

SNAPS

Women leaders reject new Bill

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali**  
Women leaders here rejected the proposed bill on reserved women seats in Jatiya Sangsad (JS) terming the bill 'shameful'.  
They were addressing at a press conference jointly organised by Samajik Uddokta Dal and Coastal NGO Forum (CNF) at the local press club.  
CNF member Nargis Ara Bayazid read a written statement on behalf of the forum.

Two killed in Magura road accident

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura**  
Two persons were killed and four others injured when a Kushlia-bound bus coming from Faridpur knocked a rickshaw-van from behind on the Magura-Faridpur highway in Bhalkandi area on Tuesday.  
The dead were identified as Khezir Ali, 40, and Ator Mia, two day-labourers of Goyeshpur village in Madhukhali upazila, Faridpur.  
Injured Kader, Aziz, Shahid and Zabbar were admitted to Magura and Madhukhali hospitals for treatment.

Hartal called at Kanaighat for UNO's removal

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet**  
A dawn to dusk hartal has been called at Kanaighat upazila headquarters on March 23 for withdrawal of the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) for his alleged misbehaviour with schoolteacher.  
The hartal programme and strike in all educational institutions in the upazila on March 19 were announced at an 'all-party rally' held at the upazila headquarter on Sunday.  
Upazila BNP President Ifajal Rahman, Awami League President Komor Uddin Chowdhury, Jatiya Party Secretary Abdul Matin and general secretary of the upazila teachers association Abdul Malik addressed the meeting.  
Alhaj Shafiqul Haque, Chairman of Lakhshimproshad Pashchim Union, chaired the rally, also addressed by all the nine Union Parishad chairmen in the upazila.  
Earlier, the protestors gave a 72-hour ultimatum to the UNO to apologise to the schoolteacher. The deadline ended on Sunday.  
It is alleged that the UNO on March 8 beat two minor boys in the Upazila complex. The boys went there to collect books.  
As the headmaster talked to the UNO over the matter, he was allegedly misbehaved.

Acid thrown on 2 women

**STAR NATIONAL DESK**  
Two women became victims of acid attack in Bogra and Satkhira on Sunday.  
Our Bogra correspondent reported that Khodeza, 35, is now fighting for life at Mohammad Ali Hospital in the town following an acid attack allegedly by her husband.  
Khodeza's second husband Yasin threw acid on her when she was asleep at her house at Gubinpur village in Sherpur upazila, she alleged while talking to this correspondent at the hospital on Monday.  
They were married eight months ago but separated a few days after marriage. Her first husband Abu Taleb died nine years back.  
No case was file till Monday evening.  
Our Satkhira Correspondent reported that a divorced housewife-Rina akhtar, 30-suffered severe burn injuries in an acid attack by miscreants near Kaligonj bus stand Sunday night.  
Daughter of Haidar Ali of Moutala village in Kaligonj upazila, she was going to a relative's house at Shetpur, police said.  
She suffered burn injuries in the chest, hands and face.

NAP for united agitation against BNP-Jamaat rule

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar**  
National Awami Party (NAP) organising secretary Saydur Rahman asked the party leaders and workers to get prepared for a united agitation against communalism, criminal activities, black money, corruption and above all against the BNP-Jamaat misrule.  
The NAP leader told this while addressing an extended meeting of the party's district unit at its office on Friday.  
Presided over by vice president of the party's district unit Dr Abul Kalam Ahmed, the meeting was addressed, among others, by its general secretary Abdul Bari Chowdhury, Sushil Ranjan Bhattacharya, Abdul Quadir Yousuf, Abdul Zabbar and Dr Bidhu Bhushan Acharya.

AL council attacked in Patuakhali

50 including lawmaker, newsmen hurt in Kalapara

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali**  
At least 50 people including local lawmaker Mahubur Rahman Talukder and three newsmen were injured when Kalapara upazila Awami League council came under attack by hoodlums twice on Monday.  
In retaliation, AL activists ransacked a local BNP office, claiming that the attackers belonged to BNP. But BNP leaders denied the allegation.  
The council that began about three hours behind schedule was adjourned after a brief session. It was announced that the adjourned council would be held at Patuakhali town on the following day.  
None of the injured AL activists went to hospital fearing arrest, party sources said. The three

injured newsmen are Shamsul Alam, Vogogazi Kunda and Gofran Ahmed.  
As the council began at about 10 am at the upazila headquarters, some people from Monohor Patti attacked it, injuring at least 20 people, witnesses said.  
About an hour later, when AL leaders and workers regrouped and prepared to begin the council, another group swooped on the venue, damaging the dais and injuring about 30 people.  
AL leaders including central organising secretary Mahmudur Rahman Manna took shelter at a nearby police station for safety.  
At about 1 pm, they came out of the police station and went to the venue under police protection to begin the council.  
Addressing the brief council,

Snatcher escapes from police custody

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra**  
An alleged motorcycle snatcher--Abdul Khaleque-- escaped from police custody with handcuff at Dhunat bus stand on Sunday.  
Police could not arrest him till Monday afternoon.  
Police said Khaleque was arrested on Saturday and a snatched motorcycle (Pabna-A-420/1) was recovered during a raid in his house. The motorcycle was snatched on Friday from one Zahangir Alam at Durgadabo bridge in Dhunat upazila.  
Khaleque was produced before court, which placed him on three days' remand.  
On Sunday, two policemen were taking him to thana from court. As they alighted from a bus at Dhunat, handcuffed Abdul Khaleque ran away and escaped.

Citizen's body on PM's public statement 'Outline Rajshahi gas supply plan'

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi**  
Leaders of the Rajshahi Protection Movement Council, a citizens' forum, has expressed their skepticism over Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's public statement that gas would be supplied to Rajshahi.  
Khaleda Zia while addressing a public meeting here on March 11 said gas would be supplied to Rajshahi.  
"She made the promise following repeated slogans from the audience demanding gas. It is not clear when and how gas will come to Rajshahi", said a RPCC state-

ment signed by 15 of its leaders including its convener Zamat Khan, Advocate Muhammad Yahia, Mosharrif Akhuni, Prof Sarwar Jahan and Proshanta Saha.  
They demanded an immediate government declaration outlining plans for gas supply.  
"The Prime Minister and a number of her cabinet members pledged many times before the last general election to supply gas to Rajshahi, but the reality is that gas is yet reach", the statement said.  
There is no noticeable activity by the government to supply gas to Rajshahi while it is being supplied to Bogra avoiding the divisional city, the statement said.  
The leaders also differed with a statement made at the Prime Minister's public meeting that Barind Development Project saved the Barind region from desertification.  
"The project so far provided irrigation facility to only 26 percent of the land in the region and it is quickening desertification by maximum utilisation of underground water", it said.

Rangpur RAKUB to file case against 1000 borrowers

**A CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur**  
About 1000 farmers of eight upazilas in the district will face certificate cases after April 29 for defaulting on agriculture loans taken from different branches of Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank (RAKUB) in Rangpur.  
Many businessmen who borrowed money from the bank will also face the same consequences.  
RAKUB officials said they served notices to the defaulting farmers earlier for repayment of loans. Only 3 percent repaid loans.  
The bank will lodge certificate cases with different courts after April 29. Mortgaged property of the borrowers will be auctioned, they

said.  
The 1000 borrowers have been listed as 'bad borrowers' as they did not take the advantage when the past two governments gave them the scope to repay only the principal amount.  
Iffat Ara, Senior Principal Officer of RAKUB at Rangpur zonal office said.  
Many of the defaulted borrowers are in great agony because they can not repay loans in the current peak season of IRRRI-Boro farming.  
Talking to this correspondent, Manik Sarker, a farmer of Lalbag area in Rangpur said, "How can I repay the loan now while I am buying diesel and fertiliser at so high prices?"  
As Tamizuddin died, his relatives swooped on the doctors.

Doctors assaulted as patient dies

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira**  
Agitated people assaulted two physicians and ransacked the office of Resident Medical Officer (RMO) of Kalaroa Health Complex Sunday night following death of a heart patient allegedly due to negligence in treatment.  
One of the assaulted doctors--Salah Uddin -- filed a case with Kalaroa thana accusing the victim's son Sirajul Islam.  
Police said Tamizuddin, 65, of Basatapur village in Kalaron upazila was admitted to the hospital Sunday night with chest pain. As other doctors were busy with patients, his relatives went to RMO Dr Abdur Rahman but he did not come to see Tamizuddin.  
As Tamizuddin died, his relatives swooped on the doctors.

Fund shortage affects training, rehabilitation in Netrakona

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona**  
The District Women Affairs Department is doing a laudable job by training distressed women on different vocations and rehabilitating them. But its activities are limping due to shortage of funds, sources in it said.  
Seven training centres run by the department in six upazilas of the district are training women between 18 and 35 in handicrafts, sewing, dressmaking, poultry raising, family planning, basic healthcare and sanitation. Soft loans are given after the six months' training so that they can be self-reliant, Shagata Sharma of the department told this correspondent during a recent visit to a centre. The upazilas are Mohongonj, Barhatta Kendua, Atpara,

Durgapur and Purbadhala.  
The women are grouped in 39 associations and a total of 260 women are trained in each batch.  
Each trainee gets 30 kilograms of rice and Tk 90 as allowance per month during the training period. Each of them has to open a savings account with a bank and deposit Tk 25 every month.  
Starting in 1997, the department has so far disbursed Tk 15.55 lakh loans women after training. An amount of Tk 3.5 lakh will be disbursed this month, but the department does not have the entire money in hand now, Sharma said.  
She said the credit program is playing an important role in empowering the poor women.



Poor women engaged in sewing under a training programme run by the District Women Affairs Department, Netrakona

'Foreign funds needed for gas supply'

Minister's reply to KCC Mayor's letter

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna**  
Work on the gas line network project in Khulna region will begin when funds are available from the Asian Development Bank (ADB).  
This was stated by State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources AKM Mosharef Hossain in reply to a letter from Khukna City Corporation (KCC) Mayor Shaikh Tayebur Rahman, written last month.  
The said a project for laying the pipeline network has been taken up after survey. But the expensive

and gigantic project can not be implemented without foreign assistance  
Mayor Shaikh Tayebur Rahman in his official letter urged the state minister to take immediate steps for gas supply to Khulna region from Pabna via Pakshey bridge for industrialisation of the region.  
It is a positive step that the government has undertaken a gas line network expansion project in Khulna region, the Mayor told the Daily Star. He also thanked the government on behalf of the people of Khulna.

Farmer Killing Day observed at Gaibandha

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha**  
Gaibandha Jatiya Party held meeting public at the Public Library hall in the town on Monday in observance of 'Farmer Killing Day'.  
Two persons were shot dead in Gaibandha when police opened fire on agitating farmers demanding fertiliser at fair price in 1992. One of them was killed near a fertiliser godown near the Deputy Commissioner's office and the other at the Mohimaganj railway station.  
A total 14 peasants were killed during agitation in the country for fertiliser at fair prices in that year.  
The speakers at the meeting

urged the government to take steps so that such incidents do not happen again.  
They also expressed concern at the price hike of kerosene, diesel and fertilizer during the current IRRRI-Boro season.  
Presided over by Jahidul Islam Jhantu, secretary of Gaibandha Jatiya Krishak Party, the meeting was addressed by, among others, its central Vice-Chairman Abdur Rashid Sarker, central Joint Secretary Waiduzzaman Sarker, JP leader Shajahan Khan Abu, Jatiya Sramik Party leader Rezaubbabi Raju, Jatiya Mohila Party President Fouzia Akhter, Ragib Hasan Chowdhury and Anwarul Islam Lebu.



The foundation stone of a Bangladesh Television (BTV) relay centre in Sylhet was laid a few years ago. But nobody knows when the project work will start.

RU students face session jam

**RU CORRESPONDENT**  
About 25,000 students of Rajshahi University (RU) face a session jam due to closure of the university for 53 days.  
Although honours and masters final examinations of most of the departments began before its closure, yet the examinations were not finished as per schedule, according to university sources.  
Political Science Department chairman Professor Anseruddin blamed the university authorities for the grim situation. He said the authorities do not think about students' education life, rather they are always engaged in activities to attain political gains.  
Anthropology Department chairman Prof Abu Bakker Siddik told this correspondent that examinations of third year students were finished without viva examination. Still they face a session jam due to closure of the university.  
Professor Entajul Haque, convener of Progressive Teachers' Association said the present administration is responsible for the session jam.  
Mahabubur Rahman, an Economics Department final year student said that previously there was no session jam in the department, but the closure created a new session jam.  
Nazrul Islam, a commerce student told this correspondent they face a session jam because

their semester-based faculty curriculum is yet to be finished on time.  
On contact, Vice Chancellor Professor Faisal Islam Faruki informed that he would shorten vacations to reduce session jam. He had already asked all departmental chairmen to publish examination results of their departments as soon as possible. 'Examinations in many departments will be held even on Fridays', he told this correspondent.  
Rajshahi University was closed for an indefinite period after a clash between Jatiyatabadi Chhtra Dal and Islami Chhtra Shibir on January 13. At least 50 persons were injured in the clash.  
8 hurt as BCL groups clash in Satkhira  
**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira**  
At least eight leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhtra League (BCL), student front of the opposition Awami League (AL), were injured in a clash between two rival groups on Monday at Satkhira Government College.  
Witnesses said rival supporters BCL leaders Jewel and Jadu clashed over formation of the college unit of the party.

BPDB's Tk 6 cr unrealised in Moulvibazar

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar**  
Electricity consumers here are yet to pay power bills amounting to over six crore taka to Moulvibazar Power Development Board (BPDB) till January this year.  
Moulvibazar Pally Biddut Samity (PBS) did not pay bill amounting to two crore 85 lakh taka, different government offices one crore 65 lakh taka while different private and commercial consumers one crore 71 lakh 321 taka, according to local BPDB sources.  
Power consumers here face a chronic problem of over-billing and they have to pay much due to this phenomenon, consumers alleged. They further alleged that BPDB staff always distribute electricity bills to consumers only four to five days before the last date of payment although the bills are issued one month ahead of last date of payment.  
Moreover, consumers fail to register their complaints as the concerned on-duty PDB official do not receive the calls.  
This correspondent on March 10 visited the local BPDB office where he stayed for about 45 minutes and found all officers and employees including assistant engineer and executive engineer excepting five to seven staff left the office to attend the marriage ceremony of a Line Helper, also a trade union leader.



A farmer receives agriculture loan from Sonali Bank general manager (Admin) Md Ziauddin Ahmed at a function held at Teota Union Parishad in Shibhalaya upazila, Manikganj on Saturday. The bank disbursed six lakh taka as loan among 35 poor farmers of the union under a special pilot project.