

Youth's death in custody protested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Several hundred people brought out a procession and paraded the main streets of the town yesterday protesting death of a youth in police custody on Sunday.

Sajidur Rahman Sajid, 26, of Munshira here died in police custody during his remand. His mysterious death sparked resentment among local people.

A protest meeting was held at the V-Aid Road intersection where speakers demanded punishment to the culprits.

They also blamed police for trying to divert the incident suppressing the fact. They demanded a neutral investigation into the incident.

Police arrested Sajid from Katpatti adjacent to Gaibandha Railway Station Thursday night with a revolver.

Family sources said that Sajid died due to torture by police. But police said the victim committed suicide inside the hazat of police station by fastening cloths.

After the incident, a sub-inspector (SI) named Fahmida Khatun who was also the duty officer and a constable named Dulal Chandra Sarker were suspended by the police authorities for negligence in duty.

The Superintendent of Police (SP) of Gaibandha has formed a one-member team with Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Kayemuddin to investigate the incident.

## Nominate 'clean' candidates in next polls

Speakers at Satkhira workshop urge parties

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Speakers at a round table yesterday urged political parties not to nominate corrupt and inefficient candidates in the next parliamentary election.

They also called upon leaders of major parties not to use muscle power and black money in the polls to institutionalise democracy and develop the country.

They said, nominating 'clean' candidates in the forth coming general election has now become a demand of the people and political parties should realise this.

The round table on Election and Citizen's Role, organised by Shyamnagar Sujan Shushan Nagarik Committee, was held at Shyamnagar upazila auditorium.

Dr Badiul Alam, director, of Hunger Project, an NGO moderated the round table.

It was addressed by Satkhira BNP leader and Public Prosecutor (PP) Syed Iftakhar Ali, Shyamnagar upazila Awami League president Jagul Haidar, local BNP leader Abdul Wahed, Principal GM Osman Gani, Principal Ashek-e-Elahi, Alamgir Haidar, Abdus Samad, freedom fighter Abdul Mazid, Chandrika Banerjee, GM Liakat Ali, Hafez Abdur Rashid, Mahsin UI Mulik and Prof. Abdul Wahab.

They said the civil society has a great role to play in making country's politics clean and beneficial for people. They can compel political parties to nominate honest, efficient and patriotic people in the next election.

Honest and patriotic people do not come to politics now as it is plagued by corruption and muscle and money power. This trend must be changed if political parties really want to do good to the

country and its people, they said. Otherwise the parties will be discarded by people and new ones will come up to fulfil the vacuum and people's aspirations, they said.

Demanding compulsory registration of political parties, they said this will ensure transparency in political process and holding of fair election.

There is no alternative to fair politics for consolidating democracy and changing the lot of people, they said.

They said a country is run by the party in power. If those in power are corrupt, there is no use crying against corruption, law and order slide and all other ills that affect development.

Law can not curb corruption if the custodians of law are themselves corrupt, they said.



People joined by leaders of all political parties and professional groups formed 4-km human chain in Kushtia yesterday for pipe line gas supply.

PHOTO: STAR

## Arrest of killers of 3 AL men demanded

A CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Awami League (AL) yesterday brought out a procession at Shatbaria village under Khan-Morich union in Bhangura upazila demanding arrest to the killers of three party leaders.

A gang of miscreants killed three AL leaders Hassan Ali of Purba Rannagar, Golam Hossain of Ramanathpur village and Rafiq of Shatbaria village Friday night.

Earlier, a big protest meeting was held at Shatbaria ground on Sunday. Speakers condemned the killing and demanded punishment to the culprits after proper investigation.

Pabna district AL leader Advocate Shamsul Haq Tuku Bhangura AL president Md Mokbul Hossain Chatmohar upazila AL secretary Md Abdul Malek expressed their determination to continue the agitation programme until the culprits are punished.

## 5-POINT DEMAND Day-long strike by RU officials, employees

RU CORRESPONDENT

All administrative activities were stopped at Rajshahi University yesterday as officials and employees observed work abstention at the call of Officers and Karmochari Okkiya Parishad to press its five-point demand.

The work abstention will continue today, as per an announcement by the Parishad earlier.

Their demands include confirmation of jobs of 31 employees appointed on January 15, 2002, fixing retirement age at 65 and cancellation of the decision to cut 20 per cent pension.

The officials and employees also held a rally and staged a sit-in in front of the administrative building.

The university central library was also closed.

At a rally in front of administration building, Okkiya Parishad leaders criticised university authorities for ignoring their demands for long.

## Agitation mounts in Kushtia for pipeline gas supply

4km human chain formed, rally held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

People irrespective of political affiliations have once again raised their voice for pipeline gas supply to Kushtia. Thousands of people of all walks of life including political leaders, industrialists, traders, professionals and NGO officials formed a four-kilometre human chain yesterday to press the demand.

The Gas Link Implementation Committee (GLIC) organised the human chain stretching from Station Road to the BSCIC industrial estate.

At least 50 political, socio-cultural and professional organisations, trade bodies and NGOs took part in the human chain. They include Awami League and its front organisations, BNP and its fronts,

Jatayia Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), Jatya Party (Ershad), Kushtia Chamber of Commerce and Industries (KCCI) and Kushtia Shop Owners Association.

The human chain was followed by a rally, presided over by GLIC Convenor Mozibar Rahman, an industrialist and president of KCCI.

Yesterday's agitation was part of a series of programmes including road barricade and sit-in to be observed later as per an announcement by the GLIC earlier.

Speakers at the rally included Kushtia Municipality Chairman Anwar Ali and KCCI president Mozibar Rahman.

They said Kushtia is the most prospective district for setting up industries because of its geographical location and good road

links with rest of the country.

At least 20 industrial units are already in operation in the BSCIC (Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation) estate, producing world class commodities including cable wires. Products of BRB Cable are earning foreign exchange.

But all there are dependent on power supply, which disrupts production due to load shedding.

According to Power Development Board (PWB), the Kushtia needs 35 mw power daily but the supply is 15 to 17 mw, they said.

Mozibar Rahman, also chairman of BEB Cables, said his industry produces 33 per cent less than capacity due to load shedding.

## STALEMATE IN LAND ACQUISITION FOR BHOMRA LAND PORT

# Govt changes decision in favour of vested quarters

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Work to develop Bhomra customs check post into a full-fledged land port can not be started due to complexity in acquisition of land, allegedly created by some vested quarters enjoying political clout and backing by a section of officials.

Conflict between two groups in the port area who are obstructing acquisition of land surfaced as the district administration targeted to acquire lands and homesteads of 150 families at the behest of some influential, changing their earlier decision to acquire croplands nearby. The lands can not be acquired due to the conflict, sources claimed.

Shipping Minister Col (Rtd) Akbar Hossain at a meeting there in 2004 declared that Bhomra would be developed into a full-fledged land port and a private developer company was designated for this. But everything remained stalled.

The district administration had earlier selected croplands near the check post for acquisition. But the authorities changed the decision allegedly because the croplands were owned by some local influential, who opposed the move.

The 22 influential, many of them known for land grabbing earlier, submitted joint petitions to the customs authorities and the prime minister to change the decision, saying that the lands proposed for acquisition were graveyards.

The authorities then changed



PHOTO: STAR

Due to lack of landing yard at Bhomra customs checkpoint, a Bangladesh truck loads goods from an Indian truck on a nearby road.

their decision and targeted to acquire lands by evicting 150 families, most of them of Hindu community in Laxmidari village.

The people of Laxmidari village opposed the plan, saying the change in the decision was due to a conspiracy by some vested quarters. At a press conference on March 14, they also sought intervention by the prime minister to save them from being evicted from their ancestral homesteads.

They also threatened to

launch tougher agitation programs to resist the authorities' move. Since then, all activities to acquire land is stopped.

"Export import through Bhomra started in 1996. Though there is virtually no infrastructure facilities, it exceeded the revenue earning target every year," said Satkhira Chamber of Commerce and Industries President Sheikh Azhar Hossain while talking to this correspondent. All official activities at the customs check post are done in

a three-room small tin-shed structure.

On contact, Satkhira Deputy Commissioner Md Ilias said, land acquisition is being delayed due to obstacle by a some people in the area.

"We are trying to acquire lands through understanding without applying any force," he said.

"We have taken a soft stance to resolve the problem through negotiation with locals as it is difficult to evict 150 families," said an official at the check post.

## Repair road to Burimari port

Thousands travel 26 kms to besiege Nilphamari DC office

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Several thousand people from Jaldhaka upazila yesterday staged a demonstration in front of Nilphamari Deputy Commissioner's office demanding immediate renovation of the 88 km road from Burimari land port to Paglapeer, connecting the land port with the Dinajpur-Rangpur-Dhaka highway.

They also submitted a memorandum to the prime minister through the DC, seeking her intervention for repair of the vital road, used for carrying merchandise to and from the land port.

The programme was organised by Jaldhaka Sharta Sangrakkan Committee (committee to protect interest of Jaldshaka), a civic body.

The memorandum said tougher agitation programmes including token hunger strike and barricading the road will be launched if concrete steps are not taken by May 31 for its repair.

Covering a distance of 26 kilometers from Jaldhaka, the demonstrators reached Nilphamari in 21 trucks. Many people walked the whole distance in processions.

As the truck procession was



PHOTO: STAR

People staged a demonstration in front of Nilphamari DC office yesterday for repair of Burimari-Paglapeer road.

stopped by police at the entrance of the town, the demonstrators left the vehicles and marched into the town, parading streets in a procession and chanting slogans.

The demonstrators virtually laid a siege to the DC's office for about two hours and held a rally on its

premises.

Addressing the rally, convener of Jaldhaka Sharta Sangrakkan Committee Shamsuzzaman said the government earns about Tk 100 crore revenue from Burimari land port annually.

# Protests in districts against fake voter list

