

SNAPS

Students' strike at BSBMC continues

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

The students' strike at the Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College (BSBMC) continued for the third day on Tuesday.

The general students called the strike under the banner of Sarbodaliya Chhatra Dikkya for realisation of their six-point demands. The demands include safety and security of students and teachers, resisting extortionists, outsiders and setting up of permanent police camps.

The BSBMC students' union also extended support to the strike. The college authority met the student leaders twice, but failed to refrain them from strike.

30 hurt in B'baria clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

At least 30 people including two women were injured in a clash between two rival groups at Moyshair village in Ashuganj upazila on Monday.

The clash was a sequel to rivalry between two Union Parishad members -- Rashid and Malek -- following formation of Gram Sarker in the village.

Five of the injured persons have been admitted to Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital. They are Golap Mia, 26, Md Abdul Hai, 55, Kabita Begum, 30, Aminul Islam, 22 and Rasida 20. Hospital sources said condition of Golap Mia, Md Abdul Hai and Kabita Begum is critical. The rest were given first aid at the hospital at some clinics.

JCD conference held in Magura

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

An annual conference of Magura Sadar thana Jatiyotabadi Chhtrra Dal was held at local Asaduzzaman auditorium on Saturday.

Former minister Nitai Roy Chowdhury was the chief guest at the conference with Abidur Rahamn Biplob in the chair. JCD Organising Secretary for Khulna Divisional Abidur Rahman Kuasha was the main speaker at the conference.

The conference formed a 51-member JCD Sadar thana unit with Kari Sanaul Huq Tanmoy and Abdul Kader Sardar as president and general secretary respectively.

Shrimp sector awaits big boost

New environment-friendly cultivation method to raise yield by 5 to 7 times

ABDUL KADER, back from Bagerhat

A newly introduced cultivation system will revolutionise shrimp production, increasing yield of the second largest export industry by five to seven times.

The system is environment-friendly and produces virus-free shrimps. It is easier than the traditional system followed in the southwestern region of the country.

Production per hectare in the new method is estimated at around 1.8 tons (18 hundred kgs), said experts of the Shrimp Seal of Quality (SSOQ), which is providing technical support to farmers. The assistance is being provided under the Agro-based Technology Development Programme (ATDP), a USAID-financed project.

The new cultivation system, which is being widely followed by most of the shrimp exporting countries including Thailand, is important for Bangladesh as foreign buyers have imposed restriction on shrimp import from Bangladesh and are asking for virus-free good quality shrimp, said an expert of SSOQ.

In the new system, shrimp is cultivated in blocked pond water. It ensures environment-friendly cultivation by saving trees and paddy fields in surrounding area and keeping fertility of land and other fish species intact, said the experts.

The water of the pond has to be replaced after certain periods, which needs a reservoir.

SSOQ experts are now providing technical support to farmers in

greater Khulna region where 80 per cent of the country's shrimp is produced.

"In the traditional system, I got only five kilograms of shrimp from about 3.5 acres of land last year because of virus-infection. But this year, using the new method, I am expecting 10 to 12 maunds from only .5 acres," said farmer Mina Afzal Hossain at Fatehpur in Bagerhat Sadar.

He was talking to a group of reporters who visited the area on Saturday.

Hailm Patwari, who received training in Thailand also expressed similar views regarding production.

But he said the cost of shrimp feed in the new system is higher than in the traditional system because it is imported from Thai-

land.

It costs Tk 75 per kg. It will be Tk 30 to 35 per kg if produced in the country, he said.

Virus infection of shrimp is widespread in Bagerhat region, which discourages its cultivation.

According to official data, Bangladesh now produces around 30,000 metric tons of shrimp annually in about one lakh ninety thousand hectares in the southwestern and southeastern coastal regions. This is 2.5 per cent of the global export.

According to Export Promotion Bureau (EPB), Bangladesh earned 278.12 million dollars in 2002 by exporting 68.36 millions pounds of shrimp.



Unlimited prospect... virus-free shrimps grown in a pond in Bagerhat through a newly introduced environment-friendly cultivation method. The photo was taken on Saturday.

PHOTO: STAR

Onion prices fall in N dists

BSS, Rangpur

Onion price has fallen in northern districts in the last few days as local markets have been flooded with huge supplies of imported onion.

According to market sources, imported onion is now selling at between Tk 23 and 24 per kilogram in Thakurgaon, Panchagarh, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Gaibandha and Bogra districts.

Locally produced onion, supply of which is inadequate, is now being sold at between Tk 27 and Tk 28.

According to a survey conducted in the region in the last three days, coarse varieties of rice were selling at between Tk 13 and 14 per kg and medium varieties at between Tk 15.50 and 16.50.

Life for 3 rapists in Magura

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Three rapists were awarded life term rigorous imprisonment (RI) by a court here on Tuesday.

The District, Sessions and Special Judge Mohammad Shafiuddin also fined Tk 20,000 each, in default, to suffer three months more RI for raping a school-girl at village Mandalgati in Mohammadpur upazila.

The convicts are : Kashem, Lakh and Zillu of Mandalgati village in Mohammadpur upazila.

Miscreants led by Kashem entered the house of Asaduzzaman at Mandalgati village in the early hours of March 16, 2002 and dragged his daughter Majeda Khatun, 14, and raped her one after another in a nearby bush.

The victim's father Asaduzzaman filed a case with Mohammadpur thana.

Barisal Admin Tribunal to be closed

Officials unhappy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

The Barisal Bench of the Administrative Tribunal will be closed soon, official sources said.

The Attorney General's office suggested closure of the Bench due to shortage of cases, they said.

Employees of different government offices, autonomous bodies and nationalised banks expressed their unhappiness over the planned closure.

Administrative tribunals were first set up in Dhaka and Bogra to dispose of departmental allegations.

In 1984, cases of nationalised banks were also placed under the disposal of these tribunals.

During the period of the caretaker

government in 20021, benches of the tribunals were opened in all divisional

headquarters.

Within two years, the Barisal Bench tried 60 cases. Ten cases are pending.

Quick disposal of the cases was highly appreciated by people.

Some government officials this correspondent talked to said the tribunal need not be closed due to less number of cases. They suggested that the number may be increased by expanding the jurisdiction of the tribunal and allowing it to take up other types of cases.

Government officials will suffer if the Bench is closed, they said.

Eight fishermen rescued from sea after 16 hours

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Eight fishermen who were tossed into the Bay of Bengal by pirates were rescued after 16 hours from the sea about 30km from Kuakata by other fishermen.

Police said pirates attacked fishing trawler FB Hatem Khan on Sunday and looted fish and fishing equipment.

The pirates during the heist

tossed 12 fishermen and crew into the sea.

The fishermen were floating in the sea until Monday evening when fishermen of another fishing trawler rescued eight of them.

The rescued fishermen were taken to Mahipur Health Complex. Of them, condition of three is stated to be critical. The three are Jahangir, 25, Kuddus, 28 and Jabbar, 23.

Tk 7 lakh contrabands seized in Satkhira

BSS, Satkhira

Contraband worth over Tk 7 lakh was recovered from a Dhaka-bound bus at Jhaudanga Bazaar and a shop at Nalta Bazaar in two days. Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), in two separate drives, recovered the contraband Indian goods on Friday and Saturday.

Acting on a tip-off, jawans of Satkhira 12 Rifles Battalion raided the bus and recovered the smuggled goods worth over Tk 4.5 lakh, BDR sources said.

One person named Fakrul Islam, 38, son of late Abdur Rauf of village Kaliganj under Daudkandi upazila of Comilla district was arrested.

The seized goods were deposited with the Satkhira Custom authorities.

A case was filed with the Sadar thana.

In another drive on Saturday, the personnel of First Rifles Battalion raided an electronics shop at Nalta Bazaar under Kaliganj upazila and recovered goods worth over Tk 2.5 lakh.

The seized goods included CD, VCD, deck set, cassette player, two-in-one, calculator, torch light, wrist watch and spare parts of watch.

Newborn stolen from BSBMC rescued within hours

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A newborn male baby was rescued within hours of his missing at the Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (BSBMCH) on Tuesday morning.

However, the abductor was detained, but snatched away by local youths.

Police, medical and victim sources said Parvin Begum, mother of three children of Sonagachhi, Barguna came to visit her husband Montu Mia at Barisal Central Jail where he has been detained. From there she was rushed to the BSBMCH with acute labour pain where she gave birth to a son at the emergency ward at about 11 am.

Jharna, a medical 'Aya' and Parvin's attendant went to the nearby Social Welfare Centre for help. In the mean time the newborn baby was stolen from the lap of his unconscious mother.

When this news spread tension

created and a search party was formed.

After about one hour the stolen baby was rescued from a cabin at the fourth floor of the hospital. He was found lying by the side of another four months old patient.

The cabin's attendant told this correspondent one Mahinoor brought the baby there for a while. She was detained, but was snatched from the authority by local youths.

BSBMCH Director Dr Moazzem Hossain said a two-member inquiry committee headed by the Assistant Director has been formed and asked to submit a report within 48 hours.

The incident has created panic in the labour ward of the hospital.

Workshop on pest control held at M'bazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, M'bazar

A day long workshop on "Pumri pest control in transplanted aman paddy field" for local farmers was held on the Udayan KG and Junior High School premises in Monumukh union under Sadar upazila recently.

The Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), Moulvibazar organised the workshop in collaboration with Danida SPPS.

Moulvibazar DAE Deputy Director Md Abdul Hamid Mullah presided over the workshop while Director of the Plant Protection wing of the Directorate of Agriculture Extension, Dhaka Shachindra Chandra Debnath was chief guest.

Among others, Md Ibrahim Khalil, Project Director of DAE/DANIDA SPPS project, Hasanul Haque Panna, Deputy Director of the Plant Protection Wing of DAE, Dhaka and Md Sujon Miah Chairman of Monumukh Union Parishad addressed the workshop.

A total of 500 farmers took part.

70 cattle looted from Monpura shoal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Pirates on Saturday looted more than 70 cattle from a remote shoal area under Monpura upazila in Bhola district.

Of the looted cattle, 28 belong to three relatives of the Home Minister.

The Home Minister's relatives are Bhola district BJP president Kamaluddin Chowdhury (10 cattle), his brothers Maznu Chowdhury (6 cattle) and Noman Chowdhury (12 cattle).

The shoal, Dhal char is cut off by road and tele-communication. It is situated on the Meghna estuary, about 40 kilometres off Monpura, its nearest locality and police station.

Shamsuddin Bachhu Chowdhury, president of Monpura upazila unit of BNP also a brother-in-law of the Home Minister informed this correspondent that the pirates fled away safely by trawlers after looting the cattle.

Monpura Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) SI Fazle Rabbi told this correspondent that they had heard the news of cattle looting, but nobody complained or lodged any case.

Meanwhile, an order of the Home Ministry to establish a permanent police camp at the shoal is also yet to be executed,

the OC added.

Thousands of cattle of landlords and rich farmers of the area graze at Dhal Char which are most often looted by pirates. But the looted cattle are never recovered as nobody files any case due to lack of police station here.

World Vision donates 120 sewing machines

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The World Vision, an NGO, has distributed 120 sewing machines free of cost among poor people in Mymensingh town for self-employment.

Martin Singh, its coordinator in Mymensingh, distributed those at a simple function held at the town recently.

Government officials including Police Superintendent Kohinoor Miah and local journalists were present at the function.

It was told at the function that such programmes would be gradually extended to the grass-roots level.



Waterbodies encroached! One of many sluice gates on Boalia canal in Golachipa illegally controlled by a local influential for fish cultivation creates waterlogging in the wet season and deprives croplands of irrigation in the dry season.

PHOTO: STAR