

SNAPS

Irony of fate

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Netrakona

A mother of three girl children died of heart attack as she again gave birth to twin daughters.

Merina Akhtar, 28, and her labourer husband Afjar Rahman, 35, of New Babupara area in Nilphamari pourasova had three girl children. Her husband had threatened her of divorce if she gave birth to a girl again.

But fate was so cruel to her. She gave birth to twin girl babies on Sunday. She fainted when she came to know this.

As she regained sense after some time, she made a shrill cry and collapsed.

The tragic incident created a sensation in the area.

The twin babies were taken as adopted daughters by two couples.

Rally to create awareness about AIDS

RU CORRESPONDENT

A big candlelight memorial rally was held on the Rajshahi University campus on Sunday night.

Anti AIDS Students Alliance and Centre for Communication and Development (CCD) jointly organised the rally to express sympathy to the AIDS affected patients of the campus.

A procession was also brought out where the processionists paraded the main streets of the university to make students aware about HIV/AIDS.

Several hundred teachers, students and officers of the university took part in the programme.

Discussion on Guru Rabidas held

A CORRESPONDENT, Joyprhat

Speakers at a meeting at Panchbibi thana here discussed the life and mission of Guru Rabidas, the emancipator of the backward Rabidas community who preached equality among human beings.

Bangladesh Guru Rabidas Mission, Panchbibi branch organised the meeting recently at Sarkarpara Rabidas Palli to commemorate Guru Rabidas Maharaj, the religious and cultural mentor of the community named after him. Sunil Rabidas was in chair while Master Kanai Lal Rabidas Mohanto, Director-General Bangladesh Guru Rabidas (Dham) Mission was present as chief guest. Shankar Rabidas, Prof Sunil Roy, advocate Babul Rabidas, Jahangir Alam and commissioner Mansur Rahman participated as special guests.

Tiger kills honey collector

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkira

A honey collector was killed by a man eater Royal Bengal tiger in the Sundarbans on Monday evening.

Quoting relatives of the victim police said the victim, Sahid Sana, 40, son of Abdul Jabbar Sana of Sora village in Shyamnagar upazila went to collect honey in the Sundarbans. During honey collection at Hshemarie area in the Sundarbans, a Royal Bengal swooped on him. The body was recovered on Tuesday morning.

Tragic

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Mother Anjana Nath, 30, committed suicide after killing her four year-old daughter Sumana at Patihar village under Agailjhara upazila allegedly after a feud with her husband Nikunja Nath.

After the quarrel, Anjana took her daughter to a nearby betel leaf field, Friday evening, poured insecticide into her mouth and herself took it, their relatives told this correspondent at Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital.

They were brought to the hospital in an unconscious state. They died Saturday morning.

Nikunja is absconding. A case is yet to be filed.

Student killed for toll?

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Mystery shrouds the death of a second year student of Kushtia Polytechnic Institute at his Choraikol village home in Kumarkhali upazila on Monday.

Police recovered the body of Sohel rana, 20, hanging from the ceiling.

Kumarkhali police said some extortionists had demanded Tk 50,000 from Sohel's businessman father Mofazzel Hossain but he declined and filed a general dairy with police. The gang then threatened his father of abducting or killing his son Rana.

On Monday in the evening, the family had gone to a neighbour's house on an invitation, leaving Rana alone at home. On return, they found Rana's body hanging from the ceiling.

Police said Rana might have been killed. A case has been filed.

The body was sent to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy.



A great job done together...People of Masterpara and Fakir Para villages in Shadullapur giving final touches to the newly dug canal to protect the area from erosion and flooding by Ghagot river. Gaibandha DC Tapon Chandra Majumder (wearing a cap) inaugurated the canal last week.

PHOTO: STAR

Villagers set an example

One kilometre canal dug in Sadullapur voluntarily to check erosion and flooding by Ghagot

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Gaibandha

Failing to get government assistance, the villagers joined hands and did a great job voluntarily.

People of two villages have dug about one kilometre canal that will stop erosion and flooding by the Ghagot river in Sadullapur Upazila and also allow pisciculture.

Strong current of the U-shaped portion of the river flowing through Mastarpara and Fakirpara villages earlier caused massive erosion and

flooding during every monsoon. The river will now lose its fury as it will flow straight after the loot-cutting.

The abandoned two-millimetre U-shaped portion will be used for pisciculture, fisher officials said.

Continued erosion threatened the Sunderganj-Sadullapur road, besides rendering several thousand people homeless and damaging crops on vast lands every year.

Local people several times appealed to the Water Development Board for digging a one-kilometre

canal to get rid of destruction by the U-shaped river, but to no effect.

They then decided to do it themselves.

Hundreds of people of all classes with spades in hand voluntarily joined the month-long earth cutting work and completed it last week.

"People can do every thing if they can be mobilised", said Anwarul Kadir, former president of Gaibandha Chamber of Commerce, who pioneered the programme.

Sadullapur UNO Paritosh

Chandra Das extended all out support to it.

Inaugurating the new canal, Gaibandha Deputy Commissioner Tapon Chandra Majumder allocated a grant of Tk 20,000 for construction of an embankment for its better protection.

He emphasised pisciculture in the abandoned U-shaped portion of the river.

Local fishery officials said over Tk five lakh fishes will be produced in the abandoned river.

AL bags more seats than ruling alliance

Factional feud cuts Alliance votes in Barisal divn municipal polls

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Awami League-backed candidates got five out of nine posts of municipal chairman against two bagged by the ruling Four-Party Alliance in Barisal division.

A rebel Alliance candidate won one post of chairman and the rest one went to a Jatiya Party (Ershad)-backed woman candidate in the staggered polls that ended on May 10.

But according to data available from the Election Commission, alliance candidates got more votes than the opposition parties but less posts. This was due to factional feud.

In the last parliamentary polls, AL got more votes but lesser seats due to factional feud.

The municipal elections were held by and large peacefully barring some stray incidents of violence at Gournadi, where rigging was

alleged. The AL men elected municipal chairmen are Golam Saleh Manju Molla (Banaripara), Md Shahjahan (Barguna), Anwar Hossain Akaon (Patharghata), Rafiquddin Ferdous (Mathbaria) and Masud Khan (Nalchhity).

Four AL chairman candidates and three renegades lost the polls.

The two elected chairmen from the Alliance are Mustak Ahmed Pinu (Patuakhali) and Nure Alam Howlader (Gournadi). Pinu joined BNP recently.

Rebel Alliance candidate Abdul Halim Gazi won in Jhalakati.

JP (Ershad) candidate Nasrin Jahan Ratna alias Ratna Amin, wife of JP Secretary General Ruhul Amin Howlader, has been elected chairperson of Bakerganj municipality.

In the nine municipalities, in Barisal division, total of 1,23,376 voters (70.19%) were cast out of 1,75,770.

Nine AL candidates got 35, 615 votes (28.86%) and three rebel candidates got 7,243 votes (5.87%).

Nine Alliance candidates got a total of 41,566 votes (33.69%) while its rebel candidates got 22, 640 votes (18.35%).

The JP candidate got 9410 votes.

Eight Alliance candidates and two rebel candidates lost the polls.

Three AL and one Alliance chairmen candidates have been re-elected. They are Golam Saleh Monju Molla, Md Shahjahan and Rafiquddin Ferdous of AL and Mostak Ahmed Pinu of the Alliance.

Anwar Hossain Akon and Abdul Halim Gazi were former municipal chairmen.

Four incumbent chairmen lost the polls. They are Belayet Hossain (AL- Jhalakati), Mahbub Hossain (AL- Bakerganj), Taslim Chowdhury (Ind-Nalchhity) and Ayub Hossain Mallick (Ind-Patharghata).

Housewife killed for dowry

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Patuakhali

A pregnant housewife was allegedly beaten to death by her husband for dowry at Kazirhawla village in Galachipa upazila on Sunday night.

The victim has been identified as Jowela, 26.

According to family sources, Jakir Hossain, a teacher of Rangabali College married to Jowela of nearby Mouduvi village three years ago. From then on Jakir was demanding one lakh taka dowry from his wife which she refused always. On the fateful night dowry-greedy Jakir asked his wife to bring him the dowry which she refused again. Then he beat her like anything resulting her spot death.

The victim's brother Jashim filed a case with the local thana. Police recovered the body and sent it to the morgue at Patuakhali General Hospital. The killer husband has been absconding.

20 injured in Nilphamari hospital fire

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Nilphamari

At least 20 people were injured when panicked people scrambled to come out of Nilphamari Hospital when a fire broke out there on Monday from an electric short circuit.

Patients and eyewitnesses said the main gate of the hospital was closed at that time. Terrified people broke the gate at the ground floor and jumped out. Some of the people tumbled and were trampled.

One of the injured was admitted to the hospital with critical head injury, hospital sources said.

On information, fire brigade came and put out the fire.

Over Tk 2 cr smuggled goods seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkira

BDR seized smuggled goods worth 2,09, 79, 422 taka from different bordering areas in the district during the last four months.

This seized goods include sugar, onion, fruits, spices, cycle, cycle parts, motor cycle and parts, parts of transport vehicle, eggs, cosmetics, cows, nylon net and Phensidyl, Battalion Commander Major Ashraf Hossain told this correspondent.

SHAHJALAL FERTILISER PLANT PROJECT SCRAPPED

Govt decision triggers agitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A government decision to scrap the planned Shahjalal Fertilizer Plant at Fenchuganj has sparked people's agitation in Sylhet.

The Sylhet Bibhag Unnayan Parishad (Sylhet Division Development Council), a Dhaka-based non-partisan forum of Sylhet people, began a month-long agitation programme on Monday with formation of a human chain and holding a rally in the city's Court Point area.

The Greater Sylhet Ganadabi Parishad (Greater Sylhet People's Committee to Realise Demands), another non-partisan forum, at its meeting on Sunday also protested the government decision and discussed an agitation programme, to be announced soon, sources said.

Unnayan Parishad's agitation programme, announced at the rally include a sit-in in front of the Nagar Bhaban on May 22 and a view-exchange programme with professionals on May 28, to be followed by rallies and processions at different puazila headquarters.

Speakers at the rally said tougher agitation will be launched if the government decision is the proposed Shahjalal Fertilizer Plant is not built.

They speakers included Dulal Ahmed Chowdhury, Abdul Khaleque, Md Shawkat Ali, Mojibur Rahman Mojb, Rezwan Ahmed, Jibunnessa Shirin, Humayun Kabir and Md Aaludin. Rafiqul Islam, Sylhet district unit president of the Unnayan Parishad presided.

Some professional and trade bodies will also begin agitation soon.

The then government in 1993 had decided to close down the country's first Natural Gas Fertilizer Factory (NGFF) at Fenchuganj, built in 1961, on the plea that it was too old to undergo renovation.

As the decision sparked wide-spread agitation throughout the district, the government formed a committee headed by Prof Iqbal Mahmud, a former vice-chancellor of BUET, to give a report. The committee recommended running and renovation of the mill at a cost of Tk 25 crore.

Since then, the factory is exceeding its yearly production target of 85,000 tons. Small renovation work was done time to time but the 25 crore taka renovation was not implemented.

As per the committee recommendation, the government decided to construct a new factory named Shahjalal Fertilizer Factory on the

vacant space adjacent to the old one.

International tenders were floated after ECNEC approval of the new project in 1993. A separate cell styled Shahjalal Fertilizer Factory Project started working at the BCIC (Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation) head office in Dhaka. A signboard was also erected at the site in Fenchuganj.

Recently, the BCIC closed the cell and some of the staff were transferred to NGFF.

Since ECNEC approval, international tender was floated as many as six times for the proposed \$ 250 million Shahjalal Fertilizer Factory with a production capacity of 1000 tons of Ammonia and Urea fertiliser daily. The last tender was floated in December 2002, to be responded by February 23, 2003.

Initially, Tk 30 lakh was also spent.

Sources said, the industries ministry at its meeting on March 31 stopped all work regarding the Shahjalal Fertilizer Factory at Fenchuganj and decided to shift the project to Sirajganj. As per a decision of the meeting, BCIC was asked to prepare a project proposal for the Sirajganj project within a month.

Diarrhoea kills 12 in 3 dists

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Diarrhoea claimed 12 lives in Gopalganj, Bandarban and Kishoreganj districts in last week.

Our Gopalganj Correspondent reported that diarrhoea had claimed five children and attacked 559 persons last week, according to an official source.

The victims are Shajib, 5, son of Mokter Hossain of Bedgram village, Antora, 8 months old daughter of Amar Biswas of Ghandashor village, Mominur Rahman, 4 months old son of Shadiqur Rahman of Mollarhat village, Insan, 7 months old son of Jahangir of Dugrapur village in Gopalganj Sadar upazila and Sobita Bari, 9 months old daughter of Ramlal Bari of Chatrapur village in Kotalipara upazila.

About 200 patients were admitted in Gopalganj Sadar Hospital, 62 in Kasiani Upazila Health Complex (HC), 132 in Kotalipara HC, 98 in Maksudpur HC and 75 in Tongipara HC.

The worst affected areas are Pathalia, Basbari, Gamadanga, Dugapur, Raghunathpur, Dhara Basha, Kandhi, Tangrabhola, Uzani, Nazanikandhi and Bathuria.

Dr Sayfuddin Ahmed, Resident Medical Officer (RMO) of Gopalganj Sadar Hospital told The Daily Star on Monday every day 15 to 20 diarrhea patients are being admitted in the hospital. He said an acute shortage of cholera IV saline and necessary drugs has been prevailing in his hospital.

Our Bandarban Correspondent reported that diarrhoea killed three children and an elderly woman in Thanchi upazila.

However, their identities are yet to be known.

Fourteen diarrhea-affected patients including seven women were admitted to Bandarban General Hospital on Monday.

Our Netrakona Correspondent reported that diarrhoea killed four infants and attacked over 100 people in Bajitpur and Kuliarchar upazilas of the district in last one week, sources at the Civil Surgeon's office here said.

The dead are Tahmina, daughter of Ershad Mia of village Koilaj; Sonia, daughter of Jahur Mia of village Patuli under Bajitpur upazila and Kausar and Msuda of Dumrakona village under Kuliarcha upazila.

Manikganj by-polls: Six to contest for chairmanship

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Manikganj Pourasabha by-election will be held on May 31.

After scrutiny six candidates are now contesting for the post of chairman. Additional District Magistrate of Manikganj and Returning Officer of the by-election Kazi Meraj Hossain distributed election symbols.

Awami Jubo (AL) League central committee member Sudev Shaha got the symbol of "bullock cart" while AL leader Romjan Ali got "Candle." Four-party Alliance candidate and BNP poura committee president Belayet Hossain Khan got "Umbrella." BNP rebel candidate Nasir Uddin Ahmed Jadu got "bi-cycle," independent candidate Uzzal Ahmed got "wheel" and Kazi Rayhan Uddin Tuku got the symbol of "wall clock."

The post of chairman of the pourasabha fell vacant after removal of Md Masharraf Hossain Babul from the post by a no-confidence motion of poura commissioners on September 3 in 2003. He was elected chairman on January 26 in 2002.