

Youth beaten to death over theft suspicion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

A young man died after reportedly being beaten by locals on suspicion of theft in Khulna early yesterday.

The deceased is Didar Sardar, 30, of Kashiani upazila of Gopalganj. He had been living in a rented house in the Arongghata area of Khulna.

Police recovered his body from bushes near a railway line beside Khaja Khal Road under Arongghata Police Station.

Md Shahjahan Ahmed, officer-in-charge of Arongghata Police Station, told The Daily Star that locals allegedly beat Didar over accusations of theft.

He was later taken to Khulna Medical College Hospital in an injured condition, where doctors declared him dead, the OC said.

The OC also said that Didar had five theft cases filed against him at different police stations.



PHOTO: JAHIDUL ISLAM

Industrial pollution threatens riverbank communities, ecosystems

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Narsingdi*

Unchecked industrial pollution has endangered the rivers flowing through Narsingdi district, while leaving the riverbank communities and ecosystems vulnerable.

Narsingdi is crisscrossed by a number of rivers, including the Shitalakkhya, Meghna, Brahmaputra, Arial Kha, Haridhoya, Paharia, Haridhoya and the Old Brahmaputra rivers.

Over the past decades, industrial establishments that have expanded rapidly along the riverbanks continued to discharge untreated toxic wastes directly into the rivers using pipelines, thereby polluting the water and leading to an escalating environmental crisis.

Illegal encroachment on riverbank areas and declining navigability of the rivers further worsened the situation. For much of the year, even small boats find it difficult to ply many stretches of the rivers due to poor navigability.

Despite a government initiative to re-excavate around 232 kilometres of river channels to restore navigability, pollution remains a persistent challenge for its implementation.

Even during monsoon, when water levels typically rise, dissolved oxygen levels

in the rivers still remain critically low, making it impossible for fish and other aquatic species to survive.

According to a study by the River and Delta Research Centre, the 38km Haridhoya river ranks second among the most polluted rivers in the country. The river's dissolved oxygen level stands at just 0.6 mg/L, while alkalinity has reached 4.1, posing serious risks to both biodiversity and human health.



Many residents living along the river have been suffering from skin diseases from exposure to the polluted water. Fish and other aquatic organisms are gradually being wiped out from the river's water.

Meanwhile, the river has also shrunk to a narrow channel due to poor flow and encroachments.

Field observations reveal that a similar situation prevails in the case of most other rivers in Narsingdi.

In recent years, mass fish deaths have been reported during winter along stretches of the Shitalakkhya from Kapasia to Ghorashal.

Proloy Zaman, general secretary of Narsingdi Environment Movement, said that poisonous gases and chemical waste from certain factories are responsible for recurring fish deaths.

"If this continues, the environment will face a serious crisis, fish production will decline, and livelihoods will be endangered," he warned, urging authorities to take immediate action.

Sources said the immediate past interim government had allocated Tk 10 crore through the Department of Environment to address Haridhoya's pollution. The fund was handed over to the Bangladesh Water Development Board for pollution control and improving riverbank accessibility. However, DoE officials claimed that their share of the allocation has yet to be disbursed, even after a year.

Md Badrul Huda, DoE deputy director in Narsingdi, said investigations are underway to determine the exact causes of pollution and fish mortality.

"Necessary actions will be taken against those responsible after discussions at the National River Conservation Commission," he added.

Sack-grown ginger gains ground in chars

S DILIP ROY

Farmers in riverine chars of Kurigram and Lalmonirhat are increasingly cultivating ginger in sacks, using organic inputs, and turning a once-absent crop into a growing source of income in climate-vulnerable areas.

The method has spread across char areas in Kurigram and Lalmonirhat over the past three to four years, with farmers reporting steady profits, according to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) and growers.

About 1,20,000 families live in some 500 chars along 26 rivers, including the Brahmaputra, Teesta, Dharla, Dudhkumar, Jinjiram, and Gangadhar, in the two districts, where agriculture is the main livelihood, according to DAE data.

Originally introduced for vegetables such as cucumbers with support from the DAE and NGOs, sack-based cultivation has expanded to ginger due to its higher returns and adaptability to sandy soil and flooding.



Nawshed Ali, a farmer from Ghughumari Char on the Brahmaputra riverbed in Kurigram, said all 450 families in his char have been cultivating ginger in sacks for the past four years.

"It costs around Tk 25 to 30 per sack, and each produces about one to one-and-a-half kilograms of ginger," he said. "With prices between Tk 200 and Tk 300 per kilogram, it brings good returns."

Farmers fill sacks with sandy loam soil mixed with compost before planting ginger in Boishakh (mid-April to mid-May) and harvesting in Falgun and Chaitra (mid-February to mid-April).

"During floods, we can move the sacks to higher ground," said Jobeda Begum of Char Jorgachh in Chilmari upazila, who earned about Tk 5,000 last year from 12 sacks and has increased production this season.

In Lalmonirhat's Teesta char areas, farmers report similar gains.

Agriculture officials say the practice, though not new elsewhere, is gaining traction in char regions due to rising demand for chemical-free produce.

"Consumers prefer it because it is produced using organic fertilisers," said Abdullah Al Mamun, deputy director of the DAE in Kurigram.

Rokia Afzal

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Born in 1941, Rokia started her career at a commercial bank in 1962. Within two years, she became the country's first woman bank manager. From there, she went on to build a distinguished career in business, finance, media, and social development.

She played a pioneering role in promoting women's financial independence. She was the founding president of the Bangladesh Federation of Women Entrepreneurs and played a key role in forming Women in Small Enterprises. She also served as chairperson of Midas Financing Limited, which helped small entrepreneurs, especially women, market their products without middlemen.

Her contribution went beyond business. She served as president of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, adviser to the 2001 caretaker government, and a board member of several organisations, including Bangladesh Bank. She also chaired the board of directors of the Asian University for Women Support Foundation.

During her long career, she received several honours, including the Leading Women Entrepreneurs of the World award in Monte Carlo, the Businessperson of the Year 2003 award by the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh, and the Priyadarshani Award in India.

Death following C-section sparks unrest at Dinajpur clinic

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Thakurgaon*

A woman died during a Caesarean section at a private clinic in Dinajpur's Birganj upazila on Friday night, triggering vandalism by her relatives and locals.

The authorities later sealed the clinic, while the health department has formed a three-member probe committee to investigate the incident.

Quoting the victim's family members and locals, Officer-in-Charge of Birganj Police Station Saiful Islam said Sameja Begum, 28, wife of Abdur Razzak of Saronja village under Kaharol upazila, lost consciousness as her condition deteriorated during the C-section while giving birth to a baby girl at Birganj Clinic on Khansama Road.

As Sameja did not regain consciousness, she was referred to Dinajpur Zia Heart Foundation. Family members said she died on the way to Dinajpur due to excessive bleeding.

They further claimed that the clinic authorities referred her to Dinajpur

despite knowing about her death in an attempt to avoid public outrage.

Following the incident, agitated relatives and locals vandalised the clinic around 9:30pm, confined its staff, and staged protests by lighting fires in front of the facility.

Later, police brought the situation under control, said the OC.

That night, Birganj upazila Assistant Commissioner (land) and Executive Magistrate Dipankar Chandra sealed the clinic.

The newborn girl is currently safe. Birganj upazila Health and Family Planning Officer Dr Afroza Sultana said it could not be confirmed whether a qualified anaesthetist was present during the operation.

The OC said the clinic's owner and manager likely went into hiding as they could not be reached over the phone till yesterday morning, while the whereabouts of the attending physician also remained unknown. Efforts are underway to contact them, he added.

Need inclusive justice.

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remand, public shaming of suspects, and the absence of compensation for unlawful detention.

He highlighted poor governance as the main problem in Bangladesh's criminal justice system, and warned that disorganised solutions would not work.

When one gap is addressed, another emerges elsewhere, he said, adding that practices once carried out through preventive detention are now often carried out through criminal cases.

He said there is a misconception that a single judgement or legal amendment can solve wider problems in the criminal justice system. In reality, when discretion is curbed in one place, abuse often reappears in another form.

He added that a "bail economy" had developed in the country and called for reforming the entire bail system.

Addressing the event, Prof Md Nazmuzzaman Bhuiyan, dean of the law department at Independent University, Bangladesh, said reforms frequently remain confined to paper as implementation receives far less attention than lawmaking.

He stressed that no law can be effective unless underlying problems are addressed.

He also said neither the judiciary, police, nor the government should be seen as adversaries, adding that a society based on accountability and human rights can only be built through cooperation.

Professor and Advocate Limon Hossain and Imtiaz Hossain Rocky also shared their experiences as victims and claimed

justice. Victims of warrantless arrest and detention who shared their experiences said ensuring their safety was essential for filing cases in such incidents, adding that court orders must be implemented effectively through clear state action.

Speakers noted that although several important changes had been introduced through recent amendments to the Code of Criminal Procedure, implementation remained weak and independent judicial assessment was often missing in practice.

They stressed a framework based on justice, accountability, and good governance and the need to learn from legal experiences in other parts of the world, build trust in freedom of expression, and introduce effective screening systems in the arrest process.

Participants proposed greater use of technology in law enforcement, especially body cameras, implementation of the Police Reform Commission's recommendations, preservation of reliable data on victims, and effective enforcement of court orders.

Supreme Court lawyer Dr Kazi Zahed Iqbal moderated the discussion, while BLAST legal department director Md Barkat Ali presented the keynote.

PRAYER TIMING
APRIL 5

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-40	12-45	4-45	6-21	7-45
JAMAAT 5-15	1-15	5-00	6-24	8-15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Bangla literature evolving

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He also stated that literature does not progress in a linear fashion and no writer starts with a clear understanding of its direction.

He also expressed concern over declining readership, particularly in poetry and fiction, compared with earlier decades.

Fiction writer Shuhan Rizwan spoke about changes in prose and the evolving relationship between writers and readers.

He said Bangla literature saw a major shift with the spread of typing software, blogs, and internet-based writing in the late 2000s, followed by the rise of new media.

He said reading is no longer a solitary activity, as readers now engage with books through online discussions, social media reactions, and writers' public personas.

Books are increasingly being read more collectively across digital platforms, he added.

He also noted the emergence of parallel literary trends through blogs and online platforms. Referring to genre fiction, he said writers of thrillers, horror, and science fiction in Bangladesh are influenced by both local and global trends, though quality remains uneven in many cases.

Rejecting the idea that Bangla literature is declining, he said, "Bangla is the language of 25 crore people. The language carries ways of thinking that cannot be expressed through another language."

Fiction writer Nasima Anis highlighted the challenges faced by women writers in Bangladeshi society.

She said women not only have to fight social constraints but also

struggle constantly to prove their worth, which affects their creative development.

Drawing on her own experience, she said women writers often have to seek permission, directly or indirectly, over what they can write, a burden male writers usually do not face.

She also criticised publishing practices in the country, saying many publishers lack proper editorial boards to assess manuscripts, guide writers, and help books reach the right readers. As a result, both writers and readers suffer.

Other participants spoke about shrinking space for free expression, weakening cultural practices, declining readership, and the growing gap between literary discussion and actual reading.

The session was conducted by The Daily Star journalist Emran Mahfuz.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
PWD Maintenance Division
Chattogram
Phone: 02-334453126

Memo no: 25.36.1500.242.18.002.26/743 Date: 02/04/2026

e-Tender Notice (OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following work. Details are given below:

e-GP Tender ID	Last Selling Date and time	Closing Date and time
1253271	05-April-2026 9:30	20-April-2026 10:30

This is an online tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal.

(Signature)
(Moniruzzaman Jitu)
Executive Engineer
PWD Maintenance Division
Chattogram.

GD-719

Higher Education Acceleration & Transformation (HEAT)
Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Extreme Heat in Dhaka City:
A Framework for Resilience to Heat Stress
(SP 13010)
Higher Education
SPM Office, Department of Geography and Environment, University of Dhaka, Dhaka-1000

Memo No: HEAT/13010/SPMO/59 Date: 04 April 2026

E-Tenders are invited on the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following goods under HEAT Sub-Project (PIN-13010) titled "Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Extreme Heat in Dhaka City: A Framework for Resilience to Heat Stress" for the Department of Geography and Environment, University of Dhaka.

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description	Online Tender Notice Publication Date	Online Tender Closing Date
1245039	DU/PIN1 3010/G4	Procurement of Satellite Images	06-April-2026	19-April-2026

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal, and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from the e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Professor Dr. Md. Humayun Kabir)
Sub Project Manager (SPM), SP 13010

GD-717