

SNAPS

Banana cost his ear

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

Magura

A youth lost his ear during a scuffle over plucking of banana on Thursday.

Witnesses and locals said, Sanjoy Kumar, 22, and his cousin Utpal, 20, of Durannagar village in Sreepur upazila locked in a scuffle over plucking of banana.

At one stage of scuffle Utpal bit Sanjoy's right ear and severed it.

Sanjoy was admitted to Dariapur hospital.

Motorcycle snatched from Jhenidah

Square staff

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

Kushia

Unidentified armed miscreants snatched a motorcycle from an employees of Square Pharmaceuticals in Jhenidah on Thursday.

They also snatched Tk 4,000 from Golam Sarwar, area manager of the company, at Bishkhal.

Extortion from cattle truck: 2 cops suspended

BSS, Faridpur

Two policemen were suspended yesterday for negligence in duty in checking extortion from cattle trucks at RajbariFaridpur crossing on the Dhaka-Khulna highway in the Sadar upazila Tuesday night.

They are ASI Khalilur Rahman and Havidur Abdul Hossain.

Faridpur Police Superintendent SM Hafizur Rahman paid a surprise visit to the area and saw toll collectors were collecting toll from a truck at the spot, where the two cops were on duty, police said.

The SP also caught the toll collector, Ismail Hossain. The policemen were standing were in the area when Islam was collecting toll.

Ismail was arrested and a case under Speedy Trial Act filed against him.

Pro-BNP contractors ransack LGED office

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

Nilphamari

A group of contractors belonging to ruling BNP allegedly ransacked the office of Nilphamari LGED Executive Engineer for payment of bills for a work.

LGED (local government engineering department) office sources said BNP leader Nasiruddin got a Tk 80 lakh work for construction of Gomnati-Khorar Danga road known as 'Zia road' connecting Damar and Dimla upazilas. The work is under RDP-Project 21 (Rural Development Project 21).

Nasir shared the project work with five other contractors, most of whom are leaders of district and and Sadar upazila BNP.

On Wednesday, Nasiruddin along with other contractors entered the executive engineer's

office and demanded that he put his signature on the 'final bill' for the work. But the Executive Engineer refused to sign it without inspecting the work. This infuriated the contractors.

At one stage they ransacked the office, shouted at the Executive Engineer and humiliated him, creating a panicky situation, the sources alleged.

Hearing hue and cry inside, passers-by gathered outside the office, they said.

After the incident, Executive Engineer Sahadat Hossain told newsmen that the contractors pressed him for his signature on the final bill.

"As per rule I can not sign the final bill without inspecting the sight", Sahadat said.

He alleged that Nasir also pressed him for fitness certificate of

construction materials used.

Nasir told newsmen that the LGED Executive Engineer illegally held up his bills.

He claimed that the LGED thana engineer and other officials concerned inspected the sight.

Even the Deputy Project Director and the Field Engineer from Rangpur inspected the sight.

He claimed that the Executive Engineer held up his bill as he refused to pay him seven per cent of the bill as commission.

He further alleged that the Executive Engineer went to Dhaka one week ago and returned just before the Eid. "We can not pay employees and workers before the Eid for non-payment of bills. The Executive Engineer is responsible for the situation", Nasiruddin alleged.



Girls decorating their hands with henna ahead of Eid festivities. The photo was taken from Rasna Commercial Academy in Rajshahi on Thursday.

PHOTO: STAR

Ashuganj launch dacoity Body of missing cop, one rifle recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

The body of Constable Sukumar, who was thrown into the Meghna during a launch dacoity near Lalpur marker in Ashuganj on Tuesday night was recovered Thursday evening.

One of four rifles snatched from four policemen who were on duty at the launch was also recovered.

Police said yesterday they arrested three persons in connection with the dacoity.

At least 40 passengers were injured when 20 to 25 armed dacoits snatched rifles from four policemen, threw them into the river and robbed the passengers. The dacoits had boarded the Bhairab-bound launch --MLC Queen-- from Nabinagar in the guise of passengers.

The three other policemen--Habibul Abdul Matin, and constables Jane Abam and Moni Chakna swam shore but Sukumar drowned as he was stabbed. The three are now being treated at Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital.

Patrol boat tragedy Body of another missing ASI found

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Body of a missing assistant sub-inspector (ASI) of Jhalakati Sadar thana has been recovered, at last.

Body of missing ASI Mahtab Hossain, 35, was recovered from Charvatakanda area of Dhansiri-Gabkhan-Bishkhal estuary on Tuesday.

Jhalakati police sources said local people recovered the decomposed floating body.

After its recovery police sent it to his village home at Puthia in Rajshahi district after proper identification.

A patrol boat of Jhalakati Police Station capsized with 10 cops at a place four miles away from Jhalakati town after being hit at night by a launch, MV Belayet on January 21.

The cops were on an operation to Ponabalia to nab criminals. Both the vessels were running without marking and searchlights. All but two cops ASI Nizamuddin and ASI Mahtab managed to save their lives by swimming.

The body of ASI Nizamuddin was recovered from a nearby shoal of the spot of accident two days later.

Eight firearms with about three hundred rounds of ammunition drowned.

Woman killed, 15 hurt as launch hits shops at Boga ghat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A woman was killed and about 15 people were injured when a launch rammed into a cluster of shops on the bank close to the river water at Boga terminal on Tuesday night.

The woman-- Sofia, 35-- was waiting for a launch.

Police said the Dhaka-bound double-decker MV Sagar-6 from Patuakhali hit the shops nearby instead of touching the terminal as its crew lost control.

Seven shops were damaged.

Police seized the launch and arrested two of its staff --Meher Ali and Shahidul Alam.

12 get life for UP member murder

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Additional District and Sessions Judge Ainul Islam has given life term to 12 people for killing a Union Parishad member at Tekala village in Daulatpur upazila in 1995.

The convicts are four brothers Mahabul, 32, Moser Uddin, 46, Nabi 48 and Daud, 44; Ismail Hossain, 46, Naeb Ali 33, Taslim Ali, 38, Atu, 34, Saban, 42, Siraj Uddin, 34, Ruhul Alam, 30 and Belal, 34.

They stormed into the house of Sarwar Hossain, member of Adabaria Union Parishad, on August 30 in the evening and sprayed bullets indiscriminately on the inmates, injuring Sarwar, 45, his brother Ruhul Amin, 48, and their cousin Helen, 12.

They were taken to Kushtia General Hospital. Critically injured Sawar died on the way while being taken to Dhaka.

The victim's brother Zinnat Hossain filed a case with Daulatpur police station accusing 18 people. Eighteen witnesses were examined in the case.

Protests on for scrap of Sylhet JCD bodies

Beanibazar activists urge central leaders to intervene

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Amid the on-going protests against the reconstituted JCD committees in the district, its leaders and activists from Beanibazar at a press conference here on Thursday sought intervention by the central leaders for scrapping the bodies.

The committees formed earlier this month and reconstituted later following protests are still dominated by "criminals and non-students", they alleged. Only posts have been changed in the name of reconstitution.

This is not acceptable, they said. Their dissolution would be in the interest of JCD, the leaders and activists from Beanibazar College, upazila and municipal units of the ruling party's student wing said.

Giving details, they said the new president of Beanibazar upazila JCD is not a student. He is a contrac-

tor and a "known criminal".

The person who has been made general secretary could not cross high school and he was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment.

The organising secretary is a drug addict.

They said the new secretary of Beanibazar municipal unit of JCD is a supporter of Bangladesh Chhatra League (Opposition Awami League's student front), who had no link with JCD earlier.

The new president and the secretary of Beanibazar Government College JCD unit are also not students. They are businessmen, it was told at the press conference.

They said they would go for an action programme if these elements are not replaced with devoted and sincere activities.

A hundi trader was behind inclusion of such unwanted per-

sons in the JCD, they claimed.

Former JCD general secretary at Beanibazar Government College read out a written statement at the press conference.

Meanwhile, the new presidents and general secretaries of Sylhet district and city units protested the comments against the new committees, made in the last few days.

The protesters do not belong JCD. Some of them actually belong to Islami Chhatra Shibir, they said and called upon the party activists to "resist them".

Earlier, JCD activists in the city brought out black flag processions and held rallies demanding immediate scrapping of the reconstituted party committees in the city and in the district.

They also held a press conference at Sylhet Press Club on Wednesday where they detailed the composition of the bodies.

30 to 60 pc fare hike in Barisal

Bus-launch owners to earn Tk 1 cr more profit during Eid

AKTER FARUK, Barisal

Road transport and water vessel owners in the southern zone are out to earn Tk one crore additional profit from passengers within a fortnight during the ongoing Eid season.

They are charging 30 to 60 per cent higher fare.

At least 224 launches sail on 28 major routes in Barisal division.

Usually the one-way launch fare on Barisal-Dhaka-Barisal route was Tk 50-80 on deck, while it was Tk 300 for non-AC single cabin and Tk 500 for double cabin. An amount of Tk 100 extra fare was charged for AC cabins. But during the Eid season beginning one week ahead of the festival ending and one week afterwards, launch owners raised the deck's fare to Tk 100, while for non AC single and double cabin the fare was raised from Tk 400 to 800.

For AC single and double cabins launch owners increased fare from Tk 600 to 900. Cabin tickets were already sold out while passengers were given only a paper marked PAID without mentioning anything.

According to launch owners association, at least 112 launches sail regularly on Barisal-Dhaka-Barisal route with 30 cabins per launch.

The lunch owners would fetch at least additional Tk one core and 12 lakh by increasing the fare.

"Still the increased fare is less than the government fixed fare chart", launch owners told this correspondent.

However, they failed to reply to a question as to why the fare was lower at other times whereas it increased manifold during the Eid season.

On the other hand about 100

coaches ply on different routes of the region linking Dhaka. On average there are 40 seats per coach for 4,000 travelling passengers.

Bus owners increased fare of their vehicles by at least Tk 30 per seat. This would remain in force for a fortnight during the Eid season.

Bus owners would earn an additional amount of Tk 22 lakh and 40 thousand.

However, in this assessment extra trips of launch and buses are not counted.

Still Suravi of Crescent-Star Navigation Company is an exception as the company did not increase their fare during the Eid season.

Black marketing of tickets by the agents of launch owners and staffs is also reportedly going on.

Cattle price up by 35 to 50 pc in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Price of sacrificial cattle increased by 35 to 50 per cent this year in comparison with that of previous year in Rajshahi.

Cattle are on sale between Tk 7,500 to 50,000 while prices varied from Tk 5,000 to 35,000 last year.

Strike by Indian importers and exporters has caused increase in price of sacrificial animals.

Besides, cattle traders have to pay illegal toll to the members of the law enforcing agencies at many points which is much higher than the previous year.

Despite this reality, Indian cattle are pouring in large number at Mohishalbari, Damkura, Katakhal, Naohata, Kakonhat and Rajabari cattle markets through various other ways.

Price of goat also marked a sharp rise which varies between Tk

2,500 to 4,500. Last year the minimum price of a goat was Tk 1,700 at Mohishalbari, said a trader.

Moreover, spices are on sale at different markets at double the wholesale price in Rajshahi city markets. Now retailers sell spices as per their sweet will.

Indian importers and exporters started an indefinite strike on January 23 protesting imposition of new import rules by the concerned Customs department.

Eyes of 2 dacoits gouged out in Barguna Villagers on night vigil due to police inaction

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Police said, Faruk's gang had attacked the Amtali house of one Anwar Hossain Chowkidar, a member of Gourichanna Union Parishad in the early hours of Monday.

As the dacoits tied up Anwar and his son Forkan, neighbors rushed in hearing screams and cordoned the house. They caught Nazrul but others escaped.

Barguna Police Superintendent Rezaul Karim visited the spot after Monday's incident.

Forkan and another villager, bullet-hit in the incident, are now being treated at Barguna Hospital.

Two cases have been lodged in this connection with the two incidents.

Police said during interrogation Nazrul named other members of the gang. They include Babul, Harun and Jalil of Patharghata.

They were engaged in extortion, dacoity and other crimes in the area.



Grants Management Specialist of Local Government Initiative (LGI), ARD, Daniel Talukder (1st from right) speaking at a meeting on 'Role of Media in Strengthening Local Government at Meherpur on Sunday. Also seen in the picture are (from right) Meherpur Paurashaba Chairman Mutadeem Billah Matu, former President of Meherpur Press Club Ruhul Quddus Tito and BCDJC Assistant Editor Mahfuza Jasmine.

BNP, AL two sides of same coin, says BSD chief

'Govt has failed to run country'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Bangladesher Samajtantrick Dal (BSD) convenor and 11 Party Alliance leader Khalequzzaman has said ruling BNP and opposition Awami League (AL) are two sides of the same coin and they never protected interest of farmers, workers and the toiling masses.

They are serving interest of the rich, he told a public rally at Shahid Abdur Razzak Park on Thursday.

They have made people's life insecure as their leaders are protecting criminals, he alleged.

With Skatkhira BSD leader Shashanka Shekhar Sardar in the chair, the rally was addressed by, among others, Rajekuzzaman Ratan, Nurul Islam, Principal Ashek-e-Elahi and advocate Azad

Hossain Belal.

Khalequzzaman alleged that the government has released 70,000 criminals from jails.

"Twenty thousand women were raped and 10451 people killed during the 24 months of BNP-Jamaat rule", he alleged.

Workers are losing jobs as mills and factories are being sold out at throwaway prices in the name of privatisation on the advice of World Bank and IMF.

He called upon the people to launch a movement to protect their rights and the country's resources.

He opposed export of gas and said people will sacrifice their lives to protect it.

He also demanded the government's resignation, claiming that it has failed to run the country.



PHOTO: STAR

Bogra Janata Institute of Medical Technology Director Anwar Hossain Sumon was arrested on Thursday with a pistol (right) on charge of misusing the firearm, licensed in his mother's name.

'Most wanted' outlaw Dulal held in Khulna

Manik Saha murder clue may be found

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

'Most wanted outlawed' Nurul Islam Dulal, belonging to Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-Jana Juddho), was arrested by Joint Forces on Wednesday morning from a hair cutting saloon at Labouchora under Khulna thana.

Police said Dulal is one of the leaders of PBCP in South-Western region of the country and possesses a good number of illegal firearms. He faces three murder cases.

He is being interrogated at the Joint Forces' camp.

Police officials said they hope to

get vital clues to the murder of journalist Manik Shah and distribution of PBCP posters and leaflets from Dulal. He evaded arrest earlier.

Meanwhile, the M-L (Marxist-Leninist) faction of PBCP, a rival of PBCP (Jana Juddho), has posted numerous posters in the Khulna industrial belt, giving 'death threats' to 'police informers and brokers'.

This has created a panic among the city dwellers. It is now apparent that the entire Khulna city is in the grip of two rival factions PBCP, some ward commissioners of Khulna City Corporation told this correspondent.

Attack on newsmen at Kolaroa

Property attachment of 8 Jubo dal, JCD activists ordered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A court on Thursday ordered attachment of moveable property of eight absconding leaders and activists of Kalaroa thana Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal and Chhatra Dal, charged with attacking journalists during Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina's visit to the area last year.

They are Kalaroa thana Jubo Dal President Ashraf Hossain, its secretary Abdul Kader Bachchu and activists Shamsur Rahman, Ranju and Ripon; and Chhatra Dal activists Biplob, Mobin and Lucky.

The AL chief's motorcade came under attack allegedly by the activists of ruling BNP youth and student fronts when she was

going to Jessore through Kalaroa after visiting a rape victim at Satkhira Hospital.

Subash Chowdhury, Satkhira correspondent of the Bhorer Kajo, filed a case with Kalaroa thana accusing them of attacking and injuring some journalists.

After investigation, police submitted charge sheet against them on April last year.

Earlier the court issued arrest warrants against them as they did not appear for trial.

Local sources however claimed that all the accused are moving freely in the area and visit Kalaroa thana at times.

Police said they could not arrest them and informed court that they were absconding.

Abduction scare grips Kushtia, police inactive 3 kidnapped for ransom in 2 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Abduction of three persons including two students for ransom in two days created a panic in the district but police could neither rescue the abducted persons nor arrest any the captors.

Two of the abductions took place in Bighagram village in the Sadar upazila on Wednesday night.

Outlaws allegedly belonging to Gono Mukti Fouz (GMF), an offshoot of Sromojibi Mukti Andolon (SMA), abducted Sabir Hossain Mithu, 12, student of class six at Sheikhpara High School and son of Nurjan Hossain while he was returning home from a local market.

In the same night, another gang of outlaws abducted one Bablu 30, son of Kalu Mullah while he was returning to home at the same village.

The outlaws demanded Tk two lakh ransom for each.

In another incident on the following day, outlaws belonging to New Biplobi Communist Party (NBPC) abducted Osman Gani alias Roni 19, son of late Mokbul Hossain, when he was returning home at Chapra village in Kumarkhali Upazila from college at Kushtia town. He was a student of Kushtia Police Line School and Collage.

The abductors demanded Tk 10 lakh ransom.

Three separate cases were filed with respective police stations but police could not rescue any of them.

When contacted, police said they were trying to rescue the abducted persons.

12 bus passengers stabbed by robbers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Highwaymen stabbed 12 bus passengers and took any Tk 3 lakh in cash and other valuables from them in the early hours of Friday.

Injured bus passengers said 10 armed robbers boarded on the bus in guise of passengers from Dhaka, its place of departure. When the bus reached near Shibpur Aziz Pipe factory on the Faridpur-Magura highway at around 1-30am, they attacked the passengers of the Khulna-bound bus.

Critically injured passengers Muhit, 40, Risalat, 35, Ahsan Habib, 25, Idris Ali, 45, Hasan Ali, 20 and Abul Mian, 38-- were treated at Magura Sadar Hospital.