

SNAPS

4 killed in Manikganj road mishap

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Four persons were killed and eight others injured when an Aricha-bound pickup van collided head on with a truck at Paturia in Shivaloia upazila yesterday.

The dead are Abdur Rahim, 45, of Tepra; Julhash, 50, of Aricha; Lipi, 25, of Korjona and Ekhtas Mollah 45, of Shaljana in Shivaloia upazila.

Lipi and Ekhtas Mollah died on the spot. The two others died at Uthuly health complex, where the eight injured were admitted. Two of them were shifted to Manikganj Sadar Hospital in critical condition.

Boy drowns, 2 others missing in Meghna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A boy drowned and two others are missing as two trawlers, hit by cargo launches, sank in the Meghna in two incidents in Barisal and Bhola on Wednesday.

Police said Raihan (10), son of Razzak Munshi of Baugati, drowned when their trawler sank at Torki launch ghat in Gournadi upazila in Barisal. They were members of a bridal party. The body of Raihan was later recovered. The unidentified killer vessel sped away.

In the other incident, Joynal, 8 and Shimu, 11, are missing after their trawler, hit by cargo launch Palashpur-1, sank in the Meghna in Tazmuddin in Bhola district.

Passengers of the ill fated trawler was rescued by fishermen. But the two children are missing. People seized the vessel and handed it over to police but its crew escaped.

2 killed in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Two betel leaf traders were killed on the spot when a Chuadanga-bound pick up van hit them from behind at Dakbanglo Bazar on the Jhenidah-Chuadanga highway in Jhenidah district on Thursday.

They are Fakrul Islam Panu, 35, of Baksipur in Sadar upzila and Haradhan Biswas, 22, of Bhaturia in Harinakundu upzila in Jhenidah.

Police said the killer pick up managed to escape.

Unrest at Akis Bidi Factory Labour leader held, 12 face case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Police on Thursday arrested Jewel Ahmed, a labour leader at Akis Bidi Factory, after its owners filed a case against 12 factory workers.

The factory workers are agitating for about a month for pay hike and payment of Tk 20 arrears.

Workers claimed that the owners have declared the factory "partially closed". There are about 5,000 workers at the factory.

They alleged that they went to police to file a case against factory manager Khorsed Alam, but police did not accept their case. Their leaders are fleeing homes now, fearing arrest.

The workers alleged that some goons allegedly hired by the factory manager attacked workers when they were holding a meeting with the manager on May 6 regarding their demands, injuring 30 people.

When contacted Khorsed said the case has been filed as some "unruly labourers are trying to damage the factory".

Killings by outlaws up

91 murdered in Chuadanga in Jan-Apr against 40 in Oct-Dec: At least 1000 cadres in 20 gangs under 9 political godfathers active

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

Killings by outlaws in Chuadanga district have increased alarmingly.

At least 91 people were killed in the district in the last four months compared to 40 in the previous three months.

Twenty-one people were killed in January, 18 in February, 22 in March and 30 in April this year. This compares to nine in October, 12 in November and 19 in December last year, according to police records and newspaper reports.

In a single incident on April 30, outlaws belonging to Janajuddho faction of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) killed three persons in the district. In another such incident on December last year, its cadres killed five persons at Chalerkathi village in Damurhuda upazila.

According to police sources at least seven outlawed parties with 1000 armed cadres grouped in 20 gangs are active in the terror torn district in the southwestern region.

About 12 lakh people of four upazilas of the district are hostage in the hands of the gangs.

Fifty ringleaders control the armed cadres who possess about

15000 illegal firearms, according to sources in intelligence agencies.

The outlawed parties are Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP), Janajuddho faction of PBCP, Banglar Communist Party (BCP), Biplobi Communist Party (BCP), New Biplobi Communist Party (NBCP), Jashod Gono Bahini (JGB) and Gono Mukti Fouz (GMF) of Sromojibi Mukti Andolon.

The hardened criminals belonging to these parties collect illegal toll from people and business men, grab land, abduct and commit murders for ransom and rape and kill girls at will.

At least 100 people were killed by these terrorists in the district in last four months, according to police records and newspapers report.

The victims include political leaders and activists, businessmen failing to pay toll and girls, killed after rape. Members of rival parties were also killed over rivalry for establishing supremacy in different areas.

The law and order situation in the district is the worst now compared to any previous period, some police officials told this correspondent preferring anonymity. Murders

have crossed all previous records, they said.

PBCP (Janajuddho) is responsible for most of the killings. It claimed responsibility for at least 60 killings, they said.

"Godfathers of the outlaws are political leaders belonging to major parties", said a high police official.

"The godfathers use the outlaws for various purposes including election, establishing supremacy or killing political opponents", he said.

"Intelligence agencies have identified at least nine such godfathers and 126 professional terrorists of various outlawed parties and gangs in Chuadanga and gave lists to higher authorities several month ago but to no effect", he said.

Other sources claimed that these outlaws maintain close link with a section of policemen and get tip-off before police raid. As a result they evaded arrest during last three successive joint drives in this region since last year.

There are nine joint forces' camps in the district but they can not make any headway in netting the outlaws.

Honey farmers can earn forex

Yield can be raised to 4000 maunds annually in Modhupur from 1200 with govt help

JAHANGIR ALAM, back from Modhupur (Tangail)

Netrakona: The forest area in Mymensingh was named Modhupur for its abundant natural supply of modhu (honey). But the natural supply depleted long ago with gradual shrinking of forests.

A good number of farmers still cling to their traditional profession amid odds, producing about 1200 maunds of honey a year. The production can be raised to about 4000 maunds, leaving a sizeable export surplus, if the problems are removed and assistance provided, they say.

Marketing problem, lack of scientific preservation facilities, HYV bees and bank loan and high price of medicine to protect bees from diseases are the major problems.

Officials at the Bangladesh Institute of Agriculture (BIA) at Rasulpur at Fulbaria in Mymensingh said there are about 2000 honey farmers in Madhupur, Mukttagacha, Fulbaria, Ghatail and Jamalpur in Modhupur forest area and in adjacent Sharishabari and Gopalpur upazilas.

BIA Director Nurul Islam at Rasulpur told this correspondent that they purchased 500 maunds of honey from farmers last year at Tk 120 per kilogram. Farmers supply honey to BIA only when they do not buyers from outside, he said. The market price rallies on Tk. 180 per kg, he said.

Sunil Nokrak, a honey farmer at

Joynagacha village in Modhupur, said he sells honey to BIA only when he does not find a trader because BIA offers cheaper rate. Sunil said last year he sold most of his product to traders in Mymensingh, Kishoregonj, Netrakona and Gazipur district towns.

Lutfur Rahman Masud, an educated young honey farmer at Nayagao village in Fulbaria upazila in Mymensingh, said he started honey farming in 1990 after three months' training at the BIA.

He started with only three bee boxes (one box accommodates a hub of 3000-3500 bees). Now he has 15 boxes. Last year he sold 165 kilograms of honey from 15 boxes and earned Tk 23,100.

Masud is cultivating Apish Sirana bee, a local variety. He is cultivating the local variety because he can not procure the high yielding Apish Malifera variety, which is costly.

The yield from Apish Malifera is almost double that from the local variety, he said. Besides, Apish Malifera bees are resistant to diseases unlike the Sirana variety.

Masud said BISIC and BIA sell Apish Malifera bees. But he cannot purchase those because of high price. A box of Malifera bees are sold at Tk 2500 to 3000, which poor honey farmers can not afford, he said.

He said the Apish Sirana bees are susceptible to various diseases. Once the hub in one box is attacked, all are infected and die. The preven-

tive medicine is imported and is not easily available.

Abul Kalam of Fulbaria headquarter is cultivating honey since 1992. He has 14 boxes, all with Apish Sirana. He said he tried for bank loan to expand the farming, but did not get.

Abul Hossen, Executive Director of Honey Cultivation Development Corporation at Modhupur, when contacted, said Modhupur forest area is famous for honey for long because the environment is suitable.

But honey farmers do not get any financial assistance from government. He said 90 per cent of the farmers are poor. The yield can be increased many times if the farmers are given assistance and other facilities. Only replacing the local variety with the Malifera variety could raise the annual yield to around 3000 maunds, he said. But the farmers said they could increase the yield to around 4000 maunds if their efforts are patronised by the government.



Lutfur Rahman nursing bees at his 'bee colony' at Nayagao village in Fulbaria upazila. The photo was taken last week.

Police inactive as Ahmadiyyas attacked in Rangpur, HR activists say

A CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A fundamentalist group attacked houses belonging to Ahmadiya community in four villages under Baderganj upzila in Rangpur but police did not take any action, human rights and legal aid activists alleged.

They made the allegation at a press conference here on Wednesday after visiting Dalapara, Gazipara, Dhamapur, and Shipur villages. The attack was made on April 29.

Held at the Zila Parishad auditorium, it was addressed by Khushi Kabir, Coordinator of Nijvera Kori, an NGO. The team included, Sultana Kamal and Dr. Hamida Hossen, Executive Director and director re-

spectively of Ayn O Shalish Kendra (a legal aid forum), Rangpur Lawyers Association Secretary Samsuzzaman and Gonotantri Party leader Afzal Hossen and representatives of some local NGOs.

Khushi Kabir quoted local Ahmadiya community leaders and said about three thousand people ransacked and looted their houses in the four villages on April 29. But when contacted, Officer-in-Charge of Baderganj thana Md Golam Mostafa said he did not know anything about the attack, she said.

During the visit, the community leaders told the team that their members were isolated from the society.

Their children are not allowed to go to school or madrassah and they can not go to markets, she quoted them as saying.

Abdul High, a member of the community, told the team that he is fleeing homes since April 29 as police, instead of arresting the attackers, are after him.

Jaedul, another member, complained to the team that some local leaders of Zamaat-e-Islami barred Imams of mosques to offer Namaz-e-Janaja of his elder brother Nazrul Islam who died on April 7, she said. Tension mounted in the area after the incident.

Aiyunuddin, another member, said police arrested his son Aiyub

Ali though court granted him bail in connection with an incident in Rangpur Sader upzila. This is an allegation of police harassment.

After the visit, the team called on Rangpur Deputy Commissioner Anwarul Karim at his office and urged him to take all necessary steps to protect the Ahmadiyas in the four villages.

The victims told the team that after the attack the OC refused to record any case.

Khushi Kabir told the newsmen that they were surprised when the Baderganj thana OC said he was not

informed of any attack on Ahmadiyas on April 29.



One of the damaged houses at Dalapara village (left) and human rights activists talking to a Ahmadiya family during a visit.



PHOTO:STAR

Transport strike in Nilphamari tomorrow

BNP-Jamaat stand-off in Jaldhaka

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

The Nilphamari District Transport Workers Union has called a day-long transport strike in the district tomorrow protesting the attack on its Jaldhaka office on the May Day.

The strike has been called as all efforts by BNP to settle the stand-off failed due to non-cooperation of Jamaat-e-Islami leaders, Nilphamari president of the union Dewan Almgir Marshal said at a press conference

here on Thursday.

He said they also appealed to the district administration to arrest the attackers, but to effect. A greater movement programme will be announced if the culprits are not arrested by tomorrow, he said.

Marshal said after the May Day attack by Jamaat activists, a general diary was recorded with Jaldhaka thana mentioning names of 170 attackers but police did not take any action.

He also alleged that the attack was an attempt on the life of Anwarul Kabir Chowdhury, Jaldhaka unit president of the transport workers union. Kabir Chowdhury is also president of Jaldhaka BNP and chairman of Jaldhaka Poursabha.

Marshal said that the leaders of his organisation met the Deputy Commissioner and urged him to intervene for arrest of the culprits.

Kabir Chowdhury alleged at the press conference that efforts to settle the matter amicably failed due to non-cooperation of local Jamaat lawmaker Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury.

"The MP is sheltering the criminals. "Now my life is endangered" he added.

"Even the photograph of the Prime Minister was also damaged when the (transport workers union) office was ransacked", he said.

The nearby Jaldhaka municipal office, six bus ticket counters and two business establishments owned by BNP men were also damaged in the attack allegedly by Jamaat activists there on the May Day. The attack triggered a clash between BNP and Jamaat.

Principal, 10 others hurt as students clash with outsiders

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natrakona

Eleven persons including the principal, vice-principal and two teachers of Sheikh Fazilatunnessa college at Malandaha in Jamalpur district were injured during a clash between students and outsiders on the campus on Thursday.

Police and witnesses said there was a brawl between a college student - Manjurul Islam - and some local youths on Wednesday over playing football.

On the next day, when Manjurul Islam was coming to the college with some classmates, Babul and four local youths obstructed them at the gate. As the news spread, students came out, caught Babul and confined him in a room.

Haring this, about 50 local youths came to the college with lethal weapons and attacked the students.

Principal Shahidur Rahman, Vice-principal Md Shahjahan and teachers Badruzzan and Ruhul Amin were injured when they came to quell the violence.

Six students injured in the clash--Azad, Jakir, Jahurul, Dipu, Sanju and Titu-- were admitted in to Jamalpur Sadar Hospital.

Police have been deployed on the campus.

The college principal said his students can not be blamed for the clash as the outsiders forcibly entered the college and attacked them. He demanded police action against the intruders.

PBCP 'regional leader', cadre killed by police

Grocer bombed to death at Chuadanga

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Two armed cadres including a 'regional leader' of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP), were killed in police firing at Bamanagar when they jumped from a vehicle to escape after arrest by joint forces.

Police said they were members of ML Red Flag, a newly floated offshoot of outlawed PBCP.

Police said tipped-off joint forces raided the house of BNP leader Sanwar Hossain alias Laddu at Bhangbaria village in Alamdanga upazila at about 3 am on Thursday.

They arrested Zinarul Islam alias Toka, 35, and his accomplice Saban alias Khokon, 40 and recovered two rifles, 63 bullets, 18 bombs and two cell phones from their possession.

Sanwar is president of Bhangbaria union BNP and Chairman of local Union Parishad.

As the law enforces were brining them to Durluvpur police camp, they jumped from the police van with handcuff and tried to melt in the darkness. The joint forces opened fire, killing them on the spot.

Police said Zinarul was accused in 48 cases including 20 murder cases filed with different police station in Chuadanga and Meherpur.

In another incident grocer

Rafiqul Islam, 30, was fatally injured when unidentified miscreants hurled two bombs on him at his shop at Court Para in the town Wednesday night.

He died at Chuadanga Sadar Hospital Thursday morning.

BNP allowed, opposition barred

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Police on Wednesday foiled an attempt to form a human chain in the town to protest alleged rigging in the recent municipal polls but allowed another formed by BNP protesting the murder of Awami League lawmaker Ahsanullah Master.

Police foiled the move when the Committee to Resist Vote Dacoity and Realise Re-election, a forum of five defeated chairman candidates, tried to form a human chain at the Chowmohana square to press re-election in Moulvibazar Municipality.

But they did not disturb when BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Hawkers Federation formed a human chain nearby, protesting Ahsanullah Master's murder.

The Assistant Police Superintendent who was present there told this correspondent that police foiled the former programme in the interest of maintaining law and order.

Jubo Dal leader hacked by party rivals in Barisal

Dispute over drug money alleged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Jubo Dal leader Ziaul Hasan Suhad, 26, a listed criminal in the city and chief of self-styled Suhad Bahini, a notorious gang, was hacked by rivals in the party on Thursday allegedly over share of drug money, police and party sources said.

He was admitted to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital with injuries in different parts of his body. Hospital sources said he is now out of danger.

Suhad had deserted Awami League's student wing Chhatra League and joined Jubo Dal.

Suhad was convicted under the Public Safety Act but was granted bail by the High Court.

Witness and family sources said, some armed rivals hacked Suhad at his den at Kawnia Club near his house in Kawnia area of the city and left in motorcycles.

Suhad and his family members alleged that Sohel Chowdhury and his associates attacked him.

Kotwali police said a case is yet to be filed.

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