

SNAPS

Outlaw beaten to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna* An armed cadre of outlawed New Biplobi Communist Party (NBPC) was beaten to death by two of his associates at Khalshibunia village under Dumuria thana on Wednesday night.

He was identified as Animesh Mondol, 25.

According to police, the murder was a sequel to intra-party rivalry.

The outlaw was wanted in several murder cases in Dumuria thana.

2 armed robberies in a day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna* Two armed robberies occurred in two houses in Siddiquia Mahalla area under Sonadanga thana on Wednesday night.

According to FIR, a group of armed man wearing black masks stormed into the house of Lutfur Rahman. They made good their escape with gold ornaments worth over Tk 2 lakh, Tk 30,000 in cash, a motorbike and other valuables. The same gang of bandits committed another robbery at the house of ASI Faruque Hossain of Sonadanga thana and looted gold ornaments, cash and other valuables worth over Tk 2 lakh.

Police recovered a pipe gun of the dacoits from the house of the ASI.

Four extremists arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna* The Joint Forces arrested four extremists from Shailmai village under Batighate thana on Wednesday.

The arrested are Krishna Bairagi, Swapan Mondol, Swarajit Mondol and Ripon Mondol. Three homemade guns and a powerful grenade were recovered from their possession.

18 MCCI members elected unopposed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Moulvibazar* Eighteen members of the Moulvibazar Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) for 2004-05 were elected unopposed recently.

Out of them 12 members belong to the Ordinary Group and six members belong to the Associate Group.

Elected members of the Ordinary Group are: Anker Ahmed, Dr MAAhad, Abdul Wadud, Md Tara Miah, Syed Mofassil Ali, Mahmudul Haque Tarapder, Syed Muzammel Ali, Mohibur Rahman Tarpder, Bakshi Misbaur Rahman, Abdul Rakib, Rashid Uddin Ahmed and Syed Liakat Ali.

Members of the Associate Group are: Md Ansar Ahmed, Md Abu Taher, Syed Abdur Rouf Shamsul Alam, Sajal Kanti Ghose and Abu Sufian.

Jhalakathi journalists on the run

Police raid their houses, ruling party men set up "check posts" to nab them

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

A tense situation is prevailing in Jhalakati town as journalists are fleeing homes amid raid and attack on their houses by ruling party men.

Activists of ruling party fronts Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal, allegedly backed by police, are chasing journalists in the town and raiding their houses, newspaper officers and even madrassahs to nab them, four days after the attack on a journalists' rally at Jhalakathi Press Club in which six journalists were injured.

Protesting the assault and harassment, journalists in Barisal have kept hoisted black flag atop the Barisal Reporters Unity office and are wearing black badges.

One more case has been lodged against some Jhalakathi journalists while the accused in the case filed by the journalists are moving freely in the town, local journalists told this correspondent during a visit yesterday.

The ruling party activists have set up "check posts" in the town to nab journalists, they alleged.

They claimed that police and the administration are working on directives from State Minister for Law Shahjahan Omar, who shelters district Jubo Dal President Mir Zia Uddin Mizan, who reportedly heads the infamous Mizan Bahini.

Police raided the houses of journalists accused in the case filed by Mizan's followers on Wednesday night.

Family members of Azmir

Talukder, Akkas Hossain, Jahangir Hossain Manzu, Manik Roy and some other journalists complained that police harassed them during the raids.

On Thursday, Mizan Bahini members swooped on the office of local daily Shatokantho in search of its editor Zahangir Hossain Monju.

Monju and the daily's staff reporter Khalilur Rahman escaped through the back door. Khalilur Rahman is also the correspondent of Dhaka-based national daily Janata.

At about 1 PM on that day, they cordoned the Islamia Madrasha in front of the Jhalakati Sadar police station. They searched for its principal Mawlana Abdur Rashid who is correspondent of national daily Inqilab and president of Jhalakathi Press Club. Abdur Rashid is the

complainant of the case lodged by some local journalists.

The cordon was however withdrawn after the Deputy Commissioner and the Police Superintendent were informed.

Mizan Bahini members threw brickbats on the house of Manik Roy, correspondent of Dhaka-based national daily Janakantha and UNB newsagency.

They also chased Bhorer Kagoj correspondent Akkas Sikder and Prothom Alo correspondent Alamin as they tried to move in the town.

But police declined to make any comment in this regard.

The journalists will go for tough programmes if the harassment is not stopped, BRU sources said.



PHOTO: STAR This is Safakhali Government Primary School. There were seven students present in three classes without any teacher when the photo was taken during school hours recently.

Bank official held on charge of pension fund defalcation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Gopalganj*

Police have arrested an employee of Sonali Bank's main branch at Gopalganj from his residence and recovered Tk three lakh, allegedly misappropriated from government employees' pension fund.

Police said arrested Shawkat Hossain Mollah, head cashier-cum-sub-accountant, in a written confession said he tempered the signature of bank official Mrs Nahar and misappropriated the money in connivance with some

employees at Gopalganj district accounts office.

Bank sources said they have detected misappropriation of over Tk 25 lakh pension money from Sonali Bank on different dates.

Shawkat Hossain Mollah has been temporarily suspended but none has been arrested at the district accounts office.

Two teams have been constituted by the Sonali Bank and the district accounts office to probe the matter.

Sonali Bank has filed a criminal case with Gopalganj police.

Teachers lay on streets to realise demands

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Teachers and employees of private schools, colleges and madrassahs held rallies in Satkhira and Chittagong and lay on a streets for one and a half hours on Thursday to press their eight-point demand.

Our Satkhira Correspondent reported that police did not disturb them and transports bypassed as about 800 teachers and employees lay on the road in front of the Satkhira Press Club for one and a half hours from 11 am after holding a rally.

The programme was organised by the local unit of the Jatiya Sikkhak Karmachari Front (National Teacher-Employee Front).

Speakers at the rally said before the election, the Four-Party

Alliance had promised to fulfil their demands. But now in power, they have forgotten the promise.

The rally was addressed by, among others, Prof Gazi Abul Kashem, Subhas Chakraborty, Rafiuddin, Nasrin Khan Lipi, Moimul Hasan.

The speakers urged Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to intervene so that their demands are met.

They also vowed to launch a greater movement programme if the demands are not fulfilled.

The demands include ten per cent enhancement in salary, house rent, medical and dearness allowance. They also demanded revival of welfare trust and introduction of pension for teachers of private institutions.

Our CU correspondent

reported that hundreds of teachers and employees from different areas of the district joined a rally in front of Chittagong Press Club

and lay on the road there for about an hour to press their demands.

They staged the demonstration under the banner of Bangladesh College Teachers Association (BCTA).

The rally was addressed by, among others, BCTA Joint Secretary Abu Taher Chowdhury, its president Principal Mezbahul Alam and Prof Fausul Kabir.

They criticised the government for what they called flouting its election pledge. The government talks tall about education and teachers but is doing nothing for them, they said.

Five hurt as miscreants burn houses over land dispute

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Miscreants burnt five houses injuring five persons including women over a land dispute at Ashoknagar village under Chitalmari thana in Bagerhat district.

The attackers also looted properties worth Tk five lakh.

Police and eye witnesses said the burnt houses belonged to Gour Barhoi, Bhabani Mondol, Khokon Berhoi, Mrinal Gharami and Telai Roy.

Police said two rival groups

clashed several times in the last six years over possession of a char (shoal) land on the bank of Baleshwar river.

Awami League leader Ashok Kumar Boral alleged that the attackers included some activists of ruling BNP, its youth front Jubo Dal and student front Chatra Dal.

But Chitalmari BNP leader Ashim Kumar Samddar and Jubo Dal president Sheikh Mahabbat refuted the allegation that their party men were involved in it.



PHOTO: STAR The Moulvibazar district unit of Bangladesh Hindu-Bouddho-Khristan Oikkyo Parishad formed a human chain in the town on Wednesday protesting the recent Bashkhali carnage.

No clue to Tia murder case in 3 months

Victim's family threatened as accused 'at large'

A CORRESPONDENT, *Laalmonirhat*

Family members of housewife Aan Karobi Adhikari Tia, whose mysterious death evoked public protests in the town, are allegedly being threatened with death by the accused for withdrawal of the case.

The accused are moving freely in Laalmonirhat town and staying at their relatives' houses, the family alleged while talking to this correspondent recently.

But neither the killers have been arrested nor there has been any progress in investigation by CID in over three months though the townspeople observed hartal and held protest meetings demanding proper trial of the case. A hunger strike was also observed by some people protesting alleged police negligence in investigation.

Tia, died on September 5 from burn injuries she suffered at her husband's house in the town on August 29.

She was taken to the railway hospital, then to Rangpur Medical College Hospital and finally to the burn unit at Dhaka Medical College Hospital where she died on September 6.

Her husband's family claimed that she was injured when the stove burst as she was boiling milk. He parents alleged that she was burnt to

death by her drug addict husband and relatives.

On September 8, Tia's mother Suchitra Adhikari went to the Kotwali thana to file a case under the Woman and Children Repression Prevention Act but the police recorded an unnatural death (UD) case.

On September 10, the Deputy Commissioner Ismail Hossain and the Police Superintendent Maniruzzaman visited the victim's parents at their Christianpara residence in the town and ordered police to record a case.

Later, Suchitra Adhikari filled a case accusing the two persons including Tia's husband Shahed Rahman Pavel, 28, son of retired Prof Golam Rahman and his mother Rawshan Ara Rahman on September 11.

The case was transferred to CID (Criminal Investigation Department of Police) on September 21 as the Kotwali police failed to trace any clue to the incident.

The SP replaced investigation office (IO) sub-inspector Mostak with Kotwali thana OC Ramzan Ali.

As there was no progress in investigation, the case was transferred to CID.

CID ASP of Rangpur Range Amullo Chandro Das also visited the house of the Tia's parents on September 27.

Erratum

In our story headlined 'Gaibandha BNP leaders fall apart over new dist body' published on page 15 on December 10, BNP leader Kamrul Hasan Farul was wrongly quoted as "I was president of district committee twice, its vice president twice and president of district Krishak Dal once..." In a rejoinder later he said he was only vice-president of the district committee twice. We regret the inadvertent mistake.

Teenage Indian girl's ordeal ends after over 3 months

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Nilphamari*

The ordeal of an ill-fated teenage Indian girl ended on Monday following Home Ministry's nod after over three months of indecision.

The 14-year-old girl, Khaleda Akhtar Mukta had to pay a good price of love by languishing in Bangladesh jail for more than three months.

Daughter of a solvent farmer named Zahedul Islam of the bordering village of Hemkumari Baniapara in Koochbihar district, India, Mukta fell in love with a Bangladeshi cowboy Hafizul Islam, son of Abu Bakar of Giridangi village under Bhogdabari union of Domar upazila in Nilphamari.

Receiving a false promise from her fiancé, she became desperate and crossed the barbed wire border fencing to meet him on August 20. But to her utter frustration she found that the boy cheated her. She became disgusted and began to loiter aimlessly inside the Bangladesh territory. At one stage local people caught her and handed over her to BDR officials of Dangapara camp under Domar upazila. Ultimately, she was handed over to Domar Thana police who

lodged a case against her for illegally crossing the international border. Subsequently, a court in Nilphamari sentenced her to seven-day imprisonment for her offence which ended on August 30.

Despite expiry of her jail term the unlucky girl languished in prison for over three months. During the period her relatives in Bangladesh contacted the Home Ministry of Bangladesh government and the Indian High Commission in Bangladesh. They appealed to the authorities concerned time and again to release her and give her at their disposal, but in vain.

However, on December 3 the Home Ministry asked the Inspector General of Prison to take steps to send the girl to her country within 15 days of receipt of the instruction. The order was passed to the Nilphamari district administration who requested the BDR Commander in Rangpur to make arrangement to hold a flag meeting with the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) to discuss on safe passage of the girl to her home.

Accordingly, a fruitful BDR-BSF flag meeting was held and Mukta was pushed back to India by BDR through Chilahati check post.

Life halts for 10 minutes for a hospital

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Life came to halt for ten minutes at Patkelghata, an important business centre in Tala upazila, on Thursday in demand for a hospital.

As the clock clicked 12 noon, siren blared. All came out on roads from houses and work places.

It was an unprecedented scene all the streets were crowded with hundreds of people of all ages--men, women and children-- NGO workers, cultural activists and leaders of all political parties.

The unique programme was organised by Patkelghata Bachao Andolon Parishad (Committee to Save Patkelghata) to press setting up of a hospital there.

It was followed by a public meeting at Panch Rasta intersection, presided over by Sheikh Jahurul Islam, Convenor of the Parishad. It was addressed by, among others, Dr Barkat Ali, Prof Sheikh Abdul Malek, journalist Shahiduzzaman and others.

The speakers urged the government to take up a programme immediately to set up a hospital at Patkelghata or to face a bigger movement.