

SNAPS

Symbols for Kushtia-1 bypolls

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushtia*
Symbols have been distributed among candidates contesting in the Kushtia-1 (Daulatpur) bypolls, scheduled to be held on February 29.

The symbols are Reza Ahmed Bachhu Mollah (BNP-Sheaf of paddy), Razaul Haq (JSD-INU-Torch), Nazrul Islam Panna (Muslim League-Lamp), Abdul Halim (Jatyia Party-Manju-Bicycle), Nazrul Ismail (NAP-Camel), Korban Ali (independent-Wall clock), Sahidul Islam independent-Betel leaf) and Azibar (JSD-Ziku-Footbal).

The main opposition Awami League is boycotting the polls saying it will not be fair.

Two fishermen killed by tigers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*
Two fishermen were killed by tigers in the Sundarbans on Monday.

Police and eye-witnesses said Khokon, 28, of Koira village in Shyamnagar upazila was catching fish in the Chunkuri in Harkhalli area of the Sundarbans when a Royal Bengal tiger swooped on him resulting his instantaneous death. Villagers recovered the body after a while.

In another incident, Tarun Raj Banshi, 35, of Munshiganj village in Shyamnagar upazila was catching fish fry in Dingimari canal in the Sundarbans. At one stage a man-eater attacked him. He died on the spot. Later, other fishermen recovered the body.

2 'outlaws' killed by rivals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushtia*
Police on Monday recovered the bodies of two alleged outlaws from a field at Narayanpur village in Harinakundu Upazila in Jhenedah.

Police said they might have been killed by rivals. The victim were identified as Jamal Uddin, 35, son of Rabban Mondol and Assad 38, son of Intaz Ali of Vayana village in the same Upazila.

Police said they were picked up by members of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-ML Jonajuddho) when they were enjoying folk song at Chulikani Bazar Upazila on Sunday night.

Stalemate at PSTU

VC files GD with police, local BNP leaders demand his resignation: 11 new teachers and officials not allowed to join duty

A CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

A virtual stalemate prevailed at the Patuakhali Science and Technology University (PSTU) yesterday, two days after its reopening on Monday.

The newly appointed 11 teachers and officials could not join duty as local leaders of ruling BNP barred them from doing so, campus sources said.

Vice-chancellor Dr. A K M Abdul Hannan Bhuyan, not in Patuakhali now, has filed a GD (no. 178) with Dumki thana by post, alleging that he could not return due to lack of security, police sources said. Dumki thana recorded the GD on Monday.

Academic and administrative activities were greatly hampered as local people, backed by politi-

cal parties, are pressing for realisation of a four-point demand, which include resignation of the VC and cancellation of appointment of the 11 teachers and officials.

They alleged that the newly appointed teachers and officials were taken in as per the VC's choice. They are demanding that the posts be filled up by qualified persons from Patuakhali.

Sources said their agitation for realisation of the demands will continue.

Some students and PSTU officials alleged that there were irregularities also in admission of students. Those admitted after expiry of the admission date on January 28 were not on waiting lists.

Besides, the authorities admitted students in three departments

in excess of seats.

One hundred and ten students were admitted against 100 seats in Agriculture Department, 43 against 30 in BBA and 35 against 30 in Computer Science department, they claimed.

There is a no teacher in BBA. The Computer Science Department has only one teacher.

Moreover, two-thirds posts of teacher are vacant for in the Agriculture Department.

The sources said the VC left the campus for Dhaka on January 26 after issuing a 14-day Edi vacation till February 8.

When contacted, Md. Sultan Ahmed, Dean of PSTU and a member of the admission committee, said he does not know anything in this connection.

60 hr 20 min cycling

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

The people of outlaw-infested Babuganj upazila had a respite from tension, thanks to some local public representatives who organised an entertainment meet.

Local lawmaker and central Jubo Dal Secretary Syed Moazzem Hossain Alal and Chandpasha Union Parishad Chairman Shamsul Alam Fakir arranged a marathon cycling competition at Chandpasha School and College field.

It began on Friday and ended Monday morning, with thousands of people viewing it.

Forty-one competitors joined the meet. Within hours, all but three left.

Habibur Rahman, 22, became champion by staying on peddles for sixty hours and twenty minutes. Freedom Fighter Khalek Howlader, 53, was very close to him with sixty hours and nineteen minutes.

Eighteen year-old, Russel Mridha was in the third position with 47 hours.

Thousands of people cheered as they were given prizes early morning Monday.

Habibur Rahman took a 17-inch black and white TV set from the Chandrapasha UP chairman.

Former upazila chairman Mrs Khaleda Wahab handed over a Phonex bicycle to Khalek and a 56-inch ceiling fan to Russel.

Natore arson

Males flee homes, no attacker arrested

ROVING CORRESPONDENT, *Natore*

The arson-affected families in Shahpara village in Naldanga thana in Natore are living under the open sky.

They told visiting newsmen on Monday that they were feeling insecure.

The male persons are hiding to avoid alleged police harassment.

No case was filed, nor any of the arsonists nabbed till Monday. Many of the arson-affected people have been accused in the case filed in connection with the February 7 murder of Jubo Dal leader Sabir Ahemd Gama, nephew of BNP lawmaker and Deputy Minister for Land Ruhul Kuddus Dulul.

In retaliation just after the mur-

der, houses of 16 Awami League activists and supporters were torched.

A group of newsmen visiting the area saw women and children of the 16 families in miserable conditions. They alleged that houses of Awami League activists and supporters were torched, sparing those of BNP men.

The house of one Wazed Ali Shah, a BNP worker, was looted. Smoke was still coming out of some of the torched houses.

Seventy-year-old Foyez Uddin, whose six rooms were torched, said the incident was a sequel to political enmity with the deputy minister's family.

The minister's nephew Dalim

and his (Dalim's) friends Abdur Razzak, Sentu, Golap led the arson, alleged Fulera Begum, daughter of Foyez Uddin.

The attackers also humiliated many women, she added.

Abbas Ali Shah, another victim, said filing case would not yield any result as the incident occurred in presence of police. But Champa, wife of another victim Idris Ali Shah, said "Our men are fleeing and the case will be filed when they are back".

When contacted, Natore Police Superintendent Sayed Nazrul Islam said, "We can not move if no complaint is filed".

He said the villagers are now safe as the situation is under control.

Hasina's motorcade attack case

Revision petition filed, expulsion panic in Kolaroa AL

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

A revision petition has been filed with Satkhira Judge Court challenging lower court's acquittal of persons charged for attacking Opposition Leader and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina's motorcade at Kalaroa on August 30, 2002.

Lawyers Abu Bakar Siddiq, SM Haider, Tapan Chakraborty, Abdul Jaail and Prasad Sarkar submitted the revision petition on Monday, 17 days after the lower court order.

The judge has fixed March 8 for hearing of the petition, court sources.

The petition said that on September 2, 2002, local AL leader

Moslem Uddin had filed a case with the cognisance court --Ka--.

accusing 27 people including ruling BNP lawmaker Habibur Islam Habib as Kalaroa police declined to record the case.

The accused were discharged as the officer-in-charge (OC) of Kolaroa thana and investigation officer (IO) of the case gave a final report due to influence of ruling party men, the petition alleged.

It said the OC also refrained from filing a separate case under the Arms Act.

Besides, the OC did not collect evidences and had recorded statements of persons who did not witness the incident, the revision

petition alleged.

Earlier, the complainants submitted a naraji petition. The court rejected the naraji petition on January 22.

Meanwhile expulsion panic has gripped a good number of local AL leaders and activists after a party probe committee submitted its report on statements by party leaders to the IO during investigation of the case.

The probe report was submitted to the Satkhira AL convener on February 6.

The party leaders' statements to the IO led to submission of a final report in the case, it alleged.



PHOTO: AKM MOHSIN

State Minister for Education Ehsanul Haque Milan addressing a meeting on Enhancing Quality of Education and Curbing Cheating in Examinations, held at Nilphamari Shilpakala Academy on Monday. Rajshahi Education Board organised the meeting. Amjad Hossain Sarker MP, Rajshahi Board Chairman ProfMd Nazrul Islam, representatives of DCs of six districts, superintendents of police, district education officers, heads of educational institutions, and civil society leaders attended the meeting, presided over by Deputy Commissioner Safiul Alam.

30 out of 46 cases disposed of by Sylhet STT

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Sylhet*.

The Sylhet Speedy Trial Tribunal has disposed of 30 cases out of 46 since its establishment in November 2000.

A total of 34 persons were given punishment. Fourteen cases are now under trial. Of these, 10 are murder cases including Dr. Aftab Hossain murder case and schoolboy Shahed murder case. The rest four are arms cases.

Trial of two cases are suspended following High Court orders. These were filed in connection with the bomb explosion at the house of the then ruling Awami League lawmaker Muhibur Rahman Manik at Chhatka and an arms case in Balaganj.

All the cases were sent to the Tribunal from the four district sessions courts in the division.

Trial of eight cases can not be started as their records have not been sent to the Tribunal seven months after gazette notification, court sources said. Of the eight, seven were transferred from Habiganj and one from Sunamganj.

Disposal of the remaining cases was discussed at a recent meeting of the division level monitoring committee headed by the Divisional Commissioner.

In the cases, one of the convicts - Aziruddin -- was given life term for

BDR foils Indians' bid to build dam in Dharala river

BSS, *Patgram (Lalmonirhat)*

The Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) on Monday foiled an attempt by Indian nationals to construct an embankment on Dharala river along Lalmonirhat border, BDR sources said yesterday.

They said some Indian nationals started to construct an embankment in the river at 10 am on Monday. The area is located only 75 meters inside India from the zero line between sub-pillars 14 and 15 of the main boundary pillar no. 879 near Dhabalkuri border under Patgram upazila.

BDR personnel of 19 Rifle Battalion of Dhabalkuri BOP foiled the attempt when the Indians were building the embankment after erecting bamboo poles.

Later in the afternoon, a flag meeting was held between BDR and BSF on the no man's land. BDR lodged a strong protest against the illegal attempt by the Indian citizens. BSF ordered them to stop such activities.

The BSF side also assured BDR that they would inform higher authorities about the incident.

Normalcy is prevailing in the area now, BDR said.

Home ministry order? Thana preparing to drop four BNP men from Latif murder case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Bogra*

Dubchiancha thana police is preparing necessary papers to drop the names of four persons including Dupchiancha Poura BNP President Tazamal Hossain Tozam from the Latif murder case and a toll collection case.

District administration sources said they are dropping the names as per a Home Ministry order.

Names of others to be dropped are Tazamal's brother Rafiqul Islam, Golam Rabbini, son of Hasin Ail and Shain son of Baset from the Latif murder case (GR No-27/2000) and illegal toll collection case (GR No-47/99).

However, the cases will continue against other accused. They are Razinur Rahman, son of Azizar Rahman; Biplob, son of Khairbar; Zalal Uddin, son of Azizar Rahman and Abdus Samad, son of late Fazar Uddin of Dhaphchiancha Upazila in Bogra district.

However, sources at the Deputy Commissioner's office said the ministry order is yet to reach the DC's office.

28 hurt as BNP factions trade fire in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushtia*

At least 28 people were injured, eight of them with bullet, in a clash between two factions of ruling BNP at Belgachi in Kumarkhali Upazila in the district on Monday.

The clash erupted at about 8.30 pm when local BNP leader Abdur Rashid was shot and injured his opponents led by Tapan over previous enmity.

According to police, Rashid and Tapan Ali had a long rivalry over establishing supremacy in the area.

Hearing screams, Rashid's supporters rushed there with firearms. The two sides were locked in a clash that lasted for about an hour.

Quoting local people, police said they traded at least 10 bullets.

Bullet-hit Abu, 22, Sariful, 25, Miraj, 35, Halim, 32, Rana, 25 Aklima, 32, Nawab Ali, 41 and Rsahid were admitted to Kushtia General Hospital.

Nawab Ali was later taken to Dhaka as his condition deteriorated.

A tense situation is prevailing in the area. Police have been deployed.

Extortion Traders down shutters, hold rally at Manikganj

A CORRESPONDENT, *Manikgonj*

Traders at Manikgonj town kept all business establishments closed yesterday protesting attack on a businessmen by illegal toll collectors on the previous night.

Hundreds of businessmen, joined by townspeople, also brought out a protest procession and held a rally in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office. They also submitted a memorandum to the DC demanding arrest and punishment of the attackers.

The extortionists beat Rupa, 22, son of Mojuddin as he refused to pay them toll.

The rally was presided over by Manikganj Chamber of Commerce President Gazi Khayrul Huda Faruk. It was addressed by, among others, Manikganj Pourashava Chairman Shudev Shaha, its former chairman Md Ramjan Ali, Rajat Shuvra Ghosh Bappi and BNP leader Jamilur Rashid Khan.

They demanded arrest of toll collectors and threatened of an indefinite strike for noncompliance.

Function held at Maizbhandari

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

A grand function was organised at Maizbhandari Darbar Sharif (place of Shrine of Maizbhandari) at Fatikchhari to mark the change of Gilap (cloth covering the shrine) over the shrine Syed Golafur Rahman Maizbhandari on Monday.

Thousands of devotees from different areas of the country thronged the shrine premises during the function that also marked the 67th birthday of Syed Moinuddin Ahmed Al Hasani Maizbhandari, now in charge of the shrine.

They offered Fateha. The programme including a Milad Mahfil.

Syed Moinuddin Ahmed Al Hasani conducted a munajat.