



PHOTO: STAR

8 puppies drowned; Ishwardi officer told to vacate quarter

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Eight newborn puppies were drowned in a pond on the Ishwardi Upazila Parishad premises in Pabna, prompting the administration to order the official near whose home the incident occurred to vacate his government residence within a day.

The incident took place on Monday on the premises of the upazila parishad auditorium.

Hasnur Rahman Nayon, is the Ishwardi upazila officer of the Small Farmers Development Foundation. He had been living with his family in a government quarter on the parishad premises. According to locals and parishad employees, about a week ago a stray mother dog gave birth to eight puppies in the yard of Nayon's government residence, and had been living there with her newborns.

Yesterday, the dog was seen running around the parishad grounds, crying and drawing the attention of people nearby. It was later learned that the puppies had been thrown into a pond and drowned.

When locals recovered the bodies from the water and brought them near the parishad office, the mother dog sat beside them, crying continuously. The puppies were buried afterward.

Confirming the incident, Nayon told The Daily Star, "My wife told me to remove the puppies thinking of our children's safety. But I did not imagine they would be killed this way. I am ashamed and saddened by what has happened. I have no words to express my sorrow."

Basu Bahini: The fierce guerrilla force

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Kishoreganj and Habiganj and spoke to at least 25 fighters and villagers who once sought shelter under their protection.

Before the war, Basu had been a notorious robber, jailed in Kishoreganj in several murder cases. When students and youths broke open the prison at the end of March, he returned to Gurui village in Nikli and rallied his men and any local willing to fight.

After the Pakistani army captured Bajitpur on April 18, 1971, Sangram Committee member Prof Yakub Mia summoned Basu to his home in Chhachira.

Bahini member Abdul Wahab, 77, told The Daily Star that Prof Yakub initially hesitated to trust a former dacoit, but confidence grew. The first camp was set up at the Gurui Union Parishad with 45 fighters.

In May, the Basu Bahini trained for two weeks at Ujlabar camp in Belabo, Narsingdi, then based themselves in a house in Hilchia near Gurui. They

opened their operations by killing two notorious collaborators in the haor, according to the book.

From there, actions unfolded in quick succession: the June 25 attack on Bajitpur Police Station; the July 20 operation on Nikli Thana; the battles at Sealdah crematorium on July 25 and Manikkali Duijla Bridge on July 30; and the National Bank operation in Bajitpur.

Before dawn on June 25, hundreds of Basu Bahini fighters surrounded the Bajitpur Police Station, where Pakistani forces and Razakars took shelter.

Abdul Hekim, 82, a member of the Basu Bahini, recalled, "A seven-hour battle raged until the Razakars and police ran out of ammunition and fled through a tunnel to the OC's house, where they were captured."

Crowds then stormed the market, seized the captives, and beat them to death.

Around the same time, Basu's men blew up the railway bridge between Gachihata and Manikkhali in Katiadi

to disrupt Pakistani movements.

In mid July, Basu's men escorted the wife and children of war-time acting President Syed Nazrul Islam from Nikli towards India. Razakars ambushed them at Ratari Haor in Sunamganj, but eight Razakars were killed in a counter attack and one was captured, said Wahab.

On September 6, disoriented by the Bahini's repeated strikes, Pakistani soldiers and Razakars entered Gurui by launch, looting and burning homes. After villagers alerted the Hilchia camp, 20-25 fighters ambushed them, killing five soldiers, said Yusuf Ali, another member of the Bahini.

"When our fighters ran out of ammunition and withdrew, the army torched homes and massacred at least 25 villagers in Gurui Bazar. As they retreated by launch, 40-50 of our men attacked again, killing 15-16 Pakistani soldiers and Razakars. After that, Gurui, Hilchia, and nearby villages became liberated areas," Yusuf said.