

# Gateman, driver on the run

Police probe reveals bus as major catalyst behind 3-way collision

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, CIG

A day after the accident at Khulshi Railway Crossing in Chattogram, which led to three deaths, including a traffic constable and an HSC examinee, police are yet to arrest the gateman of the crossing.

The three-way collision between a running train, CNG-run auto-rickshaw, and bus allegedly took place due to gateman Ashraful Alamgir Bhuiyan's negligence, which resulted in a barrier on one side of the crossing remaining open as the train rushed in.

Police said both the driver of the bus and the gateman have been on the run ever since the incident. "We have identified both of them and are trying to arrest them," said OC Nazim Uddin of Chattogram Railway Police Station.

Meanwhile, the probe committee formed by Government Railway Police has started investigations to find out whose fault cost the three innocent lives.

After going through CCTV footage, the committee shed new light on the accident's causes. In the footage, it was seen that a running bus ploughed through the traffic and later collided with the running train triggering the fatal accident.

The CCTV footage also revealed that two CNG-run auto-rickshaws and a three-wheeler taxi were standing on the road as the train passed the crossing. Suddenly, the red coloured bus pushed them from behind and ran towards the train.

The footage also confirmed that gateman Alamgir did not pull down the rail barrier on side of the crossing.

GRP Additional Superintendent of Police Md Abdul Gafur, also head of the probe committee, told The Daily Star, "We are recording statements from witnesses and trying to find out who is responsible."

While visiting the spot yesterday evening, it was seen that police were recording statements of the witnesses. As the gateman fled from the crossing area, the authorities appointed a temporary gateman to resume train operation

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



PHOTO: RAJIB RAHAN

Only a day after the fatal accident, people crossed the barrier and stood awfully close to a passing train at Khulshi Railway Crossing yesterday. Bottom left, the important crossing has remained neglected for years, with garbage piling up at the footing of its barriers. Right, fellow students and friends of deceased Sadraz took to the streets to protest his killing and demanded justice for all road and rail accident victims.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## HAKALUKI HAOR

### Where poachers roam free



Migratory birds such as the wood sandpiper are often carried in fish baskets by sellers who sell them to locals. The photo was taken near BGB camp in Kaminiganj Bazar area of Moulvibazar's Juri upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

On a November afternoon several weeks back, a middle-aged man, appearing to be a fish vendor, was spotted in Kaminiganj Bazar area of Moulvibazar's Juri upazila.

But after peeking through the net covering of the bamboo basket he was carrying, over a dozen of live migratory birds were found inside, said Saddam Mia, a resident of the area, which is in close proximity to Hakaluki Haor -- one of the country's largest marsh wetlands and an Ecologically Critical Area.

Hakaluki Haor is spread out across Juri, Kulaura and Barlekha upazilas of Moulvibazar, and Golapganj and Fenchuganj upazilas of Sylhet.

Poaching and illegal trade of migratory birds have been on the rise in areas that surround large waterbodies such as Hakaluki Haor, as both poachers and sellers are increasingly adopting innovative and deceptive techniques to catch and sell the birds.

This correspondent came across one such illegal bird seller recently in Kaminiganj Bazar, near the BGB camp.

In his basket, there were 12 brownish migratory birds with long and sharp beaks, resembling common snipes. Asked, he said he bought them from hunters who caught the birds by setting traps near the haor. He said he had already sold 13 that day.

The seller left the spot hastily when

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

# RESILIENCE IN CAPTIVITY

## A painter's account of the Liberation War

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

"Make Pakistan army look strong, make Mukti look weak and defeated."

The major's instructions to Jagannath Dey was simple. On his second day of captivity at the army headquarters in Barishal city's WAPDA area, the painter was shaken to his core.

Jagannath was already a renowned painter in Barishal city by the time these events rolled around. Even in 1971, the painter was doing well, living at his family's Bazar Road residence, working at his own studio, "Abany's Painting Studio".

His father and sister were also well known as painters.

As the Pakistan army arrived on April 25, the family was looking for a way out of the city.

But their only destination was their native village in Bikrampur, which was quite impossible to reach through the heavily surveilled waterways.

"Even in these difficult times, we had to stay home. We couldn't go to Bikrampur, so we were looking for a way to reach Kolkata," the now 72-year-old told this correspondent. "We even had the date and time finalised for the journey."

On August 7, members of the occupying force suddenly came to their house and asked for the siblings' whereabouts. Fortunately, they weren't home, and the military left begrudged, but not before kicking Jagannath's father so hard that he couldn't hear for a few days.

On August 12, an army vehicle stopped near the house.

Soldiers came out of it and slowly approached the family's door. They started kicking it, hard. "With no way out, my father had to open the door. The soldiers came inside and started searching for something. After a while, they asked about the whereabouts of my sister."

Hearing that girls were being picked up from all around the city,

regional headquarters. A few other locals were picked up along the way.

"When we reached the HQ, I saw many other captives there. Some of them were terrified to death," Jagannath recalled. "I stood in front of its officers' room and awaited death. When it was evening, a Baloch soldier recognised me."

managed to access the major assigned at the army camp and made a plea. But the major was unmoved by his words.

"The Baloch then tried a different angle," Jagannath said. "He told the major that I was a good artist. 'Artist?' the major asked. His interest had piqued."

"A few days passed after this.



VICTORIOUS DECEMBER



PHOTO: TITU DAS

To this day, 72-year-old Jagannath Dey is committed to his painting career. However, the trauma of his days in captivity during the war prevents him from visiting the city's WAPDA area, where he was kept.

"Why are you here, my friend?" he asked in astonishment. I recognised him too. A few days ago, I had made a portrait of his father," the painter said. The soldier told him, in Urdu, that he was going to do everything in his powers to arrange for Jagannath's release. After many days' effort, he

On August 13 early morning, I heard cries and sound of gunshots emanating from the area, and I thought this was it for me," he continued.

"But then my fortune changed. August 14 was Pakistan Day, and the major ordered me to paint a gate to celebrate that day. His

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



Hard at work, a woman hangs strands of jute to dry at a field in Khulna's Arongghata. Once dried, the red and green strands are weaved into carpets that adorn households all over the country. This photo was taken on Saturday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

# 'They clash, we suffer'

Say students after Ananda Mohan College authorities shut down dorms following BCL infighting



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Female students of Ananda Mohan College leave the campus yesterday after the college decided to shut down its dorms following BCL factional clash the day before.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Following Saturday's clashes between two BCL factions, the dormitories of Government Ananda Mohan College in Mymensingh have been declared closed for an indefinite period.

According to campus sources, some 1,000 students left the dormitories yesterday morning after a notice, signed by the college principal, asked the male students to vacate their halls by 8:30pm on Saturday and the female ones by 8:30am yesterday.

Principal Prof Md Aman Ullah said a tense situation was prevailing on the

campus and the seven halls were closed bearing the interest of common students and HSC examinees.

This correspondent talked to several female students who were seen leaving the dormitories yesterday morning on short notice, but they were unwilling to reveal their names, fearing reprisal from BCL members.

Some of them termed this closure a "severe blow" as the dorms were reopened after a long gap due to the pandemic, but the BCL infighting has caused yet another closure of the campus, hampering their academic activities and creating further

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4