

SNAPS

'Name RU hall after Ila Mitra'
A RU CORRESPONDENT
The Rajshahi University (RU) unit of Bangladesh Chhatra Federation (BCF), Bangladesh Chhatra Union (BCU), Samajtrantik Chhatra Front (SCF) and other socio-cultural organisations have demanded naming of the fifth female hall after Ila Mitra.

They said that Ila Mitra was a leading figure in the Tebhaga movement, a peasants' movement, Santal movement and the independence movement during British rule.

Ila Mitra also played a pioneering role during the Liberation War of Bangladesh.

The hall's foundation was laid by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia on December 21, 2003.

Blankets for 150 orphans
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati
The Rangamati Hill District Council (RHDC) donated blankets to 150 orphan students of two residential schools in Bilaichari and Kutukchhari on Monday last.

RHDC member and its Education Affairs Convenor Ucha Hla Roaza handed over the blankets to the orphans at a simple function held on the school premises.

Bilaichari school's hostel superintendent cum headmaster Shakkya Priya Barua, acting Primary Education Officer of the upazila Abdul Kader, RHDC Public Relations Officer Arunendu Tripura attended the function, among others.

Man poisoned to death by wife
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sarkhira
A man was poisoned to death by his wife at Islamkati village in Tala upazila on Wednesday night.

The victim was identified as Kamrul Islam, 26, of the village.

Quoting local people police said Turgish Khatun, 18, wife of Kamrul Islam served poison-mixed meal to her husband and grand mother-in-law. Following consumption of the food both of them fell sick. Kamrul died on the spot while local people shifted immediately the old woman, Parjan Bibi, 65, to Tala Health Complex where she has been fighting for life, hospital sources said.

New body floated to save Patkelghata
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira
A 71-member committee of Patkelghata Bachao Andolon Parishad led by Sheikh Jahurul Islam and Shahiduzzaman Tutul as its President and General Secretary was formed at a meeting held at Patkelghata bazaar on Thursday.

Sheikh Jahurul Haq, convenor of the organisation was in the chair while it was addressed, among others, by ABM Altaf Hossain, SK Nurul Islam, Advocate Mostofa Lutfulah and Sheikh Abdul Hai.

People from all walks of life floated the organisation to press home their 8-point demands to save Patkelghata, an important business centre.

Pneumonia claims 2 babies in Rajshahi
A RU CORRESPONDENT
Pneumonia claimed two children in Rajshahi city on Tuesday and Wednesday.

The dead include a six-month-old baby named Himalee of Gurudaspur village and a one-year-old baby named Shimul of Katakhalia area.

At least 30 people, most of them children, are being taken to the Rajshahi Medical Collage Hospital (RMCH) daily for treatment of pneumonia and other cold-related diseases, according to a child specialist at the RMCH.

Galachipa AL's council meeting held
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The council meeting of Galachipa upazila unit of the Bangladesh Awami League (AL) was held at the upazila auditorium on Monday.

The upazila unit president of the party, Harun-or-Rashid presided over the meeting. Former State Minister for Textile AKM Jhangir Hossain was the chief guest and while the district AL president Advocate Shahjahan Mia was the special guest. The district AL secretary, Khan Moshrafa Hossain, its organising secretary Kaji Alomgir, party leaders Kashinath Datta, Golam Mostafa Tito, Ohab Khalita, Samsuzzaman Lintan and Kawsar Talukder addressed the meeting, among others.

Harun-or-Rashid was elected president while Golam Mostafa Tito was elected secretary of the 67-member Galachipa unit of the party.

Garo movement will continue till demands met, their leader says

'Scrap Eco Park project, give long term lease of forest lands to Garos'

JAHANGIR ALAM, Modhupur

The indigenous Garo people in Modhupur forest will continue their movement till the government scraps the Eco Park project there and fulfils their other demands.

"The simple Garo people have lost confidence on the authorities", Ajoy Mree, President of Modhupur Adibasi Unnayan Parishad, told The Daily Star during a recent visit to the area.

"They (authorities) had stopped the wall construction work in July last year and the people believed in their words. But they attempted to build it again this year", he said.

"This government wants to evicted the indigenous people from their ancestral homes", he said.

Albart Mankin, another Garo loader, said, "We have learnt from the Modhupur tragedy that the authorities want to evicted the indigenous people.

"This movement is for our existence, we will not back out till our five-point demand is met".

Besides scrapping of the project, their demands include punishment of the killers of Garo youth Piren Slan, withdrawal of cases against Garo youths, transfer of the Deputy Commissioner and the Police Superintendent of Tangail and long-term lease of forest lands to Garo tribesmen.

Piren was shot dead on Saturday last when police and forest guards fired on tribesmen protesting construction of a boundary wall of the proposed Eco Park.

The government has planned development of an Eco Park under a Tk nine crore National Park Development Project on about 3000 acres of land in the forest, sparking protests from indigenous people living in the area for ages. They fear the project will displace them.

The killing sparked protests. The Garo tribesmen declared a seven day mourning programme, flew black flags atop houses, shops and other installations and barricaded the Dhaka-Tangail.

The wall construction work was stopped.

Tension is running high in Garo villages as they are holding small rallies and processions, ignoring alleged intimidation by ruling party youths.

Some people this correspondent talked to said a sense of insecurity is prevailing among the indigenous people in the Modhupur forest after ruling BNP activists threatened them against their movement against the Eco Park.

They claimed that the ruling party men, armed with firearms and sharp weapons, entered the Jalchatra-Pachish Mile forest village on Wednesday night and threatened the people to not to raise their voice against the project. Many villagers left homes.

The threat came after a autotempo carrying a group of BNP activists ran into a group of Garo people who were returning home after a procession on the same day in protest against the killing of Piren Slan, the locals claimed.

3 killed, 33 hurt in clashes in Manikganj, Lalmonirhat, B'baria

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Three people were killed and at least 33 including 10 women and two children injured in clashes in Manikganj and Lalmonirhat and Brahmanbaris villages on Wednesday.

Our Manikganj Correspondent reported that Akber Ali, 30 and Selim, 35, were killed and three others were injured at Boldhora village in Singair upazila when they were attacked by rivals.

Police said, Ismail, Joynal, Mastofa and some other supporters of Boldhora Union Parishad Chairman Abdul Khalek were attacked by supporters of former UP chairman Abdul Mazed while they were returning home from Boldhora Bazar Wednesday evening.

As they cried for help, Akbar Ali and Selim came out of their house nearby and tried to protect them. The attackers stabbed Akber Ali and Selim. Akbar died on the spot.

When the news spread in the village, supporters of Khalek attacked and torched the house of Mazed at about 10.30 on the same night injuring three persons.

Critically injured Selim was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where he died on Thursday.

Being informed, police rushed to the spot and arrested seven persons.

Akber's brother Awlad Hossain has filed a murder case against Abdul Mazed and 23 others.

Manikganj Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Abdul Bari and Police Superintendent Masharaf Hossain Bhuyan immediately visited the spot.

Police have been deployed at the village as tension mounted.

Our Lalmonirhat Correspondent reported that at least 20 people including 10 women and two children were injured in a clash between two groups over occupation of a newly

emerged shoal in Brahmaputra river at Char Nabin Nagor under Rowmari upazila in Kurigram on Wednesday.

The clash took place between supporters two influential persons Niru and Gamchha Sarder over occupation of a 25-acre char (shoal).

Five of the injured were admitted to Rowmari health complex.

Local people said there may be clash again as both the influentials are trying to occupy the char land.

Police said they have taken steps to avert further clash.

Our Brahmanbari Correspondent reported that one Abul Khair, 50 was killed and 10 others were injured in a clash over damage of a cropland by Khair's cow on Wednesday.

The clash ensued after an altercation. Khair was taken to Brahmanbaris Sadar Hospital where he died at night. Three of the injured were also treated there, police said.



Passengers have to take this risk in all seasons of the year to board a launch at Shatnol in Chandpur, an important terminal sued by thousands. but who cares? The photo was taken last week.

Outlaws kill betel leaf trader in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A businessman was killed at Monohordi village in Sadar upazila on Tuesday for not paying toll, family sources said.

According to police, betel leaf trader Abul Kashem, 32, son of Kateb Ali of Dhulia in Harinakundu upazila in Jhenidah, was going to Bittipara bazaar to buy betel leaf at about 11 am when the killers way-laid him.

Police quoting locals said a gang of about five 'outlaws' caught him at Monohordi. They took him to a nearby shoal of the Kalinadi, a dead river and slaughtered him.

The victim's family sources said the outlawed party cadres demanded Tk one lakh as ransom from him, but he declined to pay themoney.

Police recovered the body on Wednesday afternoon and sent it to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy.

Akul Hossain, victim's elder brother filed a case with Islamic University Police station accusing none.

Inter-district bus strike in Barisal from tomorrow

Transport workers demand apology by Mongu MP

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Inter-district bus service from Barisal will be stopped again from tomorrow if local BNP lawmaker Mosarraf Hossain Mongu do not apologise for the alleged assault on transport workers on Sunday, leaders of bus owners and workers unions told this correspondent yesterday.

Transport owners and workers on Wednesday stopped inter-district bus service in 21 routes connecting Barisal protesting the alleged assault by some BNP activists in which two bus workers were injured at Muladi.

They claimed that the assault was done in presence of the law-maker.

However, they plied buses in routes within Barisal on Wednesday.

As they went on strike on Wednesday, the district administration, Mayor Majibur Rahman Sarwar and leaders of the bus owners and workers associations held a joint meeting at night.

At that meeting, the association leaders condemned the assault and demanded punishment of the

attackers and apology from Mongu.

The administration and the Mayor assured them to look into the matter.

On Thursday in the morning, a press release issued by the association said the strike was postponed for 72 hours and would be reinforced from Sunday if their demands were not fulfilled by that time.

Talking to newsmen earlier, Mongu denied that the assault took place in his presence. He had also said that some people assaulted the lessee of Muladi ferry terminal for "collecting toll at higher rates".

Transport workers claimed that they were assaulted for not plying vehicles during the countrywide hartal called by opposition Awami League on Saturday last.

He also denied any occurrence in presence of him. On other hand, road transport workers and owners sources claimed that a group of BNP cadres and associates of MP Mongu led by Humaun, nephew of the MP, the BNP cadres asked explanations from the transport workers for not running their vehicles during the Hartal called by opposition party on Saturday.

2 bandits nabbed, firearms recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Police arrested two armed robbers and recovered fire arms from their possession on Thursday.

Police said that police arrested Shahidur Rahman, 30, son of Matiar rahman of Raiur village in Sadar upazila. After his confessional statement, police arrested Abul Hossain, 45, of Manikganj village in Kalaroa upazila. Later police recovered a pipe gun, a gun and a shutter gun from their possession.

A case was filed with Kalaroa thana.

CU Journalism Deptt renamed

CU CORRESPONDENT

The Chittagong University (CU) authorities have renamed the Department of Journalism as the Department of Communication and Journalism from Wednesday.

The decision became effective following an order circulated from the Deputy Registrar (Admin) of the university.

Earlier, teachers and students of the department appealed the higher authorities to rename their department.

After the renaming, students met with their departmental chairman Ali Asgar Chowdhury and exchanged greetings with him.

Square's donation to mental hospital
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

The Square Pharmaceuticals Limited, a leading pharmaceutical company of the country, donated medicines to Pabna Mental Hospital where an acute drug crisis was prevailing since stealing of costly drugs worth Tk 30 lakh from its store on December 25.

Square's General Manager (GM) Golam Rabbani handed over the medicines to the acting Director of the hospital, Dr AKM Abdus Samad Mia on Wednesday noon.

The director appealed to Square company for donation of Perkenil and Peridol tablets on January 4. The company responded to the call and donated the medicines promptly.

2 UP chairmen face no-confidence in Bhola

A CORRESPONDENT, Bhola

Members of two union parishads (UPs) in Bhola Sadar and Charfassion upazilas have brought no-confidence resolutions against their chairmen for alleged corruption, embezzlement of money, wheat and misbehaviour with members.

According to an allegation submitted to the Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer, the Chairman of Ilisha union named Serajuddin embezzled Tk 3 lakh and 26 metric tons of wheat sanctioned for development work. He also misbehaved with the UP members, they alleged. Eight out of 12 members lodged their complaints against the chairman.

Meanwhile, 10 members of Rasulpur UP in Charfassion upazila brought another allegation against the chairman of their union Abdur Rob and demanded his immediate removal.

Bhola Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kabir Mohammad Asraf Alam has instructed the concerned Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) to probe into the allegations.



Beautiful Bangladesh in the Bangla month of Poush with unending yellow mustard fields. These frolicking children in the beautiful field were snapped at Sonargaon in Narayanganj yesterday.

Patuakhali WDB office locked since Tuesday

Officials absent after 'tender scam'

A CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali,

The Water Development Board (WDB) office in Patuakhali is locked since Tuesday.

This correspondent during a visit to the office at about 11 am on Thursday found all the rooms locked.

The nameplate of the Executive Engineer was also not seen at the entrance of his office.

A good number of contractors told this correspondent that the officials "fled away" fearing "harassment" for their alleged irregularities in giving Tk 14 crore work to

some "selected contractors". They alleged underhand deals in the process.

The work includes construction and reconstruction of sluice gates and embankments.

They alleged that the officials including the Executive Engineer, Sectional Officer, Sub-Divisional Engineer (SDE) did not come to office since January 5 when the work was distributed among some of the contractors.

This correspondent also tried to contact the Executive Engineer on his mobile phone (No 0171-883937). "It is not possible to connect now", was the reply always.

BNP rivals' clash: Villagers flee homes as 2 killed in Magura village

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Many villagers have fled homes at Sharshuna in Shalikha upazila fearing further clashes and police harassment after Tuesday's murder of two BNP activists by party rivals and follow-up clashes and plundering of houses.

The clashes left many injured. Police have been deployed there to avoid further clashes.

Magura Police Superintendent Afzal Hossain visited the spot on Wednesday and assured the villagers of proper investigation and action against the culprits.

During a visit to the village on Thursday, many elders told this correspondent that the people are scared and youths are staying away from homes. The village is about 20 kms off the district town.

The villagers said that on Tuesday night, local BNP leader Ansaruddin Shikader and his son Shakil Shikder were critically injured when attacked by armed supporters of another BNP leader Sayeed Shikder while they were sitting at a tea stall at a local bazaar.

They were rushed to Magura Sadar where Ansaruddin died at around 2 am Wednesday. His son Shakil died while being shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The murders angered their supporters, who went on a rampage in the village destroying at least seven houses of their rivals and looted valuables, foodgrains and cattle.

Ansaruddin and Sayeed are rivals for long, the villagers said.

Despite repeated attempts, the officer-in-charge of Shalikha thana could not be contacted over phone.

Tk 12.50 lakh gold seized in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) jawans recovered gold worth Tk 12,50,000 from three smugglers of two bordering villages in Sadar and Kalaroa upazilas in two days.

BDR recovered over 100 tolas of gold worth Tk 9 lakh while being smuggled out to India from the bordering village of Madra in Kalaroa upazila early Friday.

Two smugglers were also arrested from whom police recovered the gold. They were Abul Hossain and Rahman of Mirpur in Dhaka and handed over to police. The seized gold was deposited to the Customs Department.

A case was filed with Kalaroa thana.

In the earlier incident on Thursday, 450 grams of gold worth Tk 3,50,000 were recovered from a smuggler at Banshdah bazaar in Sadar upazila. The smuggler was smuggling out the gold to India.

BDR arrested the smuggler, Shahadat Hossain, 35, son of Ishaque Ali of Banshdah from the spot and recovered the gold from his possession. He was handed over to police later on. The seized gold was deposited to the Customs Department.

A case was filed with Satkhira thana.



A destitute receiving a sweater from Nilphamari SP Chowdhury Abdullah-al-Mamun at the police line ground on Wednesday. All members of the district police force have donated their one day's salary for the cold affected people.

'Shun politics of hatred'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Islami Oikhya Jote leader Fazlul Haque Amini MP has said politicians should shun "politics of hatred and jealousy" if they really want to do good to the people.

But the top leaders of the two major parties are breeding this hatred and jealousy and can not tolerate each other, he said while exchanging opinion with local journalist at Brahmanbaria Press Club on Thursday.

There will be no development till politicians join hands to solve national issues, he said.

The meeting was presided over by president of the club Md Mansur Kamal.

He said the Islam-loving Muslims of the country are not extremists but some vested quarters are trying to brand them as extremists.

One to suffer 20 years RI for possessing illegal arms

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A court here sentenced one person to 20 years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) for possessing illegal arms.

The victim was identified as Shafiqul Islam Shipu, 24, son of Moslemuddin of Sibamgari village under Lalpur thana in Natore district.

The court also fined the convict Tk 1,000, in default, to suffer six months more RI.

Pabna Sadar thana police recovered an Italian made pistol and five rounds of bullets from Shipu while conducting a raid in a night coach on January 30, 2001.

The Fourth Special Tribunal Judge of Pabna, Mohammed Shafiqur Rahman pronounced the verdict.

Scientific confce at BAU

A two-day annual scientific conference of the Bangladesh Society for Veterinary Education and Research (BSVER) was held at Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) Shilpachraya Zainul Abedin Auditorium, Mymensingh on Wednesday, says a press release.

Chaired by Professor Dr Shaikh Hefazuddin, the inaugural function was attended by Professor Dr Md Daulat Hossain, acting Vice Chancellor and Convener, Council of Deans, as chief guest.

The function was addressed, among others, by Professor Dr Md Abul Qasem, Chairman, organising committee, Professor Dr Md Rafiqul Islam, Secretary, BSVER and Professor Dr Md Jahurul Karim, Secretary, organising committee.

Veterinarian Scientist of international repute of Tohoku University, Japan Professor Dr Yutaka Nakai delivered the BSVER annual lecture.

Nilphamari police beside cold-hit people

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

All the members of Nilphamari police, irrespective of their rank and file, have set a unique example by donating their one day's salary for the destitutes. With the money they bought warm clothes for them.

The Superintendent of Police (SP), Nilphamari, Chowdhury Abdullah-al-Mamun distributed sweaters among over 100 people at the district police line ground on Wednesday.

During the distribution ceremony Additional SP Rezaul Karim, ASP circle Jatun Poddar, officers and newsmen of different national dailies were present.

Police will distribute warm clothes in turn in all the six thanas of the district.