

SNAPS

Political parties to help admin combat crime in N'ganj

**UNB, Narayanganj**  
Leaders of different political parties have assured the district administration of all-out cooperation to help maintain law and order. The assurance came during a meeting with new Deputy Commissioner Harunar Rashid at his office on Thursday. Among others, Police Super Helal Uddin Badri, BNP leader Adv Toymur Alam Khandaker, Majiul Islam of Awami League, Mainuddin Ahmed of Jamaat, Mohiuddin Altaf of Jatiya Party and Bazlul Haq of IOJ spoke. They also agreed to build a crime-free modern Narayanganj. The meeting also decided to launch combing operations to arrest the listed criminals.

Lightning kills 4

**UNB, Rangpur**  
Two pursons were killed and six others injured in lightning here on Tuesday. Locals said Kamrunnahar Begum, 14, and Shafiul Islam, 17, were killed and six others were injured as lightning struck their house at Paschimpara village in Badarganj upazila.

Housewife dies from snakebite

**UNB, Manikganj**  
A housewife was killed from snakebite at Sholdhara village in Ghior upazila on Saturday. The deceased was identified as Begum, 40, wife of Dr Bahez.

Workshop on rural dev

**UNB, Munshiganj**  
A daylong workshop was held for implementing 'Palli Pragati Project' at the auditorium of Bangladesh Rural Development Board in Tongibari on Saturday. Director General of Rural Development Board AFM Matiur Rahman was the chief guest. A total of 190 members of village, union and upazila committees and village organisers participated in the workshop.

More BRTC buses likely for Rajshahi division

**RU CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi**

The newly appointed commissioner of Rajshahi Division, Miyan Mushtaque Ahmed, exchanged views with journalists on matters of public interest at his office here on Saturday. He discussed various problems in the region and said free interaction with media men and their constructive role can play a vital role in solving those. He said more BRTC buses will be pressed into service in the region and the people's demand for three trains on Rajshahi-Dhaka route will be placed before the authorities concerned. Additional Commissioner K M Rafiqul islam, DDLG Jagadish Chandra Pandit and others high officials were also present at the meeting.. A section of private sector transport workers earlier obstructed plying of BRTC buses in Bogra

Irregularities in Chittagong transport union alleged

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg**

A faction of the Arakan Sarak Panbahan Sramik Union here on Saturday accused the present committee of the organisation of "massive irregularities and corruption". Leaders of the faction at a press conference at the local press club said election to the executive committee of the organisation was not held in more than a decade. The same committee has been in office for long and it did not place any report before the members. The committee members misappropriated its funds and whoever tried to protest came under attack by "hired goons", they alleged. The transport workers blamed general secretary of the South-Eastern Sramik Federation Mohammad Yeakub Ali and his hired goons for this. Mohammad Alamgir read out a written statement at the press conference where Md. Ismail, Bhutto, Md. Osman, Azim and Md Ismail were present.



Flash food inundated 22 unions in Rajnagar, Kamalganj, Kulaura and Sreemangol upazilas in Moulvibazar district. The situation is likely to deteriorate as all the rivers in the region including the Monu and the Dhalai are rising with onrush of water from the upstream. Picture shows (left to right) inundated houses of Aqua village in Rajnagar upazila and a submerged road in Kamalganj upazila town.



PHOTO: STAR

Crimes in S-W region

BNP's Selim, AL's Khaleque blame each other

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna**

President of Bagerhat district BNP MAH Selim MP has sought active co-operation from opposition Awami League (AL) leaders in containing crimes. He refuted allegations that BNP has unleashed a "reign of terror" in Bagerhat and that it is not allowing AL to hold any rally and pubic meeting. Addressing a press conference on Saturday Selim blamed former state minister Talukder Abdul Khaleque MP for "creating lawless-

ness in Bagerhat by making an unholy alliance with extremists". He called upon Bagerhat AL leaders to shun "politics of hooliganism and destruction". The BNP leader said none of his party leaders and activists created any problem in peaceful holding of the by-election to the post of chairman of Mongla Pourasava. The election was absolutely free and fair and the verdict of voters went in favour of the AL-backed candidate. Selim alleged that Talukder Khaleque has been "assigned" by

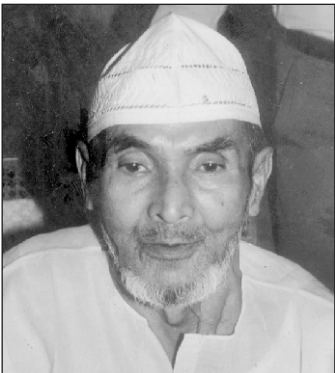
his party's high command to "create unrest" in Bagerhat for making it a hot political issue. The four-party alliance is committed to foil such conspiracy, he added. When contacted, Talukder, who is also Khulna City AL president termed Selim "a liar". Denying the allegations, he said Selim has taken administration in Bagerhat in his grip. "He is harbouring extremists in the South-Western region and nurturing them for killing Awami League leaders", Khaleque said.

BRAC staff beaten

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat**

Three BRAC employees were beaten and injured when they went to realise installment of a loan at Chinipara village under Mohendraganj upazila. BRAC employees Masud Parvez, Abdul Malek and Shafiqul Islam had gone to realise Tk 300 weekly installment from Zamilia Begum. It is alleged that Zamilia refused to make payment and at one stage, her husband Abdus Sattar and neighbours beat them. Being informed, police rescued and sent them to the upazila health complex. Shafiqul Islam was later shifted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital. BRAC employee Ashraful Islam fled a case with Mohendraganj police station. BRAC sources and other loan recipients in the village said Zamilia had taken Tk 12,000 loan and Tk 6350 is yet to be realised.

Award of honour for educationist



Asir Uddin Ahmed

**STAR NATIONAL DESK**

A noted educationist has been honoured posthumously for his extraordinary contributions in the field of education. The Dhaka-based Nilphamari Zila Samity awarded a crest to late Asir Uddin Ahmed, former headmaster of Nilphamari Model High School (now Nilphamari Government Boys' High School). The late educationist's son ZAM Khairuzzaman, a journalist of The Daily Star, received the award at a function held at the Planning and Development Academy, Nilkhet on Friday. Asaduzzaman Noor, member of parliament from Nilphamari Sadar constituency handed over the crest as the chief guest. The Nilphamari samity also posthumously honoured two others -- Dabiruddin Ahmed and Dr Mohammad Mozammel Hossain and two other living personalities -- Alhaj Bazlur Rahman Chowdhury and Md Lutfar Rahman.

UPDF office torched due to internal feud, says PCJSS

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati**

The Parbattya Chattagram Jono Sanghati Shamity (PCJSS) has protested filing of a case against 34 of its leaders and activists by the United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF), saying it is an attempt to harass them. The case was fled on Wednesday after UPDF office at Kutukchhori in Rangamati was torched in the early hours of Tuesday last. In the case it was alleged that armed terrorists 'lured' by PCJSS torched the UPDF office.

PCJSS in a press release on Saturday claimed that the arson was the outcome of internal feud in UPDF. On Tuesday, UPDF activists barricaded the Rangamati-Mahalchhori road and chanted slogan against PCJSS. The PCJSS press release said UPDF is 'patronised' by a vested quarter and it is trying to harass PCJSS leaders and activists. Earlier, UPDF filed another case against 19 PCJSS leaders and activists of its Khagrachhori district unit after its (UPDF) Khagrachhori office was torched on May 12, the PCJSS press release said.

30 feet Teesta dam damaged, WDB spur vulnerable

**UNB, Rangpur**

A vital spur of the Water Development Board (WDB) at Singimari Matherepari under Kolkond union in Gangachhara upazila has become vulnerable with the rise of Teesta river. About 30 feet of the embankment has already been damaged. Sand bags and cement blocks dumped by the Water Development Board have been washed away. The WDB has taken emergency measures to save the spur con-

structed last year at a cost of Tk 6 crore. Local people apprehended that flood protection embankment at Gangachhara would be eroded by the river during the current rainy season if the spar is not protected. Local member of parliament (MP) Moshiur Rahman Ranga visited the affected site on Tuesday and expressed dissatisfaction at the construction work, which was done allegedly with low quality construction materials.

2 housewives gangraped for refusing to pay illegal tolls

**UNB, Keraniganj**

Miscreants gangraped two housewives at Ambagicha village here Thursday night for refusing to pay illegal tolls. Police and locals said that the gang numbering about eight stormed into their house at dead of night and raped them by turn, fastening their hands and legs. Hearing screams of the victims, neighbours rushed to the spot and caught two of the criminals Delwar Hossain and Jakir Hossain -- and beat them. Later, the criminals were handed over to police. A case was filed.

Jute farming on the wane

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh**

Farmers in the district have lost interest in jute cultivation due to its continued low price. Once famous for the golden fibre, the total area brought under jute cultivation this year is only 7740 hectares out of targeted 16720 hectares in the 12 upazilas, officials at the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) said.

Findings of a survey on local govt

Women's representation in UPs not effective

**STAR NATIONAL DESK**

Women's representation in Union Parishads (UPs) is not effective. This was stated by 45.5 per cent of women respondents during an opinion poll on local government. The opinion poll conducted by Local Government Initiative (LGI), an NGO, covered 3,000 households in the six divisions. The findings were presented at a seminar in Sylhet on Thursday, held in collaboration with FIVDB. The respondents replied to 96 questions on local government and governance-related issues. Poor women sharply criticised the role of female UP members in representing women's interest. However, women of higher socio-economic status tended to be less critical. Civil society members, politi-

cians, journalists and representatives of local governments and NGOs also gave their opinions at the seminar. Ninety-seven per cent of the respondents thought that members of parliament (MPs) were involved in securing funds for development projects in UPs while 95.9 per cent wanted MPs to be more involved in such activities. Of the respondents, 70.7 per cent wanted a greater role of MPs in school management committees and 44.8 per cent wanted their greater role in UPs. On health sector, the opinions were mixed. Only 34.6 per cent wanted a greater role of MPs in resolving problems in health services. Around 58.8 per cent said UPs are the appropriate bodies for dealing with these problems.

Only 11.3 per cent said they had gone to UPs to resolve problems. According to them, functions of UPs are maintenance of roads, bridges and culverts; resolution of disputes; and ensuring law and order. They also said UPs do not have important roles in delivering social services like in health and education sectors or in social welfare. Around 87.7 per cent said UP chairmen are usually partisan. They are involved in party politics, according to 64.9 per cent of the respondents. Of the respondents, 99.9 per cent identified party affiliations of former UP chairmen. Most of the respondents support elected bodies at other levels. About 71.6 per cent wanted an elected local government at Upazila while 68.7 per cent wanted Gram Sarkar.



PHOTO: STAR

Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran, Mayor of Sylhet City Corporation speaking as the chief guest at a seminar on Local Government Policy Reform, organised by the Local Government Initiative in collaboration with FIVDB. Findings of the opinion poll were presented at the seminar, held at a hotel in Sylhet city on Thursday.

Demand for probe into Kalpana's disappearance

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati**

The Hill Students Council, student body of Parbattya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), held a protest meeting at the Shilpakola Academy auditorium here on Thursday marking the 7th year of alleged abduction of Kalpana Chakma, a leader of Hill Women's Federation. Kalpana was allegedly kidnapped on June 12, 1996 from Lailiyaghuna village under Baghaichhori upazila, a press release of the Council said. Speakers at the meeting demanded proper investigation to the incident and punishment of the persons responsible. Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council (CHTRC) member Usaton Talukder was the chief guest at the meeting, presided over by Asheen Chakma, Rangamati unit president of the Council. It was addressed by, among others, PCJSS leader Gunendu Bikash Chakma and Council leaders Shudhirgha Chakma, Bidhayok Chakma and Tulu Marma.

Young man killed in road mishap

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg**

A young medical representative was killed in a road accident in the city on Saturday. Tanvir Kabir, 30, senior medical information officer of Aventis, died on the spot when his motorcycle was knocked down by a truck in front of Chittagong port jetty. Police seized the truck but the driver fled away. Tanvir who hailed from Monohardi in Narshingdi district got married six months back. Tanvir's college AB Zahedul filed a case.

RU awards Diploma on IT certificates

**RU CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi**

The Rajshahi University (RU) Computer Science Department yesterday awarded certificates to 55 students on completion of Postgraduate Diploma in IT course. RU Vice-chancellor Prof Faisal Islam Faruki distributed the certificates at a function held at the Senate Bhaban. Director of the course Khaja Zakriya presided over the function, also attended by Pro VC KHM Shahadat Hossain Mondol and other senior teachers and officials.

Bodies of schoolgirl, man recovered

**STAR NATIONAL DESK**

Decomposed bodies of a schoolgirl and an unidentified man were recovered in Manikganj and Chuadanga on Friday. The body of Lipi Akter was recovered from a sugarcane field in Panch Para village under Singair upazila in Manikganj Friday evening, said a BSS report. She was a student of class eight at Bayra High School. She was the daughter of Joynal Abedin. Quoting the victim's family, police said Lipi had love affairs with a youth Arshed-- of same village. Her father lodged a GD with Singair police after she was missing since June 6. A regular case was filed against five persons including Arshed after recovery of the body. Police arrested three persons. Our Correspondent reported from Chuadanga that decomposed body of an unidentified man aged about 40 was recovered from near Tushar beel in Nabin Nagar village under Chuadanga Sadar upazila. Sarajganj camp police took the body to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital morgue where its autopsy was done. Legs and the left hand were severed from the body, police said.

Six freedom fighters not getting govt allowance

**UNB, Kishoreganj**

The government's social welfare department has stopped allowances to six freedom fighters in Nikli upazila without showing any reason, they alleged. They are getting the allowance for the last 11 months. They are Naresh Chandra Sutradhar, Aziruddin, Ratan Chandra Biswas, Hossain Ali, Noni Gopal Das and Fazlur Rahman.