

Dismembered body found in plastic drums near HC

Police launch probe
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered a dismembered body inside two plastic drums near the High Court in Dhaka yesterday.

The law enforcers identified the deceased as Md Ashraf, 42, an onion and garlic trader from Gopalpara village in Badarganj, Rangpur.

The discovery was made around 3:00pm when locals spotted the drums and informed police, said Khalid Monsur, officer-in-charge of Shahbagh Police Station.

Initially, the victim's identity could not be confirmed, but later police verified it through fingerprint analysis, said Masud Alam, deputy commissioner of Ramna Division Police.

According to police, Ashraf had arrived in

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7



Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus with a group of winners of Bangladesh Television's "Notun Kuri 2025" competition at Shapla Hall in the Chief Adviser's Office yesterday. Around 33,750 children registered for the competition and 73 children won this year's talent hunt programme in two age groups under 12 categories. Preyosi Chakrabarty of Tangail (Ka) and Shuvo Mita Talukder (Kha) of Sunamganj received awards from the chief adviser as champions.

PHOTO: PTD

Unkept promises, impunity deepened crisis in the CHT

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A long standing majoritarian mindset, decades of unfulfilled promises and a culture of impunity lie at the root of the crisis in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, speakers said at a discussion yesterday.

They said the state's failure to recognise indigenous identity, ensure land rights, curb militarisation and deliver justice for killings, abductions and sexual violence has kept the region trapped in inequality even 27 years after the signing of the CHT Peace Accord.

The discussion was organised by the CHT Peace Accord Implementation Movement at the Dhaka Reporters Unity.

Presenting the keynote paper, Dhaka University Sociology Professor Khairul Chowdhury said the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti documented 2,668 Juma victims of political and civil rights violations between 1998 and 2011, while the Kapaeeng Foundation recorded 6,494 victims from 2012 to 2024, totalling 9,162.

He said 3,34,488 acres of Juma land were taken through leases, military expansion, forest declarations and tourism projects. Arson, looting, evictions and land grabbing over two decades point to systematic rights violations, he added.

Transparency International Bangladesh Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said the country's political culture was not founded on majoritarianism, as the Liberation War rejected that notion. "It is tragic that we have not learned that lesson," he said.

- Over 9,000 Juma victims documented since 1998
- More than 3.34 lakh acres of Juma land taken
- Peace Accord remains largely unimplemented
- UN-led probe, constitutional recognition stressed

Criticising the backlash against the chief adviser for using the word "indigenous" and its removal from textbooks, he said majoritarian thinking has reduced those outside the majority to "second-class citizens" both psychologically and politically.

Referring to the army's long experience in UN peacekeeping, he said, "If the army can help establish peace abroad, it should be able to do the same in a region under its own jurisdiction."

Journalist Sohrab Hossain said the rights guaranteed in the accord have eroded as the hill population was pushed into minority status, while extrajudicial violence, unresolved cases and land grabs under the guise of tourism have deepened the crisis.

ALRD Executive Director Shamsul Huda said successive governments have complicated the situation instead of recognising the rights of the 13 indigenous communities in the hills. Although the interim government promised a "new settlement", the reform commissions it formed excluded women and indigenous representatives, he added.

Women's Affairs Reform Commission Chief Shireen Huq said the biggest flaw of the Peace Accord was the absence of a time-bound implementation plan.

She called for documenting all violations, the immediate release of detained Bawm women, inheritance rights for hill women, constitutional recognition of indigenous people and improved maternal healthcare in the region.

Zakir Hossain, joint coordinator of the CHT Peace Accord Implementation Movement, presided over the discussion.

Unhealthy lifestyle, stress fuelling diabetes surge

Experts say one in four adults may already be diabetic

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Sumon Kabir (pseudonym), an employee at a private firm in the capital, leads a lifestyle familiar to many urban professionals.

His office has a canteen, but he often cannot eat there as he usually works outside during lunch hours. Instead, he relies on fast food.

Once back at work, Sumon spends most of his day in front of a computer, rarely taking breaks. His job also involves considerable stress.

"One day, my office arranged a diabetes test, and I reluctantly took part," he told The Daily Star recently. "I was shocked when the results showed that my blood sugar level was very high. I had no idea I had diabetes. Now I have to manage it carefully."

Health experts say lifestyles like Sumon's — marked by long hours of sitting, stress and unhealthy eating — are a direct path to diabetes.

Like him, thousands of people are developing diabetes due to poor lifestyle choices, unhealthy diets, stressful office environments and a lack of awareness, experts said.

According to the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), about 1.38 crore people in Bangladesh have diabetes. However, health experts believe the actual number is higher, posing a serious burden on the healthcare system and economy.

Amid the situation, Bangladesh, along with the rest of the world, is observing World Diabetes Day today. This year, the IDF has focused its campaign on "Diabetes and the Workplace" to raise awareness

among working populations.

The IDF introduced World Diabetes Day in 1991, and the United Nations recognised it officially in 2007.

RISE IN DIABETIC PATIENTS

In an article published by the Diabetic Association of Bangladesh, Dr Faruque Pathan, director (academy) at Birdem General Hospital, wrote that one in four adults in Bangladesh may now be diabetic.

If this estimate is accurate, the total number of patients could exceed three crores, he noted, warning that the situation will worsen if current trends continue.

Although he did not specify the data source, an association official said a 2018 nationwide survey of one lakh adults found that one in four was diabetic.

The rise is also reflected in hospital data. According to the association, the number of registered diabetic patients increased from 15.1 lakh in 2015-16 to 65 lakh in 2023-24.

National Professor AK Azad, president of the Diabetic Association of Bangladesh, said although no recent nationwide data are available, the trend clearly shows a rapid rise.

He said around 50 percent of patients with diabetes are unaware of their condition, meaning the true number is likely much higher.

LIFESTYLE, FOOD HABITS TO BE BLAMED

At a press conference held yesterday at Ibrahim Cardiac Hospital to mark World Diabetes Day, experts discussed the reasons behind the increase and possible preventive measures.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

BNP, Jamaat rift helping AL regain ground

Says Patwary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwary yesterday said the ongoing conflict between BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami is creating an opportunity for the Awami League to regain political ground.

"Amid their disputes, Chuppu [Mohammed Shahabuddin] remains president, and attempts are now being made to have him sign the July Charter. If that happens, it will be unfortunate for the people of Bangladesh," he said at a discussion organised by Jatiya Krishak Shakti at NCP's central office in Dhaka's Banglamotor.

"On the other side, Sheikh Hasina is attempting to return to Bangladesh because of their disunity. If we fail to amend or reform the constitution now, the authoritarian structure of Sheikh Hasina's regime will keep trying to return," Patwary added.

Regarding the upcoming referendum, the NCP leader said the government and political parties should hold discussions to strengthen the Election Commission.

"Otherwise, if the referendum and national election are held on the same day, mismanagement by the EC could once again push the country into chaos," he warned.

MIR HAZIRBAGH IN OLD DHAKA

Pipe Road, a saga of daily struggle

HELEMUL ALAM

Anyone visiting the southern part of Pipe Road area will first encounter a filthy, muddy stretch of road. Only a few years ago, the area was busy and vibrant. Now, the road has become a nightmare for residents of Munshirbari in Mir Hazirbagh under DSCC ward-54, as it remains submerged in knee-deep dirty water for months.

Mohammad Ilias, a resident, said the road extends from Pipe Road on the western side, connecting Doyaganj-Jurain Railgate Road, to Mir Hazirbagh Khalpar.

About 450 metres of the road are severely damaged due to stagnant water.

"The road has been in this condition for about three years because the water cannot drain properly. After the construction of the adjoining Sahadat Sarak, the drainage flow from Pipe Road got blocked," he said.

He said water stood one to two feet deep for months and only began to recede slightly this week. "This road used to be important for residents travelling to Mir Hazirbagh Chowrasta and Khalpar," he added.

Monir Hossain, another resident, said, "I have been living here for 20 years, but for the last three years, we've been suffering because of this drainage problem. Whenever it rains, roadside shops go underwater."

He said the poor road conditions have disrupted gas supply and made it difficult for children to attend school. "Rickshaws avoid this road entirely," he added.

He also said stagnant water has become a breeding ground for mosquitoes, leading to a rise in dengue cases.

Nipa Akhter, another resident, echoed him. Mohammad Sohel, a restaurant owner in the area, said, "My restaurant sales have dropped drastically. I used to sell Tk 10,000-12,000 daily, but now I make only Tk 1,000-2,000. I cannot even pay rent or staff salaries."

"It is a huge challenge for anyone needing medical help — patients have to be carried by hand as no rickshaw or vehicle can pass through," he said.

Abdullah Al Amin, owner of a local pharmacy, said many residents are suffering from various illnesses due to the dirty, stagnant water.

"The most common problems are skin diseases and allergies. Diarrhoea is also common, and children frequently suffer from colds and coughs. Many need nebulisers because of thick mucus from constant respiratory issues," he said.

Contacted, Executive Engineer of DSCC zone-5 Md Lutfor Fakir said they have begun the road repair work recently.

It will be completed within the next year, he said, adding that once drainage and road repairs are done, the waterlogging issue will be resolved.



PHOTO: STAR

The Pipe Road in Old Dhaka's Mir Hazirbagh area has remained in a dilapidated state for a long time due to drainage problems. As a result, locals continue to suffer from persistent waterlogging and the hazards of navigating a road submerged in filthy, stagnant.