

SNAPS

Barisal newsmen observe Protest Day

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal
The Barisal Reporters' Unity observed Protest Day on Tuesday. They organised protest meeting and paraded the streets in a procession wearing black veils on mouth condemning the recent act of 'terrorism' and extortion by the BNP cadres at Patuakhali.

Acid thrown on housewife by rivals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal
A mother of one child sustained serious acid burn injuries by rivals of her husband at East Goma of Dudhal union of Bakerganj upazila on Tuesday.

The victim, Rahima Begum, 26, her child and mother-in-law were sleeping when three brothers Altaf, Anwar and Majjbor Gazi who happened to be their rival neighbours entered their house by cutting tin in absence of the house owner named Nasir. The trespassers presence awakened them. They tried to resist them, but they threw acid on Rahima which burnt the hands, legs, lower and front portion of her body.

Trader killed by snatcher in Lalmonirhat

A CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat
Snatchers killed a trader at Moghalhat railway line in Jummapara area of the town.

Police recovered the body of the victim-identified as Mamun Islam alias Chunnu Mia, 35--from a nearby canal on Monday. Quoting the victim's family, police said Chunnu Mia was carrying Tk lakh when he was attacked with the snatchers. The body has been sent to lalmonirhat sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Clash over fishing in disputed pond: 1 killed, 4 injured

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

One person was killed and four others were seriously injured in a clash over fishing in a disputed pond at Dhulia Moddher Char village under Mehendiganj upazila on Friday. The dead was identified as Ali Akkas Fakir, 45, who died at Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (BSBMCH) on Tuesday. Activists of Siraj Boiati group and those of Kalam Fakir group locked in the bloody clash. Three persons were arrested of charge of murder. They are Abul Kalam Fakir along with his attending son Nur Muhammad. Both were arrested from Barisal SBMCH and another person Altaf Hossain, arrested from Mehendiganj. Injured Ali Akkas Bepari, Abdur Rob and Farid Fakir of Siraj group and Abul Kalam Fakir of opponent group were undergoing treatment at Barisal SBMCH. A case was lodged with Mehendiganj police station.

Marooned in dry season!

Manmade flood in 15 Satkhira villages: Thousands face food crisis because of two subsequent crop loss



PHOTO: STAR

Manmade flood...Three villagers (left) wading through chest-deep water along the submerged Sharashkati-Deera road and (right) homeless people have taken shelter in makeshift thatches on the high Jugikhali-Deera road. The photos were taken last week.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Believe it or not, about 20,000 people in 15 villages in Kolaroa upazila are virtually marooned in the ongoing dry season.

Stagnant water has stopped life as all cultivable lands are under three to four feet water. Most areas in the four unions look like sheets of water, covered with water hyacinth at places.

Many of affected people have moved to highlands and many others to Satkhira, living as destitute.

The sufferings befell them as the floodwater from the Kobodak following a breach in the river in

the first week of October has not been cleared.

Neither the people's representatives nor the local administration took any initiative to remove the water despite repeated appeals, some local people told this correspondent during a recent visit.

They said they are suffering for want of food. The Aman crop has been lost and there is no scope to grow IRRi-Boro, wheat or winter vegetables as water will remain stagnant for another couple of months, if not cleared, they said.

The government relief is also scanty.

The 15 villages are Khanpara, Malopara, Sardar para, Kndapara, Kamepara, Karikerpara, Gazi

para, Jelepara, Mathpara, Nathpara, Kashiadanga, Khetrapara, Bamankhali, Jugikhali and Sarashkati in Deera, Jugikhali, Jalalabad and Joynagar unions under Kalaroa upazila.

Shahar Banu, 65 of Deera union said her family members remain virtually half-fed most of the days in a week. "There are many like us", she said in front of her damaged hut.

Most of the people are marginal farmers, day labourers or small traders.

It was earlier reported that the sudden flooding demolished 4073 kutchha houses, completely damaged crops on 2560 hectares and washed away fishes from ponds

and fish enclosures. Six educational institutions were damaged partially.

Floodwater receded from adjacent unions but no measure has been taken to clear the water from the four unions.

After loss of Aman crop, the people hoped for cultivating IRRi-Boro, wheat and winter vegetables once the water is cleared. But all our hopes have been dashed, said Junab Ali of Kandapara village.

Satkhira district administration said they distributed 10 tonnes of rice among the affected people. The Satkhira unit of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society distributed 30 tonnes of rice so far.

Where the VGF rice has gone?

A CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Eleven ward members of Lalmonirhat Poursabha out of 12 in a written complaint to the Deputy Commissioner alleged that Municipal Chairman Lutfar Rahman misappropriated 18.5 tonnes of VGF (vulnerable group feeding) rice.

In the complaint they said the rice was allotted before the Eid for distribution among the poor. But the municipal misappropriated those.

The 11 include three women ward members. The lone ward member who did not sign the written complaint is Abul Hossain. The complaint was made on November 28.

When contacted, the chairman said he distributed the rice among the ward members but they did not give those to the poor.

Jamaat leader given 8 months' RI for giving fake cheques

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Jamaat-e-Islami leader and principal of Khalishpur 'Katha Pre-Cadet School and Coaching Centre' Shaikh Zakir Hossain has been sentenced to eight month's RI and fined Tk one lakh for giving two fake cheques to a person.

The Jamaat leader had given to cheques for Tk 1,50,000 and Tk 50,000 to SM Ramjan Ali. But these were dishonoured as there was no money in the bank account.

SM Ramjan Ali filed a case with CMM's court. CMM Md Atiqul Huq delivered the verdict on Monday in absentia.

Workshop on childhood development held

BSL, Laxmipur

A two-day workshop on early childhood development (ECD) concluded here on Tuesday.

Deputy Commissioner Lutfur Rahman was the chief guest at the inaugural function, held at the conference room of the DC's office. Additional Deputy Commissioner Jasim Uddin Mahmud was in the chair.

Forty participants including health officials, teachers, social workers, NGO representatives and local journalists attended it.

The workshop adopted a set of recommendations for mental and physical development of children.

Bangladesh Shishu Academy and UNICEF jointly organized the workshop.

Case against OC, 7 cops for eviction threat

A CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

The officer-in-charge and seven policemen including an ASI of Hatibandha thana are among 21 people charged with threatening a person with eviction from his homestead.

One Azizul Haq of Bichondai village filed the case with a First Class Magistrate court on November 29.

In the case he said 13 people of the village looted and demolished his house on November 13, ploughed the homestead and threatened him to leave it.

On the following morning, Azizul went to Hatibandha thana to file a case against them.

The 13 are Abdur Rahman, Abu Bakker, Jonab Ali, Jaynal Abedin, Ashraf Ali, Alom Mia, Nur Hossain, Belal Hossain, Shamsul Mia, Abdul Hakim, Johra Begum, Jahura and

Jarua. But OC Abdus Sobhan did not record the case and instead "threatened" him.

In the complaint filed with the court, Azizul said the OC, ASI Abdul Mannan and six policemen joined hands with the 13 and "threaded" him and his family to left the homestead immediately.

Azizul also complained to the Police Superintendent on November 23 against the policemen, sources said.

The court asked the district police on November 30 to investigate the matter.

Lalmonirhat police has asked Kaligonj thana OC Shahhahan Ali to probe the matter, the sources said.

When contacted, SP Maniruzzaman said action will be taken against the OC and other policemen if found guilty.

Seven chargesheeted in Khulna AL leader murder case

IO pleads for bail of 3 suspects

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Chargesheet has been submitted to court accusing seven outlaws of Purbanga Communist Party (PBCP) for the murder of Awami League leader and Chairman of Bahirdia Union Parishad Atahar Ali.

The chargesheeted accused are Atiar Rahman, Jahangir Hossain, Shamim Hasan, Habibur Rahman, Maqbul Hossain, Momin Shaikh and Imrul. All of them hail from different villages in Fakirhat thana.

Four out of the seven are absconding.

But to utter surprise, the IO has petitioned to the court to release on bail and exempt three alleged top criminals --Zakir Hossain, Mushfequr Rahman, Mushfeque and Birhi Masud --from the case. They were arrested as suspects in the murder.

The UP chairman and AL leader Atahar Ali was gunned down in front of his House at Bahirdia under Fakirhat thana on June 9.

4 killed in Mymensingh in road mishap, clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Two persons were killed and another critically injured in a road accident in Phulpur on Tuesday.

Another person was killed and ten people were injured in a clash between villagers in Iswarganj on the same day.

Badsha Miah, 40, of Mishki village and Emdad, 35, of Payari village were killed on the spot as their motorcycle was hit by a truck on the Mymensingh-Haluaghat highway at Bagunda in Phulpur.

Their companion Shawkat was admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) in critical condition.

Movement of vehicles were stopped for an hour on Mymensingh-Haluaghat and Mymensingh-Sherpur roads as angry local people raised barricades protesting the killing.

Bacchirul Islam Bacchu, 18, was killed and ten people were injured when villagers clashed over harvesting paddy from a disputed land at Panchtari village.

Seven of the injured have been admitted to MMCH in critical conditions, hospital sources said.

Police arrested three persons. They are Jalal Uddin, his wife Tahera and their son Abul Mansur. A case has been lodged with Iswarganj thana, police said.

Dr Aftab murder trial begins on Dec 8

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The trial of much-talked-about Dr. Aftab Hossain Murder case will now begin in the Speedy Trial Tribunal, Sylhet on December 8.

Charge-framing of the case was completed on November 19.

Among the six chargesheeted accused, four are in custody, official sources said.

Dr. Aftab Hossain, Assistant Director of Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital, was called out of his private chamber at Dhakadakhshin bazaar in Golapganj upazila on the night of September 14 last year by some persons on the plea of attending a patient.

The callers, all on motorbikes, took him to a hillock in remote Ghoshgaon village and killed him. The miscreants took away his motorbike, mobile phone and money.

The body was recovered next morning.

Following filing of a case, the then officer-in-charge of Golapganj thana was entrusted with the task investigating the case.

It is widely believed that the doctor was killed by an organised gang of extortionists at Dhakadakhshin bazaar as he refused to pay them toll.

Killing of Dr. Aftab, known for his amiable behaviour with the commonman, sparked widespread resentment.

A day-long strike was observed in the upazila and doctors in Sylhet district abstained from private

practice for days together at the call of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) demanding arrest and punishment of the killers.

The central BMA also gave memorandum to the government for arrest and punishment of the killers. But, all went in vain due to alleged police negligence in arresting the killers immediately after the incident, when they were in the area, sources claimed.

Due to failure in arresting the killers and "mysterious handling" of the case by the then OC of Golapganj thana, it was transferred to the Detective Branch.

Later, the Sylhet Police Superintendent and some other police officials including Golapganj OC were transferred.

The DB arrested eight persons. They are Luthfar Rahman, Sujan, Abdul Haque, Sufian, Sebul, Liton, Panki, and Bakul.

Sujan gave a confessional statement before police and magistrate. Later, DB submitted charge sheet against six persons on July 4.

The chargesheeted persons include Noman Uddin Murad, Jashimuddin, Sujan Ali, Luthfar Rahman and Sufian.

Main accused Murad and three others--Sujan Ali, Luthfar Rahman and Sufian--are in custody.

Murad went into hiding after filing of the case and managed to evade arrest for about a year allegedly with blessing of some police officials. Last month, he appeared before court, which sent him to jail hajat. Jashimuddin is absconding.

A Poursabha memorial?

Overhead water reservoir lying idle as people suffer for water



PHOTO: STAR

The giant overhead water reservoir on Patuakhali municipal office premises is awaiting inauguration for over six months.

A CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The costly overhead water reservoir reminds the townspeople of the Poursabha's good intention. But no body knows when water will trickle down the tower.

The seven lakh litre capacity reservoir built with assistance from DANIDA is awaiting inauguration for over six months while people are suffering for supply of safe water.

About one lakh people of the coastal town need about 16 lakh gallons of water daily but the Poursabha supplies only around four lakh gallons.

All the seven water supply pumps in the town are in dilapidated conditions.

Five of those are under the Poursabha and one under the Public Works Department (PWD). Local DANIDA officials are responsible for the rest one.

Three pumps run by the Poursabha and the one by PWD are on the verge closure because

of their ramshackle condition. The DANIDA's pump has been abandoned, the sources said.

The condition of the rest two is not good also. Water supply is often interrupted because of the old pump machines.

Talking to this correspondent recently, many residents in Nabab Para, Pura Bazer, Chak Bazar, Kathpatti, Cherpara, Sabujbagh and Shimulbagh areas said the Poursabha can not supply even one third of their water needs.

On the other hand, the number of hand tube wells is also inadequate.

Five new tube wells have been sunk by DANIDA under its Water and Sanitation Project.

When contacted, Poursabha Chairman Mostaq Ahmed said the people's need will be met soon when the newly constructed overhead water reservoir will be put into service.