

## SNAPS

## Prothom Alo readers forum formed

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

*Patuakhali*  
A Prothom Alo readers' forum has been formed here.

The 17-member body formed at Patuakhali Press Club is headed by Asock Das and Subrata Shil as its president and general secretary respectively.

Patuakhali correspondent of Prothom Alo Sankar Das presided over the meeting. Press Club President Golam Kibria, secretary Jakir Hossain were also present.

## 2 youths sustain acid attack

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Two young men were injured in an acid attack at Ahulia village in Shyamnagar-upazila recently.

The victims--Ayub Ali Ansari and Rafiqul Islam are now under treatment at Satkhira hospital. Acid was thrown on them when they were asleep at night.

Police said land dispute could be the reason for the attack.

A case has been filed but none could be arrested till yesterday.

## Inter-hall cultural meet at CU

CU CORRESPONDENT

An annual inter-hall cultural competition was held at Shaheed Abdur Rab hall in Chittagong University on Sunday.

A reception was also accorded to the newly appointed provost of the hall after the competition.

CU Vice Chancellor Prof AJM Nuruddin Chowdhury was present at the function as chief guest. Pro VC Professor M Shamsuddin and Dean of Science Faculty Prof Md Abu Saleh were present at the function as special guests.

Presided over by the new provost, the function was addressed by, among others, Proctor Prof Dr Muzibur Rahman, Dr Nuruddin Mahmud, Dr M Abdul Wahab, Prof MA Hakim, Dr Mohammed Shah and Md. Khairul Islam.

## College teacher murder

## Protest rally, procession in Gaibandha

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

*Gaibandha*

People brought out a procession and held a rally at Palashbari upazila headquarter recently demanding punishment of the killers of college teacher Shafiqul Islam.

Islam, a teacher at Basudebpur College, was stabbed to death and his motorcycle snatched by miscreants on October 22 evening while he was returning home in Digholkandi village.

A memorandum was also submitted to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) for its onward transmission to the Prime Minister for arrest and punishment of the killers.

The processionists paraded streets chanting various slogans.

Meanwhile police arrested two persons --Chand Mia and Rashedulinn connetion with the murder.

Police said they gathered information including names of the killers from confessional statements of the two arrested persons but declined to disclose their names for the sake of investigation.

## Opposition conspiracy harming nation

## BNP leaders tell Krishak Dal conference

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

*Nilphamari*

Being rejected by people, Awami League is now engaged in conspiracy to defame the government and sabotage its roadmap for development.

This is harming the nation, BNP leaders said at a biennial conference of Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Krishok Dal here.

They also launched a tirade against former president and Jatiya Party chief HM Ershad.

"Ershad migrated from India and can not claim to be a son of Rangpur," said Deputy Minister for Relief and Disaster Management Asadul Habib Dulu.

"During his (Ershad) ten-year rule he did nothing for the people of

greater Rangpur. Even he did not declare Carmical College a university college", Dulu said.

The convention held at the Shilpokala Academy auditorium was also addressed by among others, State Minister for Agriculture Mirza Fakhruul Islam Alamgir, ex-MP and Nilphamari district BNP president Shahrin Islam Tuhin, acting president of central Krishok Dal Mozibur Rahman.

Convenor of the district Krishok Dal Farhanul Haque presided.

Alamgir alleged that the previous governments did not take any pragmatic step for development of agriculture and wellbeing of farmers. It was late president Ziaur Rahman who introduced massive irrigation and launched a canal digging programme, which bene-

fited farmers, he said.

He urged the party men to remain alert against "conspiracies by those rejected by people".

He said the government has taken proper steps so that farmers can get fertiliser, diesel and other agri-inputs at fair prices.

They urged the people to rally round BNP, saying only this party can lead the country to peace and development.

They also bitterly criticised Awami League for calling 102 "popular" leaders of BNP "godfathers".

The conference formed a 71-member Rangpur Krishok Dal committee with Md Mohsin as its president and Farhanul Haq as general secretary.



PHOTO: STAR

People of all walks of life joined a human chain formed in front of the children's park at Rangamati town on Sunday protesting felling of trees and planned construction of a community centre in the park.

## Movement to protect park in Rangamati

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

*Rangamati*

An attempt by the municipal authority to construct a community centre inside the lone 2.5 acre children's park has evoked protests from the townspeople.

People from all walks of life and children joined a human chain and other programmes in the town on Sunday to protest felling of trees at the park for the planned construction.

The municipality authority started the work last week under a World Bank funded Municipality Services Project (MSP) to "create recreation facilities for urban children".

The planned community centre will cost Tk one crore, provided under the MSP.

"We want a modern community centre but a children's park can not be destroyed for this", said Sunil Kanti Dey, a senior journalist, who joined the human chain.

Global Village, an environmentalist organisation organised the human chain in front of the park.

Later, members of the organisation submitted a memorandum to the Minister of Forest and Environment through the Deputy Commissioner to protect the park for children.

Leaders of Global Village said hunger strike and other programmes will be organised soon to compel the authorities to abandon the plan.

When contacted, Rangamati Municipality Chairman Habibur Rahman said the park is being renovated to enhance recreation facilities for children. The planned community centre will not affect recreation facilities.

"Rather, we are creating walkways, erecting sitting places and umbrellas for visitors and removing unnecessary bushes," Habib said. He said the park had become a den of drug addicts and criminals.

## Teenage girl's suicide

## Victim's parents threatened to withdraw case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Magura*

Parents of a teenaged girl who allegedly committed suicide after being humiliated by some local youths are being threatened to withdraw the case.

Halima Khatun, 14, of Dewli village in Mohammadpur upazila committed suicide on June 13 year after allegedly being humiliated by four local youths earlier on the day.

Before taking poison she told her parents that she was humiliated by Khairul, Alamgir, Manjur and Al-Amin of the same village.

Halima's uncle Faruk Molla filed a case with Mohammadpur police.

Her tragic end whipped up protests in the area and drew many political leaders, police officials and NGO activists to the remote village.

Though the accused in the case are in jail, an influential circle led by

## Politicians unite to save a baby

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Magura*

Political leaders in Magura have set a laudable example by presenting themselves on a single platform to save a child.

Seven year-old Md Rafi Karim is suffering from thalassaemia. Immediate treatment is needed to save his life.

Doctors said the treatment abroad will cost about Tk 35 lakh. Rafi's father Reza Karim, a small trader at Bhaina in the town, cannot afford it.

He made an appeal to generous people to extend their helping hand.

Following the appeal, leaders of BNP, Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami staged a rally in the town on Sunday, seeking financial assistance from people for the treatment.

Donations can be sent to the following accounts: Md Rafi Karim, savings A/C No 75963-3, Agrani Bank main branch, Matijheel, Dhaka and Md Rafi Karim, savings A/C No 3712, Uttara Bank, Magura branch.

## Farmers' rally against certificate cases

A CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

Farmers held a rally and brought out a procession in the town on Saturday demanding withdrawal of certificate cases against agriculture loan defaulters.

Patukhali unit of Bangladesh Krisak Samity organised he programmes, followed by submission of memoranda to the Deputy Commissioner and the regional manager of Krishi Bank.

General Secretary of Krishak Samity Shahabuddin Ahmed and its leaders Motaleb Molla, Subhas Chanda and Rustam Ali addressed the rally, held in the front of the bank.

They also demanded withdrawal of arrest warrants and end to 'harassment' of loan defaulting farmers, time extension for loan repayment, interest-free agriculture loan and steps to ensure fair price of agri-products.

a former Union Parishad member is threatening her parents with eviction from the village if they do not withdraw the case, they told this correspondent recently.

They also alleged that they informed police about the threats but they are doing nothing to ensure their safety.

When contacted, sub-Inspector Shamsul Huda of Mohammadpur thana, who is the investigation officer (IO) of the case said, "As we have submitted charge sheet of the case, they should lodge specific complaint regarding the threats to get legal protection."

Police, after two month's invention, submitted on August 11 two charge sheets under Section 305 of Bangladesh Penal Code and Section 9 (4) (Kha) of the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, 2000.

## EU-sponsored farmers' confec told

## Food output has to increase by 3m tons in 10 years

UNB, *Sherpur*

A farmer's conference was held here on Sunday with a call for more support to marginal farmers to increase their productivity.

About 200 farmers' representatives from greater Mymensingh and Rajshahi regions attended the conference, organised under a European Commission-funded project for farmers' awareness building and training.

CARE Bangladesh has been implementing the 5.5 million Euro project since 2001 in six districts -- Sherpur, Jamalpur, Mymensingh, Kishoreganj, Rajshahi and Chapainawabganj -- to ensure food security for the hardcore poor of the region.

Agriculture Minister MK Anwar and Head of the Delegation of the EC in Bangladesh Esko

Kentschynskij jointly inaugurated the conference.

The minister said the government has identified agriculture as the 'main mover of our economy' as the sector employs 63 per cent of the workforce and contributes more than 40 per cent of the GDP.

Anwar said Bangladesh achieved tremendous progress in agriculture as "we tripled the production in 30 years" from 10 million tons in 1971.

But the country needs to increase food grains production by another 3 million tons in ten years to ensure food security to the growing population, he added.

The Agriculture Minister urged the development partners, including European Union (EU), to extend more support to these programmes to ensure sufficient balanced food for the people.

CARE Country Director in Bangladesh Steve Wallace also addressed the function.

He said the LIFE-NOPEST Phase-II Project is considered to be one of the best projects under CARE's portfolio, contributing to bringing in sustainable development of farmers communities.

Esko Kentschynskij said, "European Commission always puts emphasis on governance and human rights. And one of the aims of this project was to give voice to the voiceless."

Through this project, the farmers have the chance to organise themselves and stand up for their rights, especially land rights."

The farmers expressed the hope that if they got proper guidance and support they will be able to solve their problem in a sustainable way.

## Police constable to die for killing woman

A CORRESPONDENT, *Habiganj*

A police constable on Sunday was condemned to death by a court here for killing a woman.

Additional District and Sessions Judge of Habiganj Aminul Islam sentenced police constable Abdus Salam of Haraspur police camp at Teliyapara to death by hanging for killing a woman on May 25 in 1996. The judge gave the verdict after examining 22 witnesses and evidence on record.

However, the convict is absconding.

The convicted constable, while on duty, shot dead Nehar Begum, 28, of village North Surma under Madhabpur upazila whom he loved. The victim was a cook of the police camp.

## 5 get 17 years' RI for keeping illegal arms

BSS, *Feni*

Five persons have been sentenced to 17-year rigorous imprisonment here by a special tribunal for possessing illegal firearms.

Judge Mohammad Motahir Ali handed down the punishment on Sunday to Mahfuzul Haque alias Tiger, Gias Uddin Shimul, Shourav Hossain Kafil, Sarwar Jahan and Mohammad Manik.

Police arrested them with firearms from Kazirhat under Sonagazi upazila on December 5, 2000.

After their arrest, Officer-in-charge Subhash Chandra filed a case under the Arms Act.

## Workshop on violence against women

A CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

A day-long workshop on Campaign Against Violence on Women was held at the district office of the Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB) on Saturday.

Porf Nurul Islam, principal of Patuakhali Government Women Collage, was in the chair.

Additional District Magistrate Monjurul Alam was the chief guest at the workshop, attended by political leaders, teachers, NGO representatives and media men.

## Katyani Puja begins tomorrow in Magura

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Magura*

Preparation for observance of the traditional 'Katyani Puja' is going on in full swing here. The Puja begins tomorrow.

The puja is being observed befittingly as the greatest religious festival of the Hindu community in this region for the last 15 years.

Although Durga Puja is the greatest religious festival of the Bengali-speaking Hindu community in Bengal, Magura district is an exception here. With the passage of time 'Katyani Puja' has become the main religious festival here.

The puja is being observed every year just one month after the Durga puja. This year it will begin on October 30 and will end on November 3.

Shatishchandra a rich person of Parmandul village in Magura Sadar upazila first introduced it. He observed this puja about 50 years back. Since then this puja became popular among the Hindu community here.

Every year thousands of enthusiasts even from the neighbouring states of India assemble here to celebrate the puja.

Idols of Katyani puja are similar to that of Durga Puja.

## Workshop on improved rice farming held at BRRI

STAR NATIONAL DESK

A day-long workshop-cum-training on direct wet-seeding rice cultivation by drum seeder was held at the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) on Sunday.

The Adaptive Research Division of BRRI organised by the workshop.

BRRI Director General Dr N I Bhuiyan attended the inaugural session as chief guest while DAE Director (Field Service Wing) Tarique Hasan presided.

IFAD-IRRI/BRRI Project Coordinator Dr Zainul Abedin, BRRI Director (Admin) Dr M Mahiul Haque, IFAD Country Project

Leader and BRRI CSO Dr Musherhaf Husain spoke on the occasion.

The training-workshop started with a visit to demonstration plots at farmers' fields in Gazipur and dialogue involving farmers, researchers and DAE block supervisors.

Some 45 farmers, block supervisors and NGO representatives from different areas of the country attended the training-workshop.

The participants, specially the farmers showed keen interest to adopt the new and profitable technology in the coming Boro season.

## Hard brake caused Oct 17 train mishap near Akhaura

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *B'baria*

The October 17 container train accident near Akhaura in which two persons were killed was caused due to abrupt hard brake, according to a probe done by the Bangladesh Railway.

But reports by the two probe bodies did not say why hard brake was pressed.

The reports said 375 feet of the rail track near Kudua station and eight container-carrying wagons were completely damaged in the accident.

Though the damaged portion of the track has been replaced, trains still cross the area with caution and at a speed below 12 kilometres per hour, railway sources said yesterday.

It may take months to make the track fit to allow high speed trains. Rail track, slipper and other equipment requisitioned for complete renovation of the line have not yet reached the spot, they said.

Two bodies were formed to probe the accident, one comprising divisional engineers and the other comprising sub-assistant engineers, they said.

The total damage in terms of money is being estimated, Divisional Traffic Officer (DTO) Md Belal Uddin said.

Last year, another container goods train met with an accident at the same place.



Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) Director General Dr N I Bhuiyan speaking a day-long training course on Direct Wet-seeding Rice Cultivation by Drum Seeder, a new and profitable technology in Bangladesh, at BRRI in Gazipur on Sunday.