

10 hurt as BNP groups clash for govt land in Barisal

Four Jubo Dal, JCD leaders held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

At least ten people including a journalist were injured as two rival BNP groups clashed at Agailjhara in presence of local party lawmaker Zahir Uddin Swapan on Friday over possession of a government land.

Police controlled the situation and arrested BNP activists Liton and Parvez from the spot and recovered four bombs from their possession. Their motorcycle was also seized.

Next day, as the rival groups filed two cases, police arrested four leaders and activists of Jubo Dal and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the district administration demolished the "illegal" construction.

The arrested persons are Upazila Jubo Dal Secretary Shah M Baktiar, activists Firoz Ahmed Sentu

and Kamrul Hassan Jewel and JCD leader and Agailjhara College Students Union Vice President Mohiuddin Pintu. They were sent to jail.

Sources there said that about a months ago, one BNP group led by Upazila Jubo Dal Organizing Secretary Abul Molla, activists Yusuf and Kalam Molla and JCD leader Mehdi Hassan Pintu started a construction on a government land at Agailjhara upazila headquarters. They had claimed that they leased the land.

Their opponent group led by Baktiar opposed it.

The construction was stopped following intervention by local BNP MP Swapan but the remained unresolved.

On Friday morning, Swapan went here to settle the matter.

At one stage, the two rival groups fell upon each other with sharp weapons.

Swapan took shelter in a nearby room for safety.

They assaulted Bhorer Kagoj correspondent Ferdous Molla, snatched his camera and broke it.

On information, police went there and quelled the violence.

The injured people include Azahar, Kalu Suttar, Nani Molla, Babul, Karim, and Jahangir. Four shops were also ransacked and looted.

Meanwhile, Reporters Unity units in Barisal and Agailjhara condemned the attack on the journalist.

AKM Ruman Howlader, brother-in-law of Baktiar and Abul Molla filed the cases, each accusing 15 BNP activists belonging to rival groups.

UNO office attacked as UP polls deferred in Patuakhali

A CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Hundreds of people brought out a procession and attacked the Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer's office on Friday protesting postponement of Kalikapur Union Parishad election for the third time.

The agitated people pelted stones and damaged office furniture and windowpanes. They also put up demonstrations in the district town.

Police arrested four persons -- Saheed, Mizan, Rafiq, and Sahjahan -- on charge of creating violence.

The polls were scheduled for Thursday. The High Court post-poned it till October 27 following a writ petition for delimitation of the Union Parishad and its annexation to Patuakhali Pourashabha.

The writ was filed by Abul Kalam, Sanu Gazi, Mizanur Rahman and Selim Biswas of the upazila on August 3.

Earlier, the polls were scheduled for January 28 and September 11, but were not held due to complications over delimitation.



PHOTO: STAR

A good initiative indeed... People joined an anti-smoking procession in Manikganj town recently, organised by a local NGO, Social Advancement Committee, in collaboration with Mira Tours and Travels.

Pirates toss crew into river, loot rice from cargo vessel

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Armed pirates threw three crew of a cargo vessel into Madhumati river, tied and locked seven others into the engine room and looted 175 tonnes of rice on Thursday.

The vessel was found as it drifted and touched BIWTC salvage vessel Hamza on the Kirtonkhola river in Barisal at about noon on Friday.

Informed by BIWTC personnel, police rescued the seven crew in senseless conditions and sent them to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital.

According to the rescued crew and police, M V Kafela owned by M/S Abdul Kader Navigation (M R no. 6102) loaded rice from Nowapara ghat in Jessore and sailed for Hajiganj in Chandpur district Thursday morning.

On its way, it loaded more rice at

Daulatpur in Khulna and anchored at Gopalganj Thursday evening for a night halt.

It began its journey at about 4 am on Friday with a total of about 350 tonnes of rice in 1000 bags.

At about 6 am, a gang of armed pirates came in three trawlers and attacked the vessel near the Mukchhura crossing on the Madhumati river. The pirates threw three of the crew into the river, beat and tied seven others and locked them in the engine room.

The pirates took at least 175 tonnes of rice to their trawlers and sped away.

As the engine of the looted trawler was on, it moved on and touched the BIWTC salvage vessel Hamza in Barisal at about noon on Friday.

BIWTC personnel, not getting any response from inside, boarded

the cargo and found the crew tied and locked inside the engine room. They informed police.

Police rescued the seven crew in unconscious conditions as they were severely affected by the heat and suffocation from poisonous gas at the engine room. They were rushed to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital.

They are Majibur Rahman and Khalashi Mehdi Hassan of Madaripur, Laskar Habibur Rahman and Toiab Ali of Gopalganj, Kanchan Ali of Vandaria in Pirojpur, Rubel of Madaripur and the rice carrying contractor Ashok Kumar Shaha of Chandpur.

Three other crew-Kabir, Salam and Latif -- are missing.

Police said a case would be lodged after determining under which police station the incident took place.

SNAPS

13 'criminals' held in Chuadanga

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chuadanga

Joint forces arrested 13 alleged criminals including a local BNP leader from Alamdanga and Jibannagar upazilas on Thursday night, police said.

BNP secretary of Khadimpur union, Nasiruddin, and six others were arrested from Alamdanga.

The six are Anarul, Moazzem Hossain, Khaser Ali, Abdur Rashid, Abdul Matin and Sona Mondol.

Those arrested from Jibannagar are Badal, Akbar Hossain, Golam Rasul, Nazimuddin and Mazharul Islam.

Police said they were wanted in murder, rape, kidnapping and dacoity cases.

Girl rescued, trafficker held in Satkhira

BSS, Satkhira

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) rescued a teenaged girl from Keragachi border area under Kalaroa upazila while she was being trafficked to India and arrested the trafficker.

Police said BDR of 12 battalion posted at Toluigachi border outpost rescued Ferdowsi Khatun, 16, daughter of Shaiful Islam of Bokchara village under the Sadar upazila. She was being trafficked to India on promise of good job in Mumbai.

The BDR arrested the alleged trafficker, Abdus Samad Sawdar, of Bhadra village under Kalaroa upazila and handed him over to Kalaroa police.

Ferdowsi is now in police custody.

Magura AL leader, banker sued for forgery

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

District joint convener of Awami League (AL) and the manager of Sonali Bank's main branch at Magura have been sued for their alleged involvement in withdrawal of Tk 19.23 lakh from the bank through forged demand drafts (DDs).

CID Inspector Nazrul Islam, after about eight months' investigation, filed the case with Magura Sadar thana on Sept 30 accusing AL leader Abu Nasir Bablu, manager MAMatin and 10 others.

Police said the principal accused, MA Matin, in convenience with Bablu and others, deposited 25 forged DDs which were shown as issued by an 'Exchange Centre' in the United Arab Emirates and drew

the money on November 28, 2001 and on January 1, last year.

But when the alleged forgery was detected, the manager lodged a case with Magura police for self-defence.

The district administration selected the case as a sensitive one and sent it to the CID for investigation. During investigation it was revealed that the manager and the AL leader were the "masterminds" behind the CID, police said.

The AL leader appeared before court on Saturday. Magistrate Tariqul Alam granted him bail.

Later talking to newsmen Abu Nasir Bablu said the case was filed with a political motive to harass him.

Former UPDF member killed in Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

A former member of United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF) --Kajai Marma, 35has been slaughtered in Manikchari upazila under the Khagrachari district.

Police and family sources said that a gang of armed miscreants forcibly entered Kajai Marma's house at about 2 am on Thursday. They dragged and took him to a nearby jungle and slit his throat.

Being informed, police recovered the body next morning and sent it to hospital morgue for autopsy.

Marma's wife claimed that the killing was sequel to previous enmity over land dispute. She said she recognised three of the killers but did not disclose their names fearing retaliation.

Lawyers boycott court in Munshiganj

A CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

The Munshiganj Bar Association continued boycott of the court of Magistrate Gaji Md Rezaul Karim.

The boycott started on September 18 following rejection of a bail petition of a defendant in a dowry case.

The boycott decision was taken at a meeting of the association with its president Arsheduddin Chowdhury in the chair.

Culprits acquitted due to faulty FIR, probe

Judge tells workshop on trafficking

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Culprits are often acquitted due to faulty FIR, improper investigation and lack of witnesses, District and Sessions Judge A K M Zahir Ahmed has said.

Judges have to go by law, he said addressing a workshop here on women and children trafficking.

Maulana Abdul Khalleque MP inaugurated the workshop, organised by the National Women

Lawyers Association.

With advocate Shirin Nahar in the chair, it was addressed by, among others, principal Asit Kumar Majumdar, Ataur Rahman, Kalyan Bannerjee, advocate Farida Aktar Banu and Sheikh Selim.

About 45 people including government officials, journalists, lawyers and NGO representatives attended the workshop, held on Friday.



PHOTO: JAHANGIR ALAM

Beauty and bounty faces extinction . Once a boon for Netrakona people, the Sumashowary is now a bane as most areas of the river has become silted. The river devoured at least 500 homesteads and 2,000 acres of crop land in the Sadar, Durgapur, Kalmakanda and Purbadhoala upazilas this year. Rolling down from hills across the border, the river is unpredictable and furious, depending on rainfall in upper reaches. In 1995, a 5-kilometre dam was constructed to protect Durgapur Pourasabha from erosion, but due to alleged improper site selection, the dam failed to serve the purpose. Water resources experts and local people say the only way to stop its destruction is to dredge the river to allow flow of water as flood control and protection dams would not be effective to tame it.

Bhairab BNP confce held

BSS, Kishoreganj

The biennial conference of the Bhairab Pourasabha (municipality) unit of BNP was held at a local community centre here on Saturday.

Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas attended the conference as chief guest while Majibur Rahman Manju MP, and district BNP Joint Convenor Massod Belali were special guests.

Bhairab municipality BNP convenor Md Abdul Latif presided over the conference.

Addressing the conference the minister urged the party workers to increase organisational activities to help the local administration implement government's development plans for the people.

Law and order in Kishoreganj reviewed

BSS, Kishoreganj

The law and order in the district was discussed at a meeting of officials here on Saturday.

Divisional commissioner of Dhaka division M Murtuza Hossain Munshi presided over the meeting held in the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner's (DC's) office.

The meeting discussed various issues relating to health, food, education and agriculture sectors. Head of various departments and UNOs were present in the meeting.

The divisional commissioner also visited Kishoreganj Kalibari Durga Puja mandap.

Two women get 5 yrs' RI for keeping illegal drugs in Madaripur

UNB, Madaripur

A court here has convicted two women recently and awarded them five years imprisonment each for keeping illegal drugs.

The judge of special tribunal Md Nazir Ahmed also fined the convicts -Aleya Begum and Josna Begum of Village Kumarkhali in Sadar upazila Tk 5,000 each, in default, to suffer six months more rigorous imprisonment (RI).

They were arrested for possessing 50 bottles of phensidyl from Mostafapur bus stand in Sadar upazila on July 3, 2002.

Indian pirates kidnap fisherman

BSS, Satkhira

Indian pirates kidnapped one Bangladeshi fisherman form Firingi canal in the Sundarbans under Shymnagar Upazila recently and demanded Tk 50,000 ransom.

Police said Nazrul Islam Sardar of Khagrachhat village went fishing with two companions.

As they reached Firingi canal in the deep forest, a gang of armed Indian pirates kidnapped them.

Later, the Indian intruders released two of the fishermen and demeaned Tk 50,000 for Nazrul's release. The pirates also took away the engine boat.

A case has been filed with Shymnagar thana but Nazrul is yet to be rescued.

More 68 admitted to hospitals in Nilphamari

Civil Surgeon claims diarrhoea now under control

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

More 68 diarrhoea patients were admitted to different hospitals and upazila health complexes in the district in the last 24 hours ending at noon yesterday.

Of them, 13 have been admitted to Domar upazila health complex, six to Jaldhaka, seven to Kishoreganj, 11 to Dimla, and 31 to the Sadar hospital.

Officials at the district health department control room said 197 patients were treated at outdoors of the hospitals during the period.

No fresh death was reported.

Till Saturday, the official death toll from the disease was 29. The unofficial toll was 41.

Charaikhola union in the Sadar upazila is the worst affected area where 39 people were treated at makeshift health camps during the period. Another five patients were brought to the Sadar hospital from there as their condition deteriorated.

Sources in different areas said there has been virtually no improvement in the situation although loudspeakers, hired by the district administration, continued blaring health advice.

When contacted, Civil Surgeon Nazrul Islam said they have enough stock of Cholera IV saline and other medicines. The situation is under control, he said.

Tia death probe CID ASP records statements of parents, father-in-law

A CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

ASP of Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Rangpur, Amullo Chandro Das, visited the houses of parents and father-in-law of housewife Tia, whose death raised a public anger in the town.

The ASP recorded their statements, police said but declined to elaborate.

Tia died at her husband's house in the town on August 25.

Her parents alleged that she was killed while her husband's family said she died from bur injuries she suffered when the stove burst while she was boiling milk.

Her husband is absconding since her death.

Wife killed for dowry at Rajbari

BSS, Rajbari

A newly-married housewife was allegedly killed by her husband for dowry at village Khamer Magura in Baliakandi upazila on Saturday.

Police said the victim was identified as Josna Begum, 18, wife of Kamal Mirdha of the same village.

Victim's family sources said Kamal Mirdha married to Josna nine months ago and used to torture her for dowry. She was three months' pregnant.

Neighbours said Kamal beat Josna to death on Saturday.

Afterwards, the victim's husband and in-laws hanged the body from a ceiling bar.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Rajbari Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

A case was filed with Rajbari thana.