

SNAPS

Attack on Dr Kamal protested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali  
Patuakhali district unite of Oikyo Procheshta (unity move) on Thursday held a rally on its office premises in the town protesting the attack on Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain in Rangamati on Monday.

Advocate Abdul Aziz presided over the meeting, addressed by, among others, Motiur Rahman, AKM Hossain, Omar Azam, Ruhul Amin and Abdul Kader Sikder. They demanded arrest and punishment of the attackers.

2 'outlaws' held in Manikganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj  
Shivaloaya thana police yesterday arrested alleged outlaws Abdul Motin and Akkas Bepari from a fish wholesale market at Aricha Ghat.

Police said they were wanted by Bera thana police in Pabna in connection with the murder of one Robiul during a dacoity in Bera early this month.

Disaster management rehearsal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patoakhali  
A rehearsal on disaster management was held on Thursday at North Badura High School play ground in the Sadar upazila.

It was organised by the Patuakhali unit of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society to create awareness about disasters like cyclone and tidal bore.

Twenty Red Crescent volunteers and about 3000 people took part in the rehearsal.

Bomb blast at Sylhet shrine: Case transferred to CID

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet.

The case of a bomb blast incident during annual Urs at Hajrat Shahjalal (RA)'s shrine here on January 12 has been transferred to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID).

An official said that the case docket reached the CID office here on Thursday.

Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Siddiqi Rahman would investigate the incident which claimed five lives and injured 50 others.

Meanwhile, the departmental probe body, which was formed to inquire into the incident has submitted its report three days ago, said an official.

Show-cause notice on RU BCL convenor

RU CORRESPONDENT

The Rajshahi University (RU) authorities issued a show cause notice on the university unit convenor of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), Kamruzzaman Chanchal on Tuesday.

The notice was issued to him for bringing out a procession and holding a meeting on the campus on February 10 violating the Syndicate rules. BCL was demanding reopening of the university. Chanchal has to reply within seven days.

DC exchanges views with newsmen

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

The newly appointed Deputy Commissioner (DC), Md Younusur Rahman, held a view-exchange meeting with journalists at the Brahmanbaria Press Club on Wednesday.

Speaking on the occasion the DC said journalists are partners in social development. The administration should have good relations with journalists because they work as catalysts in social uplift. Journalists should also be objective in reporting, he added.

The meeting was presided over by Press Club President Mansur Kamal (Observer).

It was also addressed by, among others, its vice-president Sayed Muhammad Shahjahan (Independent), former vice president Sheikh Md Shahidul Islam (The Daily Star), secretary Muhammad Arzo Mia (Ittefaque), Pizus Kanti Achariya (Bhorer Kagoj), Md Abdun Noor (Jugantor) and Md Muhibur Rahman (editor of local Bangla daily, Praja Bandhu).

Allotment of houses in Syedpur Uttara Housing Project

Tension mounts as Bangalees' deadline expires today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Tension is mounting in Syedpur as the deadline given by Bangalees to the local authorities for changing its decision to allot houses of Uttara Housing Project only to Beharis (Urdu speaking people) expires today.

Many local people this correspondent talked to yesterday said they apprehend violence between Bangalees and Biharis if the authorities do not take immediate steps to resolve the matter.

Despite protests, the authorities are proceeding with a plan to allot the 1000 houses in the project to Biharis, some Bangla-speaking people alleged. Their decision violates government's earlier decision announced through a gazette published on May

12, 1997, they claimed.

The February 28 deadline was announced at a February 25 public meeting of several thousand distressed Bangla-speaking people living around the project. The meeting was held at Wapda Nutan Hat near the project.

The meeting followed days of rallies and processions demanding allotment of the houses among distressed Bangla-speaking people.

At the meeting, the leader of the agitating people, Abul Hasan Bulu, had said that the authorities "must change the decision or face tougher programmes from February 29".

As per the gazette, distressed freedom fighters, victims of erosion by river and land requisition, divorced women, landless farmers and

Bangladeshi citizens are eligible to apply for the houses.

But the Syedpur Upazila Nirbahee Officer (UNO) invited applications only from Urdu-speaking people, it was reported earlier.

The Bangla-speaking people alleged that their applications were rejected and applications of Biharis and stranded Pakistanis were accepted. The allotment process has almost been finalised, they claimed.

When contacted, ruling BNP lawmaker from Syedpur Amzad Hossen Sarkar said, "Allotment (of houses in Uttara Housing Project) will be given to distressed Biharis to reduce their sufferings. This decision is final.

"The previous announcement (made in the gazette) is cancelled".

Some local people also raised questions about silence of local Awami League leaders over the issue.

When contacted, some mid-level AL leaders said some of their leaders were arrested after the party's hartal and some others are fleeing homes.

The two-room housing units are in 100 barracks with three community centres, one mosque and a market. The project was completed about two months back.

The Prime Minister is likely to inaugurate the Tk four crore project built by army. The inauguration may take place on February 14 but the schedule has not been finalised, officials said.

Ex-AL lawmaker passes away

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Mustafa M A Matin, a former Awami League (AL) lawmaker, a Language Movement activist and an eminent lawyer here died of old age ailment at a private clinic in Dhaka yesterday.

He was 70. He left behind five daughters, besides wife and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

He was buried at Bhaluka Degree College ground with state honour.

Leaders of different political parties, socio-cultural organisations and Mymensingh Bar were, among those who attended the janazaand visited his house to express their condolences.

'Heroin queen' held in B'baria

34 kg hemp recovered in another derive

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Rehana Akhter Sheuli, known as 'heroin queen' in the district, was arrested from Akhaura on Thursday by a team of Drug Control Department. But they recovered only three grams of heroin from her possession, sources said.

On the same night, police arrested one Manik Mia from Routkhula village in Kasba upazila and recovered 34 kilograms of hemp from his possession.

Police said Manik Mia and his brother Dalu Mia were engaged in smuggling hemp from India.

Acting on a tip-off, police led by Kasba thana OC Md Kurshed Alam raided his house and made the arrest. But Dulu Mia escaped.

Padma bridge at Daulatdia-Paturia demanded

BSS, Faridpur

People of all walks of life under the banner of "Padma Bridge Implementation Committee" have demanded construction of Padma bridge at Daulatdia-Paturia.

They brought out a procession and held a meeting in front of the Deputy Commissioner's (DC) office here.

Speakers said a bridge over the Padma at Daulatdia-Paturia points is a long-felt demand of the people of 18 southwestern districts.

Construction of the proposed bridge at this point would involve less expenditure than at any other point of the river, according to experts of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Former lawmaker Kh Nasirul Islam presided over the meeting while local BMA President Dr Mustafizur Rahman Shamim, Juba Dal President Rashedul Islam Litu and student leaders Md Selim and Tabriz addressed, among others.

Minerals being plundered, ecology destroyed in Netrakona

Hills may crumble due to unplanned China clay extraction: No govt supervision, smuggling alleged



PHOTO: STAR

A veritable pond (left) created due to unplanned extraction of China Clay is filled with water till now threatening a hill at Bijoypur and a heap (right) of the mineral kept only to be washed away by rains. The photo was taken on Tuesday.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

China clay, the basic raw material for ceramic products, found only in Netrakona in the country, is being plundered.

Its unplanned extraction is threatening the ecology of hilly Bijapur area in Durgapur upazila near the border. The hillocks may crumple any moment, local people fear.

The raw material is also being smuggled out as the area is only about half a mile from the border, they alleged.

Instead of being a boost, the huge deposit of the raw material has become

a bane for the area, mainly inhabited by Garo tribesmen. Several appeals to successive governments for setting up of a ceramic industry in Netrakona went unheeded, leaders of Netrakona Chamber of Commerce said while talking to this correspondent.

Quoting government estimate they said there is a deposit of over two lakh metric tonnes of china clay in the mine spread over eight kilometres in length and one kilometre in breadth. The entire area is being plundered in the search for clay, without pinpointing the depots.

It is extracted during winter by cutting hills and digging deep into the ground

indiscriminately, making big ditches which look like ponds. The extracted clay is stored in heaps nearby. When the rainy season comes, it is carried in boats. Rains wash away huge quantities of stored clay.

During a recent visit to the area, some big ditches near hillocks were seen filled with water, looking like ponds. The hillocks may crumble.

Four Dhaka-based ceramic companies are extracting the clay from the area in an unplanned way under five-year lease terms, it was gathered from local people and the chamber leaders.

But none from the government was found there to oversee the extraction.

In the absence of any supervision, the extractors dig as much deeper as they can because the more deeper they go, the better the clay is. So they do not care about the possible disaster, local people said.

The chamber leaders said representations were given to the government many a times to regulate the unplanned and indiscriminate extraction, but to no effect.



PHOTO: STAR

Gano Forum President and Convenor of Oikya Prochesta Dr Kamal Hossain addressing a public meeting at Shaheed Khokon ground in Bogra on Thursday.

Man held with dollars in B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

One person was arrested with foreign currency notes from Banchharampur and a revolver was recovered from the rooftop of a mosque at Charchartala here.

Banchharampur police arrested a 23-year-old young man named Mohosin from Banchharapur village and recovered 100 US dollars from his possession on February 24.

On the same day acting on a secret information a police team of Ashuganj thana raided Charchartala Jame Mosque and recovered a revolver.

However, police could not arrest anyone in this regard while

a case was filed with Banchharampur police station in connection with the first incident.

27 arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Brahmanbaria police in separate drives arrested 27 persons within 24 hours.

The arrested are accused of different cases including three murder cases. They were sent to court, police sources told this correspondent.

Student's death triggers violence at Khulna Polytechnic Institute

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A tense situation prevails on the Khulna Polytechnic Institute campus. The institute authorities have asked the resident students to vacate their hostels immediately. The hostels will remain closed until further order.

Meanwhile, angry students put up a barricade on Khulna-Dhaka highway on Wednesday protesting murder of a fourth year student named Riazul Islam alias Riad.

Also a Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activist, Riad was injured in an armed attack by his party rivals on the institute campus on February 19. He was admitted to Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) where doctors advised to shift him to Dhaka for better treatment. Riad was admitted to Ibne Sina Hospital in Dhaka on Saturday night where he died on Monday night.

The body reached Khulna on Wednesday from where it was sent to Riad's hometown at Bagerhat for burial.

The institute authorities have formed a threemember committee to inquire into the incident that led to Riad's death.

Riad's mother Rahela Begum has lodged a complaint with Khalishpur thana accusing 14

Chhatra Dal leaders and activists on February 20. Senior Vice President of Chhatra Dal city unit Jamil Haider is among the accused. All the accused are absconding, police said.

Diamond jubilee celebrated

BSS, Sylhet

Zahiria MU High School's diamond jubilee was celebrated on the school premises on Wednesday

Reunion of the school's former students was also held there.

Sylhet City Corporation (SCC) Mayor Badar Udder Ahmed Kamran opened the two-day programme as chief guest.

Convenor of the programme organising committee, M Atiqur Rahman presided over the opening function while Professor Mohammed Shafique spoke as special guest.

Former students remembered the memorable events of their student life in a daylong discussion. The discussion was followed by a colourful procession.

Two killers to die in Gaibandha

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Two persons were awarded death sentence and three others got life term imprisonment on Thursday for killing Abdul Khaleque Rabbani of Gobindapur village in Shaghata upazila on March 30, 1999.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Mohsin Mollah awarded death penalty to Ujjal of Dahichara village and Abu Sayem of Mamudpur village in Shaghata upazila.

Three others who got life term imprisonment are Asalat Zaman, Bulu Mia and Abdul Hadi. They were also fined Tk 30,000 each, in default, to suffer three years more rigorous imprisonment (RI).

Besides, two other accused Jahedul and Jahangir were awarded three years RI and fined Tk 5,000 each.

Five fertiliser dealers held

A CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Five fertiliser dealers were arrested while mixing lime with gypsum at Ulipur in Kurigram on Wednesday.

Acting on a secret information, police raided the Ulipur Shaheed Minar area and caught Abdul Hakim, Badsha Miah, Limon, Roushan and Sujeet. After their confessional statement police seized a truck loaded with adulterated gypsum.

How long it takes to reply a court letter?

Trial of 6 govt docs for 'wrong operation' pending for 20 monthss

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Housewife Sufia Khatun of Gourhanga area in the city filed a case against six government doctors one and a half years ago but she does not know whether the case will be tried or not.

Sufia, wife of Khondokar Tajul Islam, filed the case with the Judge Court on June 6, 2002 for alleged wrong treatment. The trial has not been started because the Prime Minister's Office is yet to reply to the court's letter seeking permission.

PMO's permission is necessary as the accused persons are government officials, sources said.

In the case, Sufia alleged that she had gone to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital on January 2, 2002 with problems in her uterus. Doctors there advised her to manage Tk 20,000 and to go to a private clinic for operation.

Being unable to manage the money, Sufia insisted that she be operated at RMCH. A medical team comprising Dr Hasina, Dr Nazmun Nahar, Dr Shah Alam, Dr Joyee, Dr Saidur Rahman and anesthesiologist Dr Subrata operated upon her on February 4.

She was released after 10 days of the operation. At home, she felt discomfort and abnormality. She went to RMCH again. After examination, doctors said her rectum was mistakenly operated and advised her to go to a private clinic.

In disbelief, Sufia consulted a specialist surgeon. To her utter surprise, she came to know that her uterus was not operated upon. Instead, the rectum was perforated.

Sufia sold her property and went to India. She returned after a successful operation at a cost of Tk 65,000.

She then filed a case against the six doctors.

"Every citizen has the right to legal protection. I do not know why I am being denied," Sufia told this correspondent on Tuesday on the court premises.

She visits the court every week hoping that the PMO's permission has reached the court.

Her lawyer Advocate Ekhlaq Hossain said it was a clear violation of human rights to delay the approval. "Reminders were sent several times. We do not also know why the PMO's office is not replying to the court letter".

Processions for removal of VC

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Teachers, students and all classes of officials and employees staged separate demonstrations on Patuakhali Science and Technology University (PSTU) campus on Thursday demanding removal of its Vice-chancellor Dr Prof AKM Abdul Hannan Bhuyan.

The students held a rally at about 11 am and paraded the campus chanting slogans demanding his removal.

This was followed by a meeting of the Teachers Association. Nizam Uddin, Iqbal Hossain, Habibur Rahman, Mohsin Hossain Khan, Hamidur Rahman addressed the meeting with its convener AKM Mostafa Zaman in the chair.

In the afternoon, 3rd and 4th class employee brought out a procession on the campus.

The VC who left the campus during the Eid-ul-Azha vacation did not return till yesterday campus sources said.