

SNAPS

Armed attack on AL leader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*
An Awami League (AL) leader and Chairman of Munshiganj Union Parishad (UP) was critically injured in an armed attack by unidentified miscreants on Sunday.
Injured Ashim Kumar Mridha, 45, of Shaymnagar upazilla was returning home on foot from the party office at that time.
He was admitted to Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) in a critical condition.
Shaymnagar Awami League has blamed the BNP-Jamaat alliance for the attack.

Charge-framing in Rakshit murder case December 30

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

The Speedy Trial Tribunal, Chittagong, has refixed December 30 for framing charges against the accused in Srikanta Rakshit Murder Case.
Justice M Hasan Imam refixed the date on Sunday following a petition by the prosecution lawyer.
The court could not frame charges against the accused on the scheduled date as Awami League (AL) lawmaker and one of the accused in the case ABM Fazle Karim Chowdhury submitted a High Court order for exempting him from the murder charge before the tribunal on Saturday.
Srikanta Rakshit was abducted from his house at Hazari Lane under Kotwali Police Station on the night of April 19 this year. His beheaded body was recovered from Hathazari upazila the following day.
Charges were pressed against 17 people including Fazle Karim Chowdhury on August 12.
Of them, 10 are now on bail, five in jail and two are still at large.

PIB training for Nilphamari journalists

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Nilphamari*

The Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) will decentralise its training programmes from the capital city of Dhaka to various districts and remote areas of the country.
PIB Director General (DG) Dr Rezwan Hossain Siddiqui announced this while inaugurating a three-day training workshop for the journalists of Nilphamari at local Zila Parishad auditorium on Monday.
The workshop has been aimed at imparting basic training to 22 working journalists of national and regional dailies.
Presided over by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Nilphamari, Abdul Bari Khan, the opening session was addressed, among others, by the Superintendent of Police (SP) Chowdhury Abdullah-Al-Mamun, Civil Surgeon Nazrul Islam and PIB Co-ordinator Aliur Rahman.

Housewives move out for gas

'It is our legitimate demand as we pay tax like in other cities', roundtable in Rajshahi told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Rajshahi*

Speakers at a roundtable organised by housewives here said Rajshahi region is not getting gas due to lack of sincerity of politicians.
Politicians of the region pledged many times before election that gas supply to the region would be their priority, but they did not keep the promise after going to power.
They also called upon people to unite under a platform and raise their voice for supply to the region including Rajshahi city.

Rajshahi Protection Movement Council (RPMC), a citizens' forum, organised the roundtable on "Gas Supply to Rajshahi: Women's Thought" at Nanking

community center with its conveynor Zamat Khan in the chair.
Eminent litterateur and columnist Maleka Begum attended the roundtable as chief guest. Engineer Tajul Islam read out the keynote paper. Prof Shahanara Hossain moderated the roundtable, attended by over one hundred housewives.
Maleka Begum said gas supply to Rajshahi is a legitimate demand of the city dwellers as they pay taxes like people of other cities having gas.
"Gas supply to this agriculturally viable region will play a vital role in setting up of agro-based industries and changing the socio-economic condition", she said. Other speakers also echoed

her voice.
She also criticised the government for its "eagerness to export gas rather than taking initiative to supply gas to every corner of the country first".
Prof Khanam Mamtaz of Rajshahi University said, gas would have been supplied much earlier had politicians been sincere. "The government can not ignore a demand by ruling party men". Opposition politicians are also to be blamed equally. They also flouted their promised, she said.
Lawyer Shamim Ara Billah said the present government has not taken any step in two years though gas supply to Rajshahi was its polls pledge. She called for building a movement for gas in the region.



A partial view of the housewives' roundtable on 'Gas Supply in Rajshahi: Women's Thoughts', organised by the Rajshahi Protection Action Committee in the city.

BSTI censures five Gaibandha mills

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Gaibandha*

The Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institute (BSTI) has asked five mills here not to market their products as those are running without BSTI licence.
The mills are Chowdhury Oil Mills, Nitai-Gowrango Oil Mills, Haji Oil Mills, Mitali Oil Mills and Star Soap Factory in the town, BSTI sources said.
A BSTI team from Rajshahi during its recent inspection found that the five mills were also selling their products without BSTI quality control label.
The oil mills are producing edible oil different brands without BSTI licence. This is illegal

and further action will be taken if the factory owners do not comply with the order, the sources said.
Two maunds of hemp recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *B'baria*

Two maunds of hemp were recovered from the rooftop of a passenger bus here on Sunday.
Paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and the Drug Control Department in a joint raid recovered the hemp.
It is to be mentioned that BDR jawans use to recover Phensidyl syrup from plying buses regularly.

Discussion on child marriage held at Patuakhali

A CORRESPONDENT, *patuakhali*

The local unit of Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB) held a day-long discussion meeting on bad effects of child marriage and responsibilities of newly married couples.
A large number of couples and people from all walks of life attended the programme, held recently at the FPAB office in the town.
Patuakhali FPAB President Habibul Hossain Alam presided over the programme. The speakers included FPAB Secretary M A Gafur Mia, its cashier Abdur Rashid Badal, National Councilor Prof Shirin Nahar and district project officer Md Salim.

A rare good day for orphans

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Nilphamari*

Orphans at Nilphamari Shishu Sadan (a government orphanage) had a good day.
They relished an improved diet and got soap to wash their clothes, which they rarely got earlier.
The orphanage was spruced up for the minister's visit on Friday.
But Social Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Muhammad Mujahid knew all these were to present a good atmosphere during his morning visit. The minister guessed mismanagement and corruption.
He talked to many of the orphans one by one. They told him the truth. Big ruhi fishes in the kitchen, fine rice and vegetables were arranged only to show the minister.
They told him in presence of the Deputy Commissioner, the Police Superintendent and accompanying journalists that the dirty dining room and the kitchen were cleaned only the day before.
But everything could not be cleaned. As he went round, the minister found the bathrooms not usable and blankets and pillows of inmates very dirty and emitting stench.
He found that the big TV set of the orphanage was adding to the beauty of the superintendent's quarter.
There is a government directive for giving proper education to inmates of government orphanages. But to the surprise of all the visitors, many of the inmates could not even read the names of the president and the prime minister of Bangladesh.
Superintendent Shafiqul Islam chowdhury showed the minister a list of 98 orphans. But even on that special day, only 60 were present.
There was no satisfactory reply about absence of the rest 38 and the government funds provided for their food, maintenance and education.
The visitors left disappointed.

AIDS awareness campaign in Patuakhali

A CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

A colourful rally was brought out and a discussion meeting held at Patuakhali to create awareness against AIDS.
The programme was organised recently by the Society Development Association (SDA), a local NGO.
The rally started from the lunch terminal and terminated in front of the local office of Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB) where the discussion meeting was held.
Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Md Bazul Rashid was the chief guest at the discussion, participated by Jahangir Hossain; Social Welfare Department Assistant Director Khodan Box; newsmen Golam Mustafa Talukder and Abdur Rashid Badal; and NGO workers Solaiman and Mohiuddin. SDA Executive Director Enayat Hossain was in the chair.



Let the spirit of service endure...(Left) Tiny tots posing as doctors and (right) presenting a dance at an Independence Day function at Moulvibazar.

'JCD leader attacked by BCL, not JCD faction'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Gaibandha*

Jatityatbdi Chhatra Dal (JCD) here claimed that the recent attack on its district unit organising secretary was made by Chhatra League activists and not by a JCD faction as reported in the press earlier.
The attackers should be punished, Gaibandha JCD President Ahmed Seketur Rob told a press conference on Friday.
JCD Organising Secretary Jahedunnabi Timu was injured in the recent attack which was sequel to a feud between Timu and some local BCL activist, Ahmed claimed.
Since the attack, BCL is trying to put the blame on JCD to malign the organisation, he said.
There is no non-student in Gaibandha JCD, he claimed.
Leaders and activists of district JCD attended the press conference.

Loans to disabled in Nilphamari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Nilphamari*

The Social Welfare Department here has disbursed Tk two lakh 82 thousand loans to 28 physically handicapped people to make them self-reliant.
The loans were given on Friday in presence of Social Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Muhammad Mujahid.
Speaking on the occasion, the minister said the social welfare department gives loans at 10 per cent simple interest, which is very low compared to the interest charged by NGOs. He urged the recipients to utilise the money for self-employment.
Presided over by Deputy Commissioner Abdl Bari Khan, the simple function was addressed by, among others, Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, Deputy Director of Social Welfare Department Halima Khatun and Nilphamari district BNP president Anisul Arefin Chowdhury.

VGf wheat scam

UP chairman's men snatch documents from probe body

BINDU SHAH, *Pabna*

Muscleman snatched documents at gunpoint from an investigation team when it was returning after probing a wheat scam by Muladuli Union Parishad (UP) Chairman and BNP leader Sirajul Islam.
The investigation officer has filled a GD with Ishwardi thana in connection with the incident.
It is alleged that the musclemen belonged to Islam, who was charge with another wheat scam

last year, also under probe now.
Source at Muladuli UNO office said the UP chairman on December 17 lifted 61 bags of wheat for distribution under government's VGf programme and sold 31 bags from the consignment in the local market on the same day.
The probe against him was initiated after 13 UP members and some local people jointly submitted a written complaint to the UNO on the same day.

In Sunday, UNO Sultan Mahmood formed a committee headed by Upazila Project Officer Azahar Ali to probe the scam.
During investigation the team detected the wheat scam, the sources said.
After the documents were snatched, Azahar Ali informed the UNO of the incident and filled a case with Ishwardi thana.
The sources said action will be taken against the UP chairman, now hiding.

BSMCH interns call off strike

Security assured, probe on JCD leader's alleged terrorism initiated

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

Intern doctors at Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital called off their strike Monday afternoon following the authorities' assurance of ensuring their security and action against alleged extortionists JCD leader Faruk Abdullah Soheli, ex-VP of SBMC Students Union.
A committee has also been formed to probe alleged assault on intern doctor Nasir on December 15 on the doctors' hostel campus by Soheli for refusing to Tk 10,000 toll, Dr. Mozammel, director of the hospital said.
The committee will submit its report within seven days. The body headed by a deputy director of SBMCH includes its assis-

tant director and an associate professor of SBMC.
Meanwhile, Soheli, arrested after filing of a case by Dr Nasir, returned to the campus on Sunday on bail.
The decision to withdraw the strike and to form the probe body were taken at a meeting SMBC Principal Dr. M A Bari, SBMCH director Dr. Mozammel Hossain and intern doctors' representatives led by their association president Dr. Rezaul Huq Mamun, held on Monday noon.
It is alleged that extortionists led by Soheli collect toll from doctors and hospital staff.
Sources in the intern doctors' association said they will go on strike again if security on the campus is not ensured.



PHOTO: RAJAT KANTI GOSWAMI