

## SNAPS

## 'All Puja mandaps in Khulna city vulnerable'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Security has been tightened in all the 51 Puja mandaps in the city on the occasion of Durga Puja. Similar steps have also been taken for 479 Puja mandaps in nine upazilas of Khulna district.

According to sources in Khulna Metropolitan Police, all the Puja mandaps in city and 112 out of 479 in the district have been identified as vulnerable.

The sources said policemen in plain dress will scan all the Puja mandaps, and BDR and Ansars will be on patrol duty.

## Workshop on Bangladesh Almanac at RU

ARU CORRESPONDENT

The department of Geography and Environmental studies at Rajshahi University (RU) held a day-long workshop on 'Bangladesh Country Almanac' at the Senate Bhabon on Thursday.

RU Pro-Vice Chancellor KAM Shahadat Hossain Mondol was present as chief guest while geography departmental chairman M Akramul Haque presided.

Prof M Shamsul Alam, Dr SA Razzak, BARC Director Anwar Iqbal, spoke at the workshop, participated by teachers, students and local journalists.

## Dr Mukherjee murder Mourning procession in Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

A silent mourning procession was brought out in the town on Wednesday in memory of murdered Dr S K Mukherjee.

The Jhenidah district unit of Probin Hitoishi Sangha, an association of elderly people, organised the mourning procession on the International Elderly Day. The processionists, wearing black badges, paraded the streets of the town.

Dr S K Mukherjee, an octogenarian physician and a leader of Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Oikya Parishad and local Puja Udjapan Committee was stabbed to death at his house in the town by a gang of armed miscreants on September 18 noon.

## Fresh agitation for BRTC service in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet.

People from three upazilas led by political leaders and the elite at a big rally at Jaintapur on Thursday announced a fresh agitation programme for immediate resumption of BRTC bus service in Sylhet-Tamabil-Jafflong highway.

A six-day programme was announced at the rally, joined by people from remote areas of Jaintapur, Gowainghat and Kanaighat upazilas.

Sraj Uddin Ahmed, former chairman of Jaintapur upazila chaired the rally.

The programme includes, holding of rallies, meetings and exchange of view meetings at important commercial places, bazaars and the three upazila headquarters till October 8.

The next course of agitation would be announced from the October 8 rally.

The speakers at the rally said the government introduced he BRTC double-decker bus service in four routes in Sylhet including the Sylhet-Tamabil-Jafflong highway on September 10. But, due to pressure by some vested quarters in the name of transport workers and owners, the government stopped the service in the Sylhet-Tamabil-Jafflong Highway one week after the introduction.

They called upon the authorities to resume the service immediately for the benefit of five lakh people. Otherwise, a tougher agitation programme including strike would be observed, they said.

An 8-hour hartal was observed in the three upazilas on September 29 to press the demand.

## Housewife killed 'by husband' in Khulna

UNB, Khulna

A housewife was killed on Thursday allegedly by her husband at Alamdanga in Khailsipur upazila.

Police said Abdul Malek severely beat up his wife Momtaz Begum, 35, on Wednesday. She was shifted to Khulna Medical College Hospital for treatment where she died on the following day.



(Left) Worried people gather at Dapdapia to see the unprecedented erosion and (right) villagers taking away trees, their last resort, as those may disappear into the river any moment. The WAPDA tower seen in the background is only 20 yards from the Sugandha river. The photos were taken on Wednesday.



PHOTO: STAR

## Erosion threatens power supply in Barisal divn

## Tower linking 33 KV supply lines may collapse any moment

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Power supply in Barisal division is threatened due to erosion by Kirtankhola and Sugandha rivers in Dapdapia in Barisal district.

Power Development Board's tower in Dapdapia which links the 33 KV power supply lines over the rivers may collapse any moment due to erosion.

During a visit to the area on Wednesday, the Sugandha was seen only about 20 yards from the tower. The tower is near the confluence of the two rivers.

PDB officials said they are monitoring the situation and have manpower to take alternative

Local people said, in the last twenty-four hours ending Wednesday noon, the Sugandha devoured more than half a kilometer area there.

PDB's Zonal Chief Engineer A K M Shamsul Haq, Sub Asstt Engineer Shahadat Hossain and WAPDA officials visited the spot Tuesday afternoon, but no precautionary measure was taken or alternative arrangement made till filing of the report on Thursday.

PDB officials said they are monitoring the situation and have manpower to take alternative

steps to continue power supply in case of any damage to the 33 KV tower.

WAPDA officials also said they are keenly observing the erosion and will dump boulders into the river to check the erosion.

Other sources said, if the 33 KV tower collapses, power supply in Patuakhali, Bhola, Barguna and large portions of Jhalakati, Pirojpur and Barisal districts will also be disrupted.

It may also cause serious accidents from live wires, they said.



PHOTO: STAR

(left) Union Parishad chairmen and members at the meeting and (right) Zarina Rahman, Deputy Chief of Party, ARD-LGI, Dr William James Kartiar, Chief of Party, ARD-LGI and Abdur Rouf (extreme right), Chairman of Alipur Union Parishad who presided over the meeting.

## 'No alternative to strengthening local govts'

## Satkhira UP chairmen, members form 21-member body

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

It was a different day for them when Union Parishad chairmen and members from across the district met and discussed ways to strengthen local governments to consolidate democracy in the country.

Putting aside political affiliations, they deliberated on good governance and transparency in functioning of local governments to deliver goods to the grassroots level people.

Local governments form the lowest tier of democratic institutions, and these have to be strengthened to consolidate democracy, the speakers, both male and female, said.

A total of 231 UP chairmen and members attended the meeting on 'Union Parishad Networking' held on September 29 under the joint auspices of ARD-LGI, an international NGO and Uttar, a local NGO.

Alipur UP Chairman Abdur Rouf presided over the meeting, held at the Shaheed Abdur Razzak Auditorium at Satkhira town.

At the meeting, a 21-member

Dr William James Kartiar, Chief of Party, ARD-LGI, was the chief guest while Zarina Rahman Khan, Deputy Chief of Party, ARD-LGI, Shahidul Islam, Director Uttar, Kajal Chatterjee and advocate Syed Iftekhar Ali were present as special guests.

It was addressed by, among others, UP chairmen Asadul Haq, Yunus Ali Sana, Sheikh Alamgir Haidar, Pranab Ghosh Bablu, Hasan Aziz Ahmed and Syed Shakhawat Hossain and UP members Abdur Rouf and Monowara Khatun.

Dr Kartiar said there is no alternative to strengthening local governments to consolidate democracy.

Zarina Rahman said local governments are the grassroots level democratic institutions. So, to strengthen democracy and ensure good governance, local governments have to be strengthened.

"It is the demand of time to form autonomous Union Parishads to serve the grassroots people and to ensure their rights", she said.

At the meeting, a 21-member

Satkhira district unit of the National Union Parishad Forum was formed. It is headed by Abdur Rouf and SM Jaglul Haidar as president and general secretary respectively.

## 3 of a family injured in acid attack in Magura

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

A 19 year-old girl and her parents have been injured in an acid attack at Kushkhali village in Shalikhra upazila.

Acid was thrown on Rafeza and her parents Kawsar Ali and Rubia when they were returning home from Magura town Tuesday night.

The victims were admitted to Magura Sadar Hospital Wednesday morning.

Kawsar Ali told The Daily Star that Rafeza's husband Nazim threw acid on them following a family feud.

## Drug peddlers beat narcotics control official in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Five drug dealers beat an official of the Narcotics Control Directorate (NCD) in front of Shah Mokhdum College in the city on Wednesday night for seizing four bottles of Phensidyl.

Police from Boalia thana rescued KM Zahid Hossain, assistant sub-inspector of Rajshahi NCD, in an unconscious state and took him to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

He is being treated for injuries on his head and bruises on different parts of his body.

He was beaten after he seized the phensidyl bottles earlier in the day and arrested three drug peddlers Sagar, Mohammad Ali and Ayub Ali.

## BDR rescues 48 from traffickers

UNB, Benapole

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) jawans on Wednesday rescued 48 people including women and children from Kagojukur village.

They were being trafficked to India.

Fifteen poor women and seven children were among the rescued people. Most of them hailed from Barisal, Faridpur and Chittagong districts.

BDR sources said human traffickers allured the poor people out of their villages, promising to give them jobs in India.

A case was filed with Benapole thana.

## APTECH's free computer training in Mymensingh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

APTECH will give free computer training to 300 professionals and officials in Mymensingh.

This was announced by officials of APTECH's Mymensingh centre at a press conference at the local press club recently.

The trainees will include 30 journalists, 100 teachers, 60 doctors and 110 government and non-government officials. They will also be taught use of Internet.

The training programme will be organised in cooperation with SHEBANET, a local computer company.

The press conference was addressed by APTECH officials Bashir Ahmed, Muklesur Rahman, Luffee Rabbi, Abu Bakar Siddique, Belal Hossain, Rajib, press club secretary Md Mosharrarf Hossain and journalist Ataul Karim Khokon.

## RCC sells 5 deer from zoo

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rajshahi City Corporation authorities on Thursday sold five deer from the Shaheed Kamaruzzaman Zoo to an NGO at the rate of Tk 10,000 each.

SOS, a non-government organisation working to rehabilitate destitute children, purchased the deer.

Zoo employees caught the five deer and put those into jute bags for sale.

Asked why the deer were put into bags instead of handing those over openly, zoo official Shaheed Uddin said it was their normal practice.

With this, the authorities sold 100 deer in the last four months.

RCC, the supervising authority of the zoo, in May decided to sell more than 250 deer because their maintenance cost is high.

At a press conference in May, the RCC Mayor had said, "The authorities spend nearly Tk 50 lakh for the zoo every year. Tk 31 lakh of which is spent for rearing the deer, which has become an impediment to running the zoo smoothly".

However, there are allegations that taking the opportunity, a section of zoo officials was selling deer beyond the knowledge of the RCC.

## 1 killed, 3 hurt as bandits open fire on villagers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

One person was killed and three others were injured severely when armed robbers opened fire on them at Gobardia village under Sadar thana in Bagerhat district in the early hours of Wednesday.

The dead was identified as Kamal Khan, 24, and the injured were Masud Khan, 22, Abdus Sattar, 50, and his wife Hazera Khatun.

Masud and Hazera were admitted to Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) while Abdus Sattar was undergoing treatment at Bagerhat Sadar Hospital.

According to a FIR, group of bandits attacked the houses of Nimai Mistry and Adhir Halder of Katua village and took away valuables. From there they stormed into the

house of Shah Alam of Gobardia. Villagers chased them while they were fleeing with booty. At this stage they opened fire indiscriminately at the chasing mob resulting in Kamal Khan's death on the spot.

A was recorded with Bagerhat Sadar thana.

However, doctors were not allowed to treat injured Masud and Hazera due to strike by the third and fourth class employees of the hospital.

Meanwhile, many patients already left the hospital due to the strike, KMCH principal informed The Daily Star.

## Two convicted for misappropriating public money

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Two government employees were fired from services and sentenced to 15 years jail by a special tribunal of Kushtia Judge Court for misappropriating government fund.

Judge Murshed Alam pronounced the verdict on Tuesday in absence of the convicts. He also fined them Tk 1 lakh and 10,000, in default, to suffer further imprisonment.

According to prosecution, the Family Planning Officer of Alamdanga in Chuadanga in collaboration with Godown Keeper Jalaluddin misappropriated government money amounting to Tk 3 lakh from 1987 to 1997.

Kushtia district Anti-corruption Bureau filed the case with Alamdanga police station in June 1999.

## Lightning kills 2 in Lalmonirhat, Chuadanga

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Lightning killed two persons and injured seven others in Lalmonirhat and Chuadanga districts on Thursday.

Our Lalmonirhat correspondent reported that Belal Hossain, 28, died on the spot and five others were injured at Sandal village in Sarpukur union under Aditmari upazila as lightning struck them when they were working in a cabbage field.

The injured are Dulal, 45, his wife Rawshan Ara, his daughter Nasima, 6, Ripon and Pushpa. They were admitted to Aditmari upazila health complex.

Our Chuadanga correspondent said lightning killed one Aminul, 30, at Joyrampur village under Damurhuda upazila.



PHOTO: ISPR

Chief of the Naval Staff Rear Admiral Shah Iqbal Mujtaba with participants in the Long Navigation Course conducted by Bangladesh Navy at BNS Issa Khan in Chittagong. The certificate awarding ceremony was held on Tuesday.