

SNAPS

Yellow panel sweeps CU Dean polls

CU CORRESPONDENT
Yellow Panel, the united platform of Awami League (AL) and left leaning teachers, has swept election to the Dean of Commerce Faculty, Chittagong University (CU) on Monday. Yellow Panel candidate Prof Dr Monzur Mahmud of Accounting Department bagged 36 votes while his rival Jamaat backed White Panel candidate Prof Dr Kazi Ahmed Nabi of Finance Department got 33 votes. Sixty-nine voters exercised their franchise to elect the dean for the next two years. The polling was held from 9am to 1pm at Commerce Faculty Lecture Gallery.

Smuggled mustard oil seized in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal
Barisal Kotwali police seized a huge quantity of smuggled mustard oil and recovered a pipe gun in the city on Tuesday. Police also arrested five criminals. They are Dhalu Howlader, Dulal, 28, Manik, 30, Riar, 12, and Dhalu, 32. Police also recovered the pipe gun from Dulal.

91 arsenicosis patients in Kasba

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria
In Kasba upazila, 91 arsenic affected patients were detected and 4,147 arsenic contaminated tube-wells were marked. Dhaka Community Hospital conducted a survey under the supervision of the Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE).

BNP leader freed by abductors

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia
A BNP leader was released after four days of abduction on payment of ransom. Abductors picked up Lutfor Rahman, general secretary of Alamdunga upazila unit of the party in Chuadanga district at gunpoint on May 26. He was released on payment of two lakh taka. The abductors threatened them to kill if they leak out the incident. Police said they are not aware about the incident as none filed any case. Earlier, the BNP leader and his family sources remained mum over the incident.

'Outlaw' killed by rivals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia
An alleged cadre of an outlawed party was gunned down by rivals at village Charsha in Sadar upazila in Rajbari district on Tuesday.
The dead is an alleged cadre of outlawed New Biplobi Communist Party (NBCP) named Ziaur Rahman, 25.
Police said 15-armed men stormed into Ziaur's house and picked him at gunpoint and took him to a nearby field. They shot him there at point blank. He died on the spot.
Police recovered the body and sent it to Rajbari Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Flood-hit dist faces food crisis

Political leaders demand test relief in 10 Sunamganj upazilas, steps against WDB officials for ill-planned dykes in haors

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, back from Sunamhanj

SYLHET: Nurul Gani at Hashkuri village in Sunamganj Sadar upazila has barely two weeks' food for his seven-member family.

He is worried how to survive till the next harvest a year later.

The early flood took away ready-for-harvest Boro paddy on three acres, the only food crop in a year.

Amir Uddin at Chhoyhara village in Jagannathpur upazila says the situation will become serious in about three weeks.

"There will be no food and work. The lands will remain under water for over seven months.

"I just looked on helplessly as the Boro fields reeled under water in 2-3 days", he said.

"We did not face such a situation even after the 1988 deluge, which came after harvest", he says.

Nurul Gani and Amir Uddin are among several lakh people in Sunamganj district, a low-lying haor area, who lost their entire paddy crop.

All the ten upazilas in the district have been affected by the floods in April-May.

Even rich farmers who are

dependent on Boro crop will face food crisis, said Shafique Miah of Dhol village in Derai upazila.

Normally water recedes within a few days and we can save crops. But this year it was different. "I could recover only ten percent of the crop from under water".

They, like many others this correspondent talked to, curse not only their fate but also Water Development Board officials. Ill-planned and improperly maintained WDB flood control embankments in haors aggravated the situation, they alleged.

The looming crisis has stirred political leaders and district officials as well.

A report prepared by the district administration says early floods caused by rain and water from Meghalaya hills across the borer submerged IRR-Boro paddy on over three lakh seven thousand acres, causing a crop loss of worth about Tk 450 crore.

The district agriculture department estimated that paddy on about 1,10,600 hectares were lost.

The district Law and Order Committee at a meeting on Tuesday chaired by Whip and Minister-in-Charge of the district Fazlul Haque Aspia discussed the

situation and suggested special relief allocations and agriculture loan.

Meeting sources said a visibly angry Whip Aspia asked WDB officials to take punitive action against officials and contractors responsible for the ill-planned and improperly maintained embankments. Aspis was elected from Sunamganj Sadar (North) and Biswambharpur upazilas.

Deputy Commissioner Jafar Siddique, Police Superintendent Mir Shahidul Islam, Advocate Bazlul Majid Chowdhury Khashru, Additional PP Mashuque Alam, Advocate Matiuur Rahman and Advocate Ainul Islam Bablu also spoke at the meeting.

Sources said Aspia met the Prime Minister earlier and apprised her of the situation and got assurance of additional relief allocations.

There are about 40 flood control embankments in haors in the district. As in every year, maintenance work was done this year also. About Tk one core 75 lakh was spent this year, WDB sources said.

But the WDB starts work on embankments just before the rainy season, which does not yield any meaningful result, people alleged.



PHOTO: STAR

Boro fields are now vast sheets of water. The photo was taken from Diara upazila on Tuesday.

65 injured in BNP factional clashes in Kushtia, Barisal

STAR NATIONBAL DESK

At least 65 people were injured as BNP factions clashed in Kushtia and Barisal.

Our Kushtia Correspondent reported that at least 50 persons were injured, 10 of them seriously

in a clash between two factions of ruling BNP at village Kazihata in Bheramara upazila on Monday night.

Two groups, one led by Awal and the other led by Dulal were engaged in a rivalry for a long time over establishment of supremacy in the area.

The clash began when Awal's men beat and injured Dulal's man Zahurul, 50, during an altercation at a tea stall at about 9:30 pm.

As the news spread, Dulal's men rushed there and locked in a clash with Awal's men for two hours.

Both the groups used lethal weapons during the clash. Police rushed and brought the situation under control and arrested four of both the groups from the spot.

They are Minarul, Faruk, Farid and Abdur Rahman. All were sent to jail.

Both the groups ransacked 25 houses and looted valuables.

Of the injured, Ali, 55, Zohurul, 40, Marium, 70, Nizam, 45, Jamal, 28, Bhola, 35, Mayen, 50, were admitted to local health complex.

Police superintendent of Kushtia, Saiful Islam visited the area.

Our Barisal Correspondent reported that 15 persons were injured in BNP factional clashes in Gournadi upazila on Tuesday morning.

Supporters of Ward No 8 unit president of BNP Jamal Sharif attacked their party leader and Ward No 8 commissioner Golam Morshed Panna, according to police.

There had been a long standing fued between the two ruling party leaders over establishment of influence in the area and municipal election. The clash lasted for about an hour till police arrived on the spot and took control of the situation.

Fourteen persons of both the groups were injured in the clash.

In another incident, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader and a student of Gournodi Government College Sujon Khalifa, 18, was beaten in Boradia area of Gournadi by the upazila Jubo Dal joint convener Rahim Howlader and his men on Monday.

'Drug queen' arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Police on Tuesday arrested drug queen Banu Barua, 35, from Debashish Nagar in the town.

Banu led an organised gang which smuggled locally made liquor to others parts of the country through Chittagong for long, said Sub Inspector Asheek, who led the special drive to nab her.

She faces several cases, the SI said. She was produced before court, which sent her to jail, court sources said.

Wife of Basu Barua, Banu was arrested earlier but she get released under bail, police said.

TALA BNP LEADER MURDER

Rally held for killers' arrest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Tala thana BNP held a rally and brought out a procession at Patkelghata Bazar on Tuesday demanding arrest and punishment of the killers of its president ABM Altaf Hossain.

The speakers at the rally alleged that Job Dal activist Montu had demanded Tk 5 lakh toll from one Kiron Majumder of Bara Kashuipur village. Altaf had protested this. Montu was expelled from the party. This could be the reason for his murder, they said.

With Akbar Hossain in the chair, the rally was addressed by, among others, former Union Parishad chairman Abul kalam Azad, Jubo Dal leader Hafizur Rahman, Aminur Rahman, Tauhidul Islam, Ali Hossain, Sohrab Hossain Abdul Jalil and Abu Sayeed.

Altaf was murdered on May 4 by unidentified assailants.

A different art competition



CHILDREN DEPICT VIOLATION OF CHILD RIGHTS... Twenty-five children at a painting competition on child rights held at a school at Patuakhali town depict others like them doing hard and risky work. They drew paintings showing children working at welding factory, lifting heavy weight at bus terminals and using electric appliances and such other risky things. The meet, organised by a local NGP-- SDA-- on Monday, was followed by a discussion meeting where officials including Additional Deputy Commissioner Baytur Rashid and human rights activists spoke.

ASP rescues OC from public wrath

Alleged killer released

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

The Additional Superintendent of police rushed to the spot on information and rescued an officer-in-charge of a thana from public wrath he faced for releasing an accused in a murder case.

The incident happened in Akhaura on Tuesday.

Akhaura police had arrested one Imon Chowdhury, 40, a suspected in the murder of Shah Alam of Ranikhar village. Alam was slaughtered on May 27.

But Imon was released from police custody on Monday.

This angered the people of Ranikhar village. They barricaded the Sylhet-Chittagong highway on Tuesday.

Akhaura thana OC Sheikh Md Ali Hayder and Constable Fazlu went to clear the highway.

Seeing them, the squatters became angry and chased them. The policemen took shelter in a nearby tea stall and gave a message to the thana.

The villagers kept the policemen confined, remanding re-arrest of Imon.

On information, ASP (Nabinagar and Sadar Circle) Md Abdul Mabud rushed to the spot and rescued them, assuring the villagers that killers of Shah Alam would be arrested.

BCL LEADER SOHEL MURDER CASE

All 27 acquitted for lack of evidence

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

All the people 27 accused in the sensational BCL leader Sohel murder case have been acquitted from all charges by district judge of Barisal on Tuesday for lack of evidence.

District and Sessions Judge Md Saiful Alom gave the verdict.

The 27 accused are prominent leaders of ruling BNP.

Sohel, the then BCL (Bangladrsh Chhatra League) president at Barisal Hatem Ali College, was shot dead on March 29, 1996, 22 hours before Awami League took over power.

BCL had brought out a procession on the Sadar Road in the city in the evening of March 29 in 1996. It came under attack allegedly by BNP activists when it was crossing the BNP office and Sohel was shot in the chest. He died soon after at hospital.

Syed Anisur Rahman, publicity secretary of Barisal district Awami League, filed a case against 27 BNP men on March 30, 1996.

Police SI Shaheduzzaman submitted charge sheet against the accused on July 31, 1996 after investigation.

But when trial of the case started, most of the witnesses did

not turn up to give evidence. Only five out of 15 gave statements in the court.

Even complainant Syed was not present to testify. When the court summoned on him to appear before court, his family members came to the court and informed it in writing that Syed Anis was out of the country.

Four of the accused died during trial. They were former law-maker Nasim Baiswas, district BNP student affairs secretary advocate Mehedi, party vice-president Kader Sikdar and Jubo Dal leader Shahin.

The 23 others are former Mayor of barisal City Corporation Ahsan Habib Kamal, former Union Parishad chairman Altaf Hossain, BNP leader Abul Kalam Shahin, Public Prosecutor Kamrul Ahsan Shahin, central Jubo Dal leader Atharul Islam Babul, city Jubo Dal president Monirul Ahsan Monir, BNP leader Aktaruzzaman Shahin, Rafiqul Islam Shahin, Mosharraf Hossain, Jahid, Shahed, Saiful Ahsan Azim, Rezaul Karim, district JCP president Monwar Hasan Zipu, Rintu, ward commissioner Jainal Khan, Sagor, Kawsar Biswas, Kalu, Babu, Litu, Ferdous and Milton.

Altaf and Milton joined Awami league in 1997.

Three to die in 4-murder case in Swarankhola

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Three persons were condemned to death by the Additional District and Sessions Judge Court here in the sensational 'Four-murder Case' of Swarankhola thana in Bagerhat district on Tuesday.

The convicts who were given death penalty are Ziauddin Howlader, Siddique Menari and Babul Akand. Ziauddin Howlader was tried in absentia while Siddique and Babul are staying in Bagerhat jail.

Ziauddin Howlader killed his father Latif Howlader, 58, mother Shafia Begum, 49, brother Kamruzzaman, 28, and sister Surma Akhtar, 18, with the help of three other accused on the night of July 8 in 1998.



PHOTO: STAR

A sequence from a drama -- Bhuler Mashul -- staged by child artistes of Spondon Shilpi Gosthi in Gaibandha. Shishu Academy organised the drama competition in the town recently.