

NEWS SNAPS

25 hurt as BNP factions clash in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

At least 25 people were injured, seven of them seriously, in a clash between two factions of BNP at Koyra village in Ullapara upazila in Sirajganj on Tuesday night. Police and local people said the clash erupted when supporters of Khoair Miah attacked Hamid group at the village at about 8:00 pm. They also ransacked several houses and looted valuables.

Both the groups exploded more than 100 crackers during the clash that lasted for about 2 hours. Seriously injured Mozammel, Shajahan, Abu Bakker, Kamrul Hossain, Ilias Hossain, Golam Mostagaa and Asaduzzaman were admitted to a local hospital at Ullapara. Police arrested seven people from the spot. A case was filed in this connection.

BNP men beat up doctor at Natore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

A group of BNP activists allegedly assaulted a physician and ransacked his chamber in the town's Chalkrampur area on Tuesday noon.

The BNP men entered into the chamber of Dr Shajahan Ali, an orthopaedic consultant of Natore Sadar Hospital and demanded Tk 20,000 as toll. As he refused to oblige, they beat him and ransacked furniture of his chamber.

Shajahan filed a case with Sadar thana accusing BNP activists Alam, Rafiq, Mukhta and five others. None was arrested in this connection till filing of this report on Tuesday night.

20 Bangladeshi nationals languish in jail

UNB, Panchagarh

Twenty Bangladeshi nationals have been languishing at Shiliguri, Jalpaiguri and Uttar Dinajpur district jails in India even after completion of their jail terms.

Seven of the Bangladesh prisoners have been identified as Daimul Islam, 45, Dalilur Rahman, 35, and Tipri, 40, of Cheprajhar village, Nurul Haque, 42, of Balapara village, Sirajul, 40, and Hulia, 35, of Bodhgon village and Rahidul Islam, 45, of Baro Singia village in Autoari upazila of Panchagarh. According to information from across the border, the Bangladeshi nationals have been leading a subhuman life in the Indian jails simply for lack of initiatives to complete necessary formalities to bring them back. Indian border guards from Kamargach outpost caught them on charge of illegal border crossing. Later, an Indian court sentenced them to various jail terms.

High court issues stay order

UNB, Comilla

The High Court has postponed all activities of the newly formed convening committee of Muktiyoddah Sangsad Comilla unit for two months.

A bench of the High Court, comprising Justice M Abdul Matin and M Marjui Haq, issued the stay order following a petition filed by Advocate Shah Mohammad Monir Sharif of the recently dissolved committee. Liberation War Affairs Ministry formed the convening committee dissolving the previous one. The BNP-backed new committee captured the Muktiyoddah Sangsad district unit office on December 28.

Clash over cutting of road leaves

60 hurt

UNB, Brahmanbaria

A clash between two groups of people over cutting of road at village Muslendupur in Nasimgar upazila of Brahmanbaria left 60 people wounded Tuesday.

Witnesses said both the groups used sharp weapons during the two-hour long battle that prompted the villagers to call in police to control the situation. Nine of the injured -- Abdul Habib, Abdul Latif, Alauddin, Kadir, Ramjan, Saju Mia, Lutu Mia, Imam Hossain and Mizanur Rahman -- were being treated at Sadar Hospital. However, no case was filed in this connection.

374 MTs of HYV 'aman' seeds produced

UNB, Rangpur

Some 132 listed seed growers of BADC in Rangpur produced 374 mts of high yielding variety (HYV) of aman seeds worth about Tk 40 lakh last year.

Of the seeds, 310 mts were BR-I while 20 mts BR-30, 14 mts BR-31 and 30 mts BR-32 varieties, officials said. The seeds were produced on 570 acres of land of five BADC farms -- Rangpur Vegetable Seed Farm, Domar Farm, Nilphamari Farm, Jute Research Institute and Lalmonirhat Airport Farm.

Work on flood centre begins

UNB, Pabna

Construction work of a first ever NGO-funded flood centre in northern region was inaugurated at a remote shoal in Pabna on Tuesday.

Asiab, a non-government organisation, with financial assistance from Concern Bangladesh is constructing the centre at Charatarpur Arial Goyal in Sadar upazila. Maulana Abdus Samad MP was present at the inaugural programme.

30 feeder roads to be constructed

UNB, Pirojpur

Thirty feeder roads will be constructed in Pirojpur this fiscal at a cost of Tk 3.85 crore.

Of the roads, four will be constructed in Sadar while three in Mothbaria, six in Nazirpur, nine in Bhandaria, four in Kaukhali and four in Sharupkathi upazilas. The roads are likely to be completed by March.

No registration of travel agencies

UNB, Sylhet

A large number of local travel agencies are running their business without registration depriving the government of huge revenues.

Although there are some 2000 travel agencies in Sylhet, only 170 of them have registration. According to competent sources, most of the travel agencies, which have no registration, are engaged in illegal hundi business and manpower export as youths Sylhet have a trend of flying abroad, particularly London.

Leader of terrorist group arrested

UNB, Noakhali

The leader of a terrorist group was arrested from Begumganj upazila in Noakhali Sunday.

The arrested was identified as Pias, an accused in five cases. Another report from Comilla adds: Being upset by his terrorist activities, a man of Bandirchar village in Chowddagram upazila handed over his son to police Sunday. Police said Ali Ahmed handed his son Shafiq, 24, over to police having failed to control him.

Two injured by armed robbers

UNB, Munshiganj

Armed robbers swooped on a house at Sanmargaon in Srinagar upazila of Munshiganj Monday and looted valuables leaving two people injured.

Villagers said the bandits broke into the house of Anil Das at dead of night and looted the valuables, including eight tolas of gold and Tk 5,000, at gunpoint. The injured received first aid.

Valuables looted from five houses

UNB, Bagerhat

In a string of robberies armed bandits looted valuables worth over Tk two lakh from five houses in Morelganj upazila in Bagerhat Sunday night.

Police said the armed robbers stormed into the houses of Nur Mohammad at Shankidanga village, Ali Akbar and Anwar Hossain at Madhya Guapara and Manjurul Kabir and Moniruzzaman of Shuvarajkati villages, and took away the valuables. Four people were injured as the robbers attacked them with sharp weapons when some inmates tried to resist them. Separate cases were filed.

RAKUB to disburse Tk 22.25cr agri-loan

UNB, Chapainawabganj

Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank (RAKUB) has taken up a programme to disburse Tk 22.25 crore agri-loan in Chapainawabganj in the current fiscal year.

The bank has already disbursed Tk 6.91 crore among 3,141 farmers for vegetable cultivation, buying agricultural inputs and bullocks and for pisciculture. RAKUB has also realised Tk 7.58 crore outstanding loan from 3,314 loan receivers during the period. Bank sources said the loan is being disbursed through 14 branches in Chapainawabganj.

Attack on Bangla weekly office

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

The office of a local weekly named Shahoshi Janata situated on new Dhaka Road in front of the Judge's court was attacked by some illegal toll collectors.

Police said some local toll collectors led by Selim came to the weekly office and forcefully entered into the office and demanded Tk 1,000 as toll from the Editor who refused to pay them illegal toll. At one stage of altercation among the newsmen and toll collectors, people from nearby assembled and chased them. Ultimately the illegal toll collectors fled away. A case has been lodged with Sirajganj Sadar thana. Sirajganj Press Club President Akhteruzzaman Bablu and GS Zakirul Islam jointly condemned the attack.

Non-payment of telephone bill

T&T prepares list of defaulting ex-MPs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The authorities of Telegraph and Telephone (T&T) Department has prepared a list of some former members of parliament (MPs) who failed to pay their telephone bills on time despite repeated official reminders.

The Public Relations Officer (PRO) of Khulna divisional office of T&T disclosed this.

T&T sent the list of defaulters to the speaker of the eighth parliament. Immediately following his approval, T&T will sue the defaulting former MPs to realise the outstanding bills, said the PRO.

The former members of parliament (MPs) belong to Khulna, Satkhira and Bagerhat. They are likely to be sued by the Telephone Department next month for non-payment of outstanding bills of over Tk 15 lakh.

The former members of fourth, fifth and seventh parliament are yet to pay their outstanding bills despite frequent official reminders. They received a monthly

allowance of Tk 4,000 from the government for payment of phone bills, but they never paid the bills, said the PRO.

Names of the defaulters are as follows: MPs of the fourth parliament: Zahurul Huq Sarder, Moktar Hossain, Principal SM Abu Saeed and Habibur Rahman.

MPs of the fifth parliament: Syed Nargis Ali, Shaikh Harun-ar-Rahid, SM Mostafa Rashidi Shuja, Sharif Khasruzzaman, Mia Mansur Ali, Kazi Shamsur Rahman, Md Mansur Ahmed and Nazrul Islam.

MPs of the seventh parliament: Shaikh Nurul Huq, Sharif Khasruzzaman, Begum Mannujan Sufian, Mir Sakawat Ali Daru, Late Syed Kamal Bakht, Dr MM Mokhlesur Rahman, Kazi Shamsur Rahman, BM Nazrul Islam, Md Shahadat Hossain, Panchanon Biswas, Kazi Sekandar Ali Dalim, Naray an Chandra Chanda and Talukdar Abdul Khaleque.

It, however, still remains unknown why the T&T has not yet prepared a list of defaulting MPs of the sixth parliament from the aforementioned districts.

Scarcity of boro seeds in Kurigram

UNB, Kurigram

Scarcity of boro seeds has been prevailing in Kurigram in the current IRRI-boro farming season pushing local farmers into uncertainty.

Farmers alleged that the dealers are creating artificial crisis of seeds for making windfall profit, but the authority concerned is yet to take any pragmatic steps to address the crisis.

It was also alleged that the dealers mixing up substandard seeds with BADC's high quality seeds and selling those at high prices.

Farmers started to prepare seedbeds in the middle of Bengali month 'kartik' this year with a hope of achieving bumper production like two previous years, but vast tracts of seedbeds were damaged due to

untimely flash flood, heavy rainfall and other natural calamities, local agriculture officials said

In this situation, farmers became totally dependent on Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) for procuring quality seeds.

Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) has set a target to bring 68,800 hectares of land under the boro cultivation with an output target of 2.30 lakh mts in the current season.

BADC officials said they have sold 53 mts of seeds already among the farmers. Of the total, 33 mts were BRI-28 variety, 12 mts BRI-29, 4 mts Shubid and 4 mts other variety of seeds.

Besides, BADC has already supplied 155 mts of seeds to 26 authorised dealers for selling those

to the farmers.

Taking the advantage of the dealers are now selling those seeds at high prices. They are selling each bag BRI-28 seeds between Tk 175 and Tk 180 as against the normal rate of Tk 140, the farmers alleged.

Two killed in road mishap

A CORRESPONDENT, Habiganj

Two persons were killed and 50 injured when a bus fell into a ditch in Baniachang upazila skidding off Habiganj-Baniachang road on Monday.

Police and witnesses said the accident occurred at about 10:30 am as the driver lost control over the steering.



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

People of number 10 union in Maheshpur of Munshiganj are in grip of panic of river erosion. This is because the river Padma devoured half the area of their union during the last rainy season. They fear they might lose their homesteads in the next rainy season. So, they demand immediate short term protection measures in this ongoing dry season, otherwise the Padma would render them homeless and pauper.

Hundi business in 16 dists

UNB, Sirajganj

Hundi business is going on unabated in 16 northern districts, including Sirajganj, due to inaction of the law enforcers.

The number of hundi brokers in the northern region have increased in an alarming proportion as the law enforcing agencies are not taking necessary steps in this regard due to reasons unknown, locals alleged.

Taking the advantage, the hundi brokers with the connivance of the officers and employees of different banks in these regions have been carrying out their illegal business.

As the past Awami League government enforced a strict restriction on hundi business and took legal actions against some officers and employees of private banks, it

remained stopped in these regions.

But dishonest traders in connivance with the corrupt officers of state-run and private banks became active in carrying out their hundi business soon after BNP-led coalition government came to power at the end of last year.

A gang of smugglers using telephone and mobile phones from different parts in the region is sending millions of taka to the recipients in various countries, including India, Pakistan, Malaysia and Singapore, depriving the government of huge revenue income.

Hundi business is brisk mainly in Rajshahi, Naogaon, Pabna, Bogra, Sirajganj, Lalmonirhat, Thakurgaon and Panchagarh.

Local leaders in the region urged

the authorities concerned to immediately take necessary steps to stop illegal hundi business.

Couple receives burn injuries

UNB, Chandpur

A young wife and her husband have landed in hospital with severe burn injuries they suffered after a quarrel.

In a fit of rage after the quarrel, 24-year old Bilqis Farhana poured kerosene on her saree and torched it at their house in the town at about 5 am on Monday. Kazi Zaheer, the husband, jumped in the fire to rescue her. He succeeded but both suffered severe burn injuries.