president of Mohipur upazila unit of Awami League (AL), continued cutting earth from the river for the last two weeks but no one dared to protest the illegal activities of the duo as they are locally very much influential, alleged locals.

On information, Kalapara Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Munibur Rahman on Saturday rushed to the spot and prevented the labourers from illegal earth cutting and asked the local union parishad (UP) chairman to monitor the situation by deploying two village policemen.

After cutting the earth, it was kept piled beside the river and later taken away from there on trucks, said villagers.

Jamal sold the extracted earth to a sawmill owner in Kuakata area, they said.

The Shibbaria is very important river as two big fish landing stations at Mohipur and Alipur lie there, said Latachapplee UP Chairman Ansar Uddin Mollah, adding that sea-bound fishing trawlers take shelter in the river.

The mindless soil lifting has made the riverbank vulnerable to collapse, he said.

He tried several times to prevent the duo from illegal earth cutting but failed, said the chairman, adding that he informed the UNO about the matter later.

Contacted, the Sramik League leader said a sawmill owner asked him to fill up his low land with earth and for this, he lifted soil from the river.

It is not harmful to the river, he said.

Meanwhile, despite repeated calls, this correspondent could not reach the AL leader for his comment on the issue as he did not receive the phone.

The UNO said action will be taken against those responsible for the illegal earth cutting.



Huge quantities of different varieties of fish were poisoned to death by unknown criminals in Madhabkunda waterfall under Barlekha upazila of Moulvibazar on Sunday.

PHOTO: MINTUDESHWARA