

SNAPS

20 hurt in Chuadanga villagers' clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia
At least 20 people were injured in a clash between two groups at Boaldia village under the Sadar upazila in Chuadanga district on Friday.
The clash erupted between the rival groups led by Rasid and Ashraf, police said.
They used lethal weapons during the clash. Five of the injured have been admitted to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital, police said.
No case was filed till filing this report.

Jubo Dal man held for snatching

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira
Police have arrested Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal activist Jahangir from his village home at Bharsha in Tala upazila on charge of snatching Tk 80,000 from a person.
Police said some activists of Jubo Dal, youth front of ruling BNP, led by Jahangir had snatched the money from one Al Amin Lattu of Atharai village in the upazila after he drew it from Agrani Bank at Patkelghata. A case has been lodged with Tala thana.

3 smugglers get 14 years RI in B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria
Three smugglers were sentenced to 14 years rigorous imprisonment (RI) each by a court here on Wednesday.
The convicts are: Suman Mia Liton, Sagar Mia and Md Kajoj Mia Helal.
Special Tribunal No 3 and Additional District and Sessions Judge Md Jahangir Hossain also fined them 500 taka each, in default, to suffer one month more RI.
Akhaura police arrested the three on April 23 in 1999 when they were smuggling banned Indian Phensidyl through Akhaura railway colony.

Life for 10 killers in Nilphamari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari
A court here on Wednesday sentenced 10 persons to life term rigorous imprisonment (RI) in a sensational murder case.
The convicts are: Atul Roy, Dhananjoy, Abdus Sattar, Sumaru, Robin, Sunil, Suresh, Ebadullah, Kalachad and Vupendra.
They were also sentenced to additional five years imprisonment in a different section of the case.
Four people were acquitted of charge as they were proved not guilty.

On August 12 in 1993, the culprits set on fire the house of a village police named Sawkat Ali of Kundopukur union in Sadar upazila over a feud. When Sawkat resisted the accused hit him with an axe causing serious injuries.
Sawkat died at Rangpur Medical College Hospital (RMCH) after fighting for life for 10 days.
Additional District and Sessions Judge of Nilphamari Md Zahedul Islam pronounced the verdict after 10 years of court proceeding.

Body of notorious criminal found

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia
Police have recovered the body of a notorious criminal who escaped with handcuff from custody about two years back.
The body of Giren Biswas 30, with its throat slit, was found on a field at Bahermadi village in Daulatpur upazila on Friday. He was the son of Mati Biswas.
Giren, accused in at least 14 murder cases, escaped from police custody while he was being taken to Daulatpur police station from Kushtia court on July 22, 2002.
Two policemen were suspended in this regard.
According to family sources, Giren came home several days ago to see his grandfather.
Unidentified men called Giren out of house Wednesday night. He was missing since then.

Bangkok Hospital to participate in Ctg fair

STAR NATIONAL DESK
Bangkok Hospital, the lone three tier specialised hospital owned by the biggest private hospital group in South East Asia, is participating in the four-day 'Thailand Exhibition-2004' being held at the Engineers' Institution, Chittagong.
Visitors are being provided with improved treatment facilities at the hospital, according to a press release.
Bangkok Hospital also took part in the just concluded Thai Mela (fair). During the fair, a medicine specialist and a heart specialist gave medical advice to serious patients.

IU VC removed, new VC Prof Rafiqul Islam

PM signs official order, confirms IU Registrar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia
Prime Minister and Islamic University Chancellor Khaleda Zia removed Vice Chancellor Prof Mustafizur Rahman from service yesterday.
The PM appointed Rajshahi University Economics Department Professor Rafiqul Islam the new vice chancellor of the university. Islamic University Registrar Dr Moslemuddin has confirmed the report yesterday afternoon.
An earlier report said the Bidhi Bidhan Sangrakkhan Committee (BBSC), a body of Islamic University teachers, officials and employees, at big joint rally on the campus yesterday gave a deadline for removal of Prof Mustafizur Rahman and announced a tougher agitation programme for non-compliance.

The programme includes two-hour road blockade on Kushtia-Khulna highway in front of the university and protest rally on the campus every day.
The liaison committee, formed earlier with representatives of teachers, students, officials and employees will oversee implementation of the fresh agitation programme.
Prof Ashraf Ali, convener of BBSC and president of IU Teachers Association (IUTA) presided over the rally. It was addressed by, among others, IUTA Secretary Prof Alinoor Rahman, Prof. Abul Ahasan Chowdhury, Prof Shahjahan Ali, Dr. Tahir Ahmed, Dr. Makhlukur Rahman, Dr. Zakir Hossain, Prof Sawkat Jahangir, Dr Rais Uddin, Kamal Uddin, Saiful and ABM Siddikur Rahman.

Reiterating their demand for removal of the VC, the speakers urged the government to take immediate steps in this regard. There will be no solution the deadlock if the "corrupt and inefficient" V is not removed, the speakers said.
The BBSC leaders also criticised a group of IU teachers who are demanding removal of the university's treasurer Prof Mosarraf Hossain. This is a conspiracy to divert the attention of teachers, officials and students from the demand, they said.
According to sources, teachers aligned to Jamaat-e-Islami who are grouped in the Green Forum and Islamic Chhtra Sibir (ICS) activists have raised the demand for removal of Prof Mosarraf Hossain, president of IU Zia Parishad.

They held a separate rally on Thursday in front of the main gate of the university and demanded removal of the treasurer, calling him "corrupt".
Meanwhile, there is a rumour on the campus that Prof Rafiqul Islam of Rajshahi University is coming as JU Vice-chancellor.
Fate of about 9000 students of the university has become uncertain as a deadlock is prevailing at the IU for several months.
The teachers, officials and students are demanding the VC's removal as he is allegedly toeing a Jamaat line and appointed many pro-Jamaat teachers and employees during his short tenure.
Allegations have it that the VC did not observe important national days on the campus.



The tractors will no more roll out of the Rangpur Sugar Mills to bring sugarcane from farmers. PHOTO: STAR

RANGPUR SUGAR MILLS

Fresh programme for lay-off withdrawal

Hartals today and on April 20, mass hunger strike on April 13

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha
The Gaibandha District Workers and Employees Federation and the Rangpur Sugar Mills Workers Union at a joint rally at the Shaheed Minar in the town yesterday announced a fresh agitation programme for withdrawal of the mill's lay-off.
The programme includes contact with political parties from April 5 to 12, day-long 'mass hunger strike' at the Shaheed Minar on April 13 and dawn to dusk hartal in the district on April 20.
The rally also called upon the people to observe a half-day hartal in the district own tomorrow, announced earlier.

Presided over by Rabiul Hossain, president of the federation, the rally was addressed by, among others, Gaibandha Awami League President Mohammed Khaled, Jatiya Party President Abdur Rashid Sarker, Workers Party Secretary Aminul Islam Golap, Gano Forum President Moinul Islam Raja, NAP President Lutfar Rahman Ranju, CPB Presidium Member Shahidullah, Gaibandha University College Student Union Vice-president Khademul Islam Khidi, its secretary Kamruzzaman Annu, Gaibandha Restaurant and Hotel Workers Union President Anowarul Islam and Rangpur Sugar Mills Workers Union President Abdur Matin.
The speakers expressed solidar-

ity with the agitating unemployed workers and employees of the sugar mill, the only heavy industry in the district.
They said the BNP-Jamaat alliance government is closing down mills one after another. It close down the Adamjee Jute Mills without creating jobs for the workers, they said.
The speakers said a tougher programme will be announced unless the government withdraws the lay-off.
After the rally, a human chain along the DB Road at the rail crossing was formed, which was participated by all sections of people.

'Ban child labour at bidi factory'

Workshop at Kushtia told

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia
Speakers at a roundtable meeting on 'Child Labour: Way of Prevention' demanded enactment of law to stop child labour in bidi factories and tobacco procession industries.
Bangladesh Trade Union Centre (BTUC) organised the round table.
They said child labour has been stopped in the readymade garments sector. This scourge can also be stopped in bidi factories.
The child workers become victims of various incurable diseases in bidi factories and tobacco processing industries, they said.
The discussants included Prof Sahinoor Rahman, chairman English Department of Islamic University; Rezaul Karim of Bangla Department; IU research fellow Amanur Aman; Officer-in-charge of Sadar police station Abdur Noor; MA Kader, executive director of Setu, a local NGO; journalist Matir Rahman Lattu; Shanara Rashid Jharna; Syeda Habiba; Sanjya Chaki; Rahmat Rizvi; Nurul Kadera and ILO official Jagannoy Brozesh Biswas. BTUC Programme Coordinator Ahasan Nabab was in the chair.

Attack on Hasina's motorcade protested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj
Awami League (AL) on Saturday brought out a procession in the town and organised a meeting in front of Manikganj Press Club protesting attack on the motorcade of party chief Sheikh Hasina in Barisal.
Fearing government's fall by April 30, the criminals belonging to BNP-led Alliance government attacked Hasina's motorcade in a planned manner, AL leaders said.
The party's district unit president advocate Golam Mohiuddin and general secretary Gazi Kamrul Huda Selim addressed the meeting.

BDR officers visit border in guise of newsmen

Three withdrawn for helping smugglers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sakthira
Two BDR intelligence officers visited some border outposts in the district in the guise of journalists to see anti-smuggling drive by the law enforcers.
Maj. Jaman and Capt. Jahur of 12 Rifles Battalion on Tuesday visited Jhowdanga BOP. But they were not well received as they identified themselves as newsmen. One Habildar misbehaved with Maj Jaman, BDR sources said.
Later they went to Kakkdanga BOP and found some BDR personnel helping smugglers.
On return to his camp, Maj. Jaman ordered withdrawal of three BDR personnel from Kakkdanga outpost for helping smugglers.
The incidents created an alarm among BDR personnel in the district, the sources said.

Nilphamari JCD leader killed under train

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari
A Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader was killed in a train accident here on Friday.
The victim is Nilphamari district JCD assistant social welfare secretary Isme Azam, son of late Rashidul Islam of Munshipara village in Kundopukur union under Sadar upazila.
Riding a motorbike he was going to his maternal uncle's house with his friend Jolish at Khoksabari for a business purpose in the afternoon. When he was crossing the Cheta Shah rail gate at Khukhapara, a speeding train collided with his motorbike resulting his instantaneous death. But his companion Jolish was miraculously saved.
During the accident the rail gate was open and no gate man was seen. A pucca road connects Nilphamari Sadar with the neighbouring Khansama upazila of Dinajpur district through the railway track.
The speakers said the river water

Govt released 70,000 criminals, former minister claims

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira
Former minister during Awami League government Abdul Matin Khosru has said the present government has released 70,000 criminals from jails.
Failing to run the country, the BNP-led alliance government has now resorted to conspiracy and repression on the opposition to cling to power, he told a workers' meeting of Satkhira Awami League at its office on Thursday.
Central AL Office Secretary Abdul Mannan Khan and local party leaders including Monsur Ahmed, Nazrul Islam, SM Haidar and Farida Akhtar Banu also addressed the meeting, presided over by district AL convener Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
Khosru called upon the party workers to mobilise people to build up a movement against the government to end its "misrule".
He said demanding resignation of a "failed" government is not undemocratic.
The former minister said law and order has deteriorated because ruling party leaders shelter criminals.
He also criticised the government for failing to check high prices of fuel and fertiliser during the on going IRR-Boro season and of essentials.

'Protect Kaliganga river from pollution'

Procession, rally held at Manikganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj
The Manikganj Paribesh Dushan Rakkha Committee (PDRC), an environment protection body, brought out a procession in the district town and held a rally in front of the Deputy Commissioner's (DC) office on Wednesday demanding steps to protect Kaliganga river from pollution by industrial waste.
Hundreds of people including teachers, students, lawyers, businessmen, journalists and political activists from villages on the banks of the river took part in the programme.
With Nur Mohammad Master in the chair, the rally was addressed by, among others, Iqbal Hossain Khan, Gazi Kamrul Huda, Afjal Hossain Khan Jaki, Nabagram Union Parishad (UP) ex-chairman advocate Nazrul Islam Badsha, Advocate Abdul Jaill Bittu, Abdul Jalil, Zohirul Hoque and Habibur Rahman Swapan.
The speakers said the river water has been contaminated by waste from a textile mill at Gilondo village in the Sadar upazila.
People living in the 20 km area on the banks of the river are facing serious crisis of water. They cannot even bathe in the river, not to speak of using the water for cooking and other purposes because it has turned almost black due to pollution, the speakers said.
Fishes in the 20 kilometre stretch of the river are disappearing.
Many people in the area have been attacked with various chronic diseases after using the water, they said.
The PDRC leaders warned that they would call a hunger strike if their demand is not met by April 10.
Earlier, the PDRC had brought out a procession and held a rally on March 15 in the town demanding steps to protect the river from pollution.
But the administration did not take any action. Rather, the Manikganj DC said that the river water is pollution-free.



Students of Bangladesh Open University brought out a procession at Bogra on Friday demanding reduction of various fees. PHOTO: STAR

Hindu Bouddha Oikya Parishad confce held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona
The Mymensingh unit of Bangladesh Hindu Bouddha Christian Oikya Parishad held its conference at Netrakona on Friday at a local auditorium.
It was inaugurated by Major General (ret) C R Datta, central president of the Parishad. Justice K M Sohban was the chief guest.
It was addressed by, among others, advocate Shiril Shikdar, Dr Nim Chandra Bhomik, Capt (Rtd) Mojib MP and advocate Pranash Chandra Mojumdher with Sawapan Sarkar, convener of Mymensingh district unit of the Parishad, in the chair.

One to die for double murder in Kasba

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria
A court here on Tuesday condemned one person to death and sentenced nine others to different jail terms for double murder in Kasba.
The Chittagong Divisional Speedy Tribunal condemned Idris Mia, son of Abdul Berek of Deewra village in Sarail upazila to death by hanging and sentenced Makbul Hussain, Mahan Mia to life term rigorous imprisonment (RI) and fined 50,000 taka each.
Tribunal judge M Hasan Imam also sentenced Abul Hasem, Mofiz alias Mobin, Yunus, Jahirul Islam alias Jahir, Abdul Kadir and Musharraf Hussain alias Sheshu Mia to 15 years' RI and fined 20,000 taka each. Another person Abdul Hamid was sentenced to 10 years' RI and fined one lakh taka.
Two businessmen of Kasba Kuti Bazaar named Mominul Haque Billal and Abul Kashem were killed three years back.

589 get back eyesight in Tangail eye camp

STAR NATIONAL DESK
A total of 589 persons got back their eyesight in the 2nd Annual Mega Eye Camp organised by Grameen Kalyan (GK) in Tangail.
The camp was held from March 23 to 29.
Intra-ocular lens were implanted to hundreds of patients through an operation which lasted for 15 to 25 minutes only. The patients ranging from 12 to 90 years of age came all the way as far as from Rajshahi, Manikganj, Munshigonj, Natore, Dhaka and local district Tangail.
The target beneficiaries of the camp were impoverished villagers, comprising both Grameen Bank and non-Grameen Bank borrowers who hold micro-health insurance cards with GK, and for non-GB members. Full sponsorship was also offered to the struggling GB members, namely beggars. Restoring vision to these members will motivate and enable them to change their profession to a more dignified and productive one.

Half-finished, full payment

Contractors draw bills before completion of bridges

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal.
A good number of big bridges and culverts constructed in Gournadi and Agailjhara in the district at huge costs can not be used for sheer negligence in their construction.
But the contractors have drawn bills keeping their work incomplete, sources said.
The LGED (Local Government and Engineering Department) constructed a 63-metre bridge on Hafez Khan Hat canal on Torik Bandar road in Gournadi in 2000 at a cost of Tk 82 lakh. It was built by Friends International, a construction firm.

Lands were acquired by the government for building approach roads to the bridge.
But the bridge can not be used as the approach roads are yet to be built, local people and LGED sources said.
The bridge is now a den of drug addicts, Abdull Jalil a resident of Torik said.
Md. Fazlur Rahman, assistant engineer who was in charge of the project said he was assaulted by the contractor's men as he pressed him to finish the work.
As local people complained, Hemayet Uddin, LGED executive engineer in Barisal visited the bridge

and sanctioned an additional amount of Tk one lakh for completing the approach road.
This correspondent during a recent visit saw that the earth-filling work to connect the bridge with approach roads is yet to be completed.
A culvert constructed at a cost of Tk 28 lakh in Temar in Agailjhara in 2001 is unused as it is not connected with approach roads but the contractor has drawn the bills.
Nannu Enterprize built a culvert in Khanzapur Maszidbari in 2001. Messers Zamal Hossain and Sarder Enterprize built two other culverts near Batajore bus stand at a cost of Tk 14 lakh each. The bills were paid.

But the culverts can not be used as the contractors did not complete the approach roads.
Local people said Batajore Union Parishad later collected money from another local project and made the culverts usable.
When contacted, Ebadat Hossain, engineer in charge of LGED projects in Agailjhara and Gournadi upazilas admitted the irregularities. He said the LGED had to pay bills due to pressure as most of the contractors belonged to the then ruling party.
He said they are taking steps so that such irregularities can not take place in future.



The Torik Char bridge constructed at a cost of about one crore taka can not be used by vehicles due to lack of approach roads (left) and people crossing the small river on boats to avail transports on the other side of the bridge. PHOTO: STAR

Editor of B'baria weekly dies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria
Poet Jamila Begum, founder editor of a local Bangla weekly Maa, died at her residence in the town on Wednesday. She was 95.
She left behind four sons, three daughters and a host of admirers.
She was a former ward commissioner of Brahmanbaria Pourashava.
She was also the author of Kabitia Sankalan and Kalantoror Dhaew.