

SNAPS

Four punished for damaging Hindu idol

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal
Four unruly youths who damaged the idol of Kall, a Hindu Goddess, at Mollapara village in Agailhara upazila on Sunday night were punished and fined.

The youths are Aminul, Nazrul, Bacchchu, and Sumon.
Motilal Sarker, caretaker of the temple said the unruly youths damaged the idol when he opposed gambling on the temple premises.

Food poisoning: 50 fall sick in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal
Fifty persons fell sick after taking 'Prasad', offering after a religious festival, at Tikashar village in Gourmadi on Saturday night.
Victims and hospital sources said family members, neighbours and invited devotees were offered 'Prasad' after 'Narayan Puja', locally known as 'Shani Puja' at the house of Nirmal Shil of the village. About 50 devotees began to vomit and complained of abdominal pain after being attacked with diarrhoea. They were treated at a local hospital.

Four to die for killing youth

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal
Four persons including three brothers were sentenced to death in absentia for killing Harun Gazi, a youth in Patuakhali.
Judge M A Matin of Barisal Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal acquitted 11 other accused from the allegation.
The convicts are: Tipu Gazi, Moti Gazi and Sohel Gazi, three brothers and their associate Mizanur Rahman.

Banshkahli carnage:

Another suspect arrested

BSS, Chittagong

Chittagong district police arrested another suspect of Banshkahli massacre from Mosarrif Mear Hat in Banshkahli upazila on Tuesday.
The arrested is Mohammad Nazrul Islam, 32, son of Rafique Ahmed of Dongra village.

With this the number of arrested persons rose to 22.

Eleven persons including houseowner Tejendra Lal Shushil were burnt alive when armed bandits set on fire their two storied house at Sadanpur village in Banshkahli upazila on November 18 midnight last year.

Nazrul was arrested from Mosarrif Mear Hat on the basis of confession made by Ahmed Meah alias Tota.

Tota, the main suspect in the murder case, was arrested from his Banshkahli house on February 18. He disclosed before a magistrate names of 12 persons behind the carnage.

High price of rod Development work in Barisal virtually stops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

All types of construction work worth crores of taka are being hampered here greatly due to price hike of MS iron rod.

The Public Works Department (PWD) has postponed its Tk three crore project work due to this phenomenon.

Contractors of different public works projects are exerting pressure on the authority to change the scheme and revise the schedule to avoid loss.

Crisis in ship-breaking industries in Chittagong has been regarded to be its reason.

Work on over 100 buildings in the city has been suspended. Afzalul Karim, a mid-level officer of a private bank, told this correspondent he hardly affords to

Attack on Humayun Azad

Protests in Rajshahi, Nilphamari, Mymensingh, Bhola, Rangamati

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Different political and socio-cultural organisations continued demonstrations in different areas of the country on Monday protesting the heinous attack on prominent writer Prof Humayun Azad and demanding resignation of the home minister for the government's failure to ensure security to citizens.

Our Rajshahi University Correspondent reported that Sammilito Sangskritik Jote (SSJ) brought out a procession and held a rally on the Muktiyudha Pathagar premises in the city.

Rajshahi SSJ President Abul Hossain and General Secretary Dr Shafiqul Alam led the procession.

Speakers at the rally said the government has no right to stay in power as it has failed to give security to political leaders, journalists, writers and cultural activists.

They deplored that the government could not arrest the attackers even after five days of the incident.

SSJ will also hold another rally on the Public Library premises today.

The Rajshahi district unit of Udichhi formed a human chain and held a rally on the day at Shabeb Bazar in the city protesting the attack.

The rally was addressed by, among others, Prof Moloy Bhowmik, Prof SM Abu Bakar, Jubo Union leader Shamol Kumar, Chhatra Union leader Pavel Ahmed, 'Udichhi' General Secretary Taj Uddin Bioplob.

The Rajshahi city Chhatra League (BCL) and Rajshahi University (RU) units of BCL and Bangabandhu Parishad also held separate protest rallies and brought out processions.

Speakers at the rallies said the government has no right to stay in power because it has failed to security to people.

The attack on Humayun Azad is an attack on democratic and progressive forces they said and called upon to all pro-liberation forces to unite to resist the fascist forces.

The RU units of SSJ and Samajtraintik Chhatra Front (SCF) in a joint statement also condemned

the attack.

Our Nilphamari Correspondent reports: The Sammilito Sangskritik Jote brought out a silent procession and formed a human chain in the town protesting the attack on Dr Humayun Azad.

People from all walks of life, including political leaders, joined the programmes.

Our Mymensingh Correspondent reports: Teachers and students of Bangladesh Agriculture University (BAU) brought out a silent procession on the campus condemning the attack on Dr. Humayun Azad.

Charan Shilpi Goshti and Udichi Shilpi Goshti of BAU jointly formed a human chain and held a rally on the campus to protest the attack.

Awami League, its student front Chhatra League, Eleven-Party Alliance, Chhatra Union, Samajtraintik Chhatra Front and Satiya Samajtraintik Dal (Inu) also held separate rallies in the town to mark their protest.

Our Bhola Correspondent

reports: The Bhola Nagarik Samaj (citizens' committee) held a rally at Obaidul Hoque College and brought out a procession in the town protesting the attack on Humayun Azad.

The rally was addressed by, among others, Principal Mofazzul Hossain, Mohiuddin Ahmed, Abu Taher, Shamsul Alam and Fazlul Kader. They demanded resignation of the home minister.

Our Correspondent from Rangamati reports:

Bangabandhu Shishu-Kishur Mela, a children's forum, formed a human chain in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office here yesterday protesting the attack on Humayun Azad.

Local Awami League leaders and journalists also joined the human chain.

Earlier in the morning, police snatched away the mike when the organisers were announcing the programme, the organisers alleged.

They also held a brief rally there.



Nilphamari unit of Sammilito Sangskritik Jote, took out a silent procession in the district town on Tuesday in protest against the attack on Humayun Azad.

Shah Anisur Rahman Award declared

RU CORRESPONDENT

The Centre for Communication and Development (CCD), a development organisation, has announced introduction of Shah Anisur Rahman Memorial Award for achievement in journalism.

The prize will be awarded during the death anniversary of Shah Anisur Rahman, a senior journalist and Rajshahi correspondent of the Ittefaq.
He died in Rajshahi on February 24.

The decision was taken at the CCD executive committee meeting held in its office recently. Professor Dulal Chandra Biswas chaired the meeting.

Three jailed for killing girl after gangrape

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cg

The Woman and Child Repression Control Court -2 here on Monday sentenced three persons to life term rigorous imprisonment (RI) for killing a young girl after gangrape in the city last year.

Justice Harunur Rashid also fined the convicts Tk one lakh each, in default, to suffer one year more RI.

The convicts are Alauddin, Md Jahangir and Jahangir Hossain. Jahangir remains absconding.

They killed Halima Khatun, 16, after gang-rape at Barma Colony in Bayazid thana on January 24.

Only peace can ensure CHT uplift, says Danish envoy

Danida-funded project launched

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Deputy Head of Mission of Royal Danish Embassy Tan B Hansen has said peace is the prime prerequisite to the development of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

He was speaking at a function held at a restaurant at Rangamati Tuesday evening.

It was arranged by Chittagong Hill Tracts NGO Forum, an alliance of 11 local NGOs, marking inauguration of a Danish-funded project, "HysWA."

The Danish government is providing Tk four crore for a water supply and sanitation project for indigenous people.

Chaired by Raja Debasish Roy,

Chairman, of HTNF, the function was attended by Pabattya Chattagram Janan Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) chief Joitirindriya Bodhipriya Larma alias Santu Larma as chief guest.

Hansen said his government is keen to give assistance in projects to help indigenous people change their life. But these should be properly implemented. Further funding will depend on the outcome of the project.

Danida-funded projects were closed after three foreign engineers were abducted from Rangamati on February 16, 2001. The funding resumed after assessment of the situation in the hills

Agro-processing holds good prospect, USAID Director says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

US Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission Country Director Gene V George on Sunday said Bangladesh needs to strengthen agro-processing and marketing units.

This is a must for making agricultural produces viable and economically profitable, he said.

"Sixty per cent workforce of the total population here are engaged in agriculture and they bring out the annual production economically worth for 22 per cent only," he said.

"Improved production using feasible, affordable and acceptable technologies for farmers and a smooth processing and marketing system can fill in the gap", he added.

Gene was briefing local journalists on activities of the USAID Mission on the occasion of the America Week.

Since the country's independence, the US government has provided nearly 4.3 billion US dollar in assistance to Bangladesh, he informed.

"Bangladesh is now self-sufficient in rice and emerging as a major exporter of high value agricul-

tural products", he said. He told that the country has a large internal market for their agri-products.

"Such products coming from India, Thailand, Malaysia and other countries are flooding local markets, which Bangladesh can replace with own products," he said to journalists.

Gene cited an example of the fish culture demonstration pond at Boro Dhadash village in Belpukur areas of Puthia upazila in Rajshahi and called upon the entrepreneurs to follow the example.

He said Bangladesh can be proud of the rural electrification programme that was recognised as most successful throughout the world. "USAID funded nearly 220 million US dollar in the programme".

Gene expressed his concern over growing population that is likely to grow by 40 million in next 10 years still continues to be a problem in the country where HIV/AIDS poses a great threat.

While expressing views on political affairs of the country the USAID chief told that political leaders should avoid hartal for the interest of the country.

Grand rally for Padma Bridge at Mawa tomorrow

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

People from 21 districts will hold a grand rally tomorrow at Mawa demanding Padma Bridge at the point.

An ultimatum will be given to the government from thereally.

Life will come to a standstill for an hour from 11 am to 12 noon in the 21 districts simultaneously on March 8.

Meanwhile programmes like token hunger strike, meeting to exchange views with people and handing over of memorandum to the administration will follow till Thursday.

On February 25 a joint meeting of the representatives of 21 districts was held in Barisal. Padma-Mawa Setu Bastobyan Committee President Golam Mawla presided over the meeting. Local members of parliament (MPs), journalists, civil society members, trade unionists and others addressed the meeting.

Obituary

Protibha Bala Dey, a social worker and mother of Ratan Kumar Dey, died at her house at Khagrachhari, town on Friday night, says a press release.

She left behind her husband, four sons, grandchildren and a host of well-wishers to mourn the death.

Sit-in by PSTU teachers, students for VC's removal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Students, teachers and staff of Patuakhali Science and Technology University (PSTU) yesterday staged a joint sit-in in front of academic building for removal its Vice-chancellor Dr. Prof AKM Abdul Hannan Bhuiyan.

They will hold the programme daily till the VC's removal, campus sources said.

During the sit-in, AKM Mostafa Zaman, convener of PSTU Teacher's Council, student leader SM Hemayet Uddin and Section Officer Abu Bakar addressed the demonstrators.

The students, teachers, employees have been agitating for the VC's resignation since January 17.

'Dig graves for govt, not for you'

Ershad tells agitating sugar mill workers at Mohimaganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad alleged that the alliance government closed down several big mills in the country just to serve interest of foreign powers.

He was addressing a public meeting at Mohimaganj High School ground on Tuesday.

The country's economy has become stagnant because there is no fresh investment due to toll collection and threat by criminals, who are sheltered by ruling party men, he said.

Investors are shying away due to

the law and order situation. This has also tarnished the image of the country abroad, he alleged.

This government failed to ensure security of people's life and property.

He bitterly criticised the government decision to lay-off the Rangpur Sugar Mills at Mohimaganj.

"Dig graves for the government, not for you", he told the meeting where several thousand workers of the mill and sugarcane growers attended.

Mentionably, the workers have threatened self-immolation if the

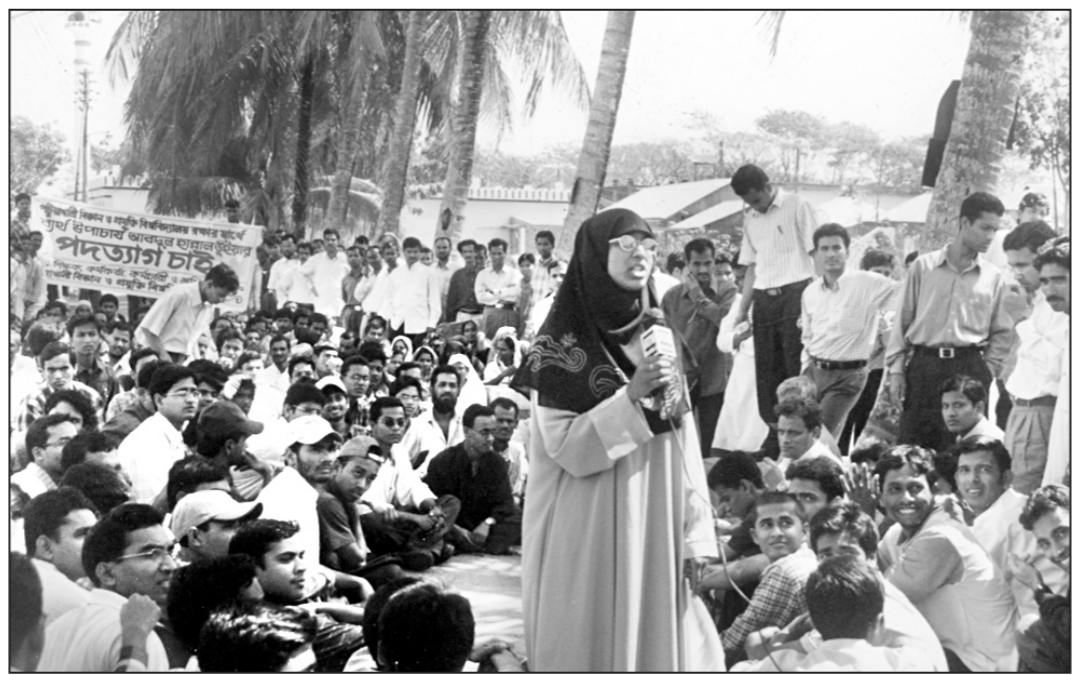
government decision to lay-off the mill from March 31 is not withdrawn.

The deposed president said all the closed mills and factories will be reopened if his party comes to power again.

Presided over by Gobindaganj Upazila Jatiya Party President Lutfar Rahman Chowdhury, the meeting was addressed by, among others, Saful Alam Prodhan, JP Presidium member, Ahsan Habib Linkon, Additional Secretary General and former lawmakers Wahiduzzaman Badsha and Abdur Rashid Sarker.



Jatiya Party chief HM Ershad (inset) addressing a public meeting at Mohimaganj High School ground.



Students holding a meeting on Patuakhali Science and Technology Institute (PSTU) campus on Wednesday demanding resignation of the Vice Chancellor.