

SNAPS

Lightning kills two

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha
Two persons were killed in lightning on Thursday. School student Mehdi Hasan, 14, died on the spot when struck by lightning while returning home at Kazir Bazar village of Palashbari upazila. Eight year-old Abdur Razzak also met with the same fate in another such incident at Barotik village in Gobindaganj upazila.

Abductor gets 14 years' RI

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkira
An abductor was sentenced to 14 years rigorous imprisonment (RI) by District and Sessions Judge Mahtabuddin of the Woman and Child Repression Preventive Tribunal here on Wednesday. The convict is Shahjahan Ali, 24, son of Ali Hossain Bajandar of Machkhola village in Sadar upazila. According to court sources, Shahjahan abducted a girl student of class nine on March 3 in 2000 from a place near to Sathkira Shishu Sadan. At that time she was going to her school, Abdul Karim Girls' High School at old Sathkira.

JCD-ICS clash leaves 20 hurt at IU

OUR CORRESPONDENT
Twenty students were injured, two of them seriously, in a clash between Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) on the Islamic University (IU) campus on Tuesday. The clash occurred when JCD leader Saiful Islam Sumon stormed into the Dean's office with his supporters at the viva-voce for admission into first year honours course of Kha unit, university sources said. The clash erupted when ICS obstructed Sumon. Critically injured ICS activists Masud and Harun were undergoing treatment at Jhenidah hospital.

3 abducted youths yet to be rescued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati
Three young traders abducted from Boradam in the Sadar upazila on May 22 are yet to be rescued. Police said armed toll collectors might have abducted Mohammed Basu Mia, Jahedul Islam and Abdur Razzak when they were going to Botradam market from Tabalchhari in the town in a mechanized boat. The toll collectors had earlier demanded toll from them, police said quoting victims' family sources.

Satkhira Press Club election held

BSS, Satkhira
A 13-member executive committee of Satkhira Press Club led by GM Monirul Islam Mini of Dainik Ittefaq as president and Altaf Hossain of Daily Sangram and BTV as general secretary was formed in an election held at its auditorium here last week.

'A party destroying country's image abroad'

People will resist today's hartal, telecom minister tells Gaibandha meeting

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Post and Telecommunication Minister Aminul Huq has said an opposition political party is conspiring against the country and its people and trying to make the government a scapegoat.

Those who are doing propaganda to prove that the government is ineffective and has fundamentalists are destroying the real image of the country and its people abroad, he said addressing a party meeting.

"They are enemies of the people and opposed to development", he said. AL chief Sheikh Hasina earlier said that the BNP-led Alliance government was an ineffective one and "sheltered terrorists and fundamentalists".

People rejected them and will foil all their conspiracies, he said. They will also resist

today's hartal, he said.

Awami League called hartal for today protesting the murder of party lawmaker Ahsanullah Master, last month's grenade attack on the British High Commissioner and arrest of Jagrata Muslim Janata (JM) commander Bangla Bhai.

Held on Gaibandha Sheed Miner premise Wednesday evening, the meeting was addressed by, among others, State Minister for Agriculture Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and State Minister for Cultural Affairs Salima Rahman.

About 200 leaders and activists from different opposition parties joined BNP at the public meeting.

Aminul Huq said the opposition party is doing anarchy at a time when the Alliance government is leading the country

towards development.

"They did a conspiracy to dislodge the government on April 30 but people foiled it. People will foil such conspiracies in future also".

The minister refuted AL chief Sheikh Hasina's allegation that the ruling party made the parliament ineffective by not allowing the opposition to speak.

"She addressed the parliament for one and a half hours (during a recent sitting)", he said.

People and honest political leaders now understand who are doing anarchy and who are doing good for the country. Seeing BNP government's development work, many political leaders and workers of different parties are spontaneously joining BNP, Aminul Huq said.

The post and telecommunication minister said BNP government has brought 165 upazilas under digital telephone system and is working to cover the rest. He assured that all seven upazilas of Gaibandha district will soon be brought under digital system.

Those who joined BNP at the meeting include Sahadat Hossain Suja and M A Abdus Sabur Sarker of AL, Abdul Wahab of Jatiya Party, Fouzia Akhter of Jatiya Mohila Party, Kazi Azizur Rahman of Jamaat-e-Islami, Ashraf of CPB, Mahbubur Rahman, and Union Parishad chairmen Hasan Imam, Abdul Alim and Shahidul Islam.

Local BNP leaders also addressed the meeting presided over by Gaibandha BNP President Hamidul Huq Chhana.



PHOTO: STAR

Post and Telecommunication Minister Aminul Huq (left) addressing a party meeting on Gaibandha Shaheed Minar premises Wednesday evening.

Sylhet yet to recover from shrine blast

City life dull, visa seekers miss interview dates as British HC office still closed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Though normalcy is returning to Hajar Shahjalal (RA) shrine area, people in the divisional city are yet to recover from the shocking May 21 bomb blast that killed three people and injured 70 including the British High Commissioner.

The blast dented the city life, particularly its economy and threw intending travelers to Britain into uncertainty as the British High Commission visa centre is yet to resume activities.

The blast also warmed up the political arena. Both the ruling Four Party Alliance and the opposition Awami League are protesting the incident and blaming each other for this.

People are now being allowed to enter the shrine through all the three gates without checking but

few are coming to visit the shrine and offer prayers. The number of visitors to the city has sharply declined.

Like in the past, big gathering was not witnessed at the Jumma prayer at the shrine yesterday though BDR was withdrawn a week earlier. Police are still deployed in the area.

Business in the city is still dull, particularly in the shrine area.

Sale of different items like tosha shinni (alm), agar, atar, caps, traditional Manipuri clothes and cane made items in the shrine area has fallen greatly.

Talking to this correspondent, manager of a hotel at the shrine gate said the incident ruined the image of the country and of Sylhet.

The number of boarders has fallen by 50 per cent and we do not know when the situation will

improve".

Shop owner Kamal Hossain also expressed the same view. "People from across the country used to visit the shrine till midnight, but the blast totally changed the scene".

Meantime, many people have already missed their visa interview dates as all activities at British High Commission's visa centre are suspended since May 23.

Now they would have to get fresh dates.

Every day, many people go to the visa centre at Kumarpara to know when it would resume work.

The security chief at the British High Commission in Dhaka visited the Sylhet office on May 31.

An official told this correspondent that a decision on resuming work will be made soon.

Fugitive arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A fugitive criminal and the main accused of jailor Monirul Islam assault case was arrested on Tuesday.

Patuakhali Sadar thana police arrested listed criminal Alal, 40, from his Adalatpara house here.

Police sources told this correspondent Alal and his accomplices attacked the jailor of Patuakhali Jail, Monirul Islam, in a triple-decker launch Sagar-5, plying on the Patuakhali-Dhaka route. He had been transferred to Dinajpur from here.

Police also arrested four ansars of the launch and Alal's seven accomplices. But Alal remained absconding.

Police already attached the culprit's movable assets including his bank account as per order of a magistrate's court.

Barisal rural health centres run without doctors

68 posts out of 117 vacant, on-duty docs do not stay at stations

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Fifty-eight per cent approved posts of doctors at upazila health centres and sub-centres are vacant for long in Barisal.

The number of vacant posts is 68 out of 117, according to official sources. These include 11 in Babuganj, seven in Uzirpur, seven in Gaurnadi, six in Banaripara, eight Agailjhara, four in Hizla and nine in Mehendiganj upazilas.

As most of the sub-centres are in remote areas, doctors usually do not stay there and manage transfer through lobbying.

On other hand, a good number of doctors posted at these centres manage to remain at the Civil

Surgeon's office in the city.

Moreover, almost all the doctors posted at the health centers and sub-centres stay in the city for private practice, depriving the rural people of medicare services.

Out of the nine upazila health complexes, eight have 31 beds each, except the one at Agailjhara with 50 beds.

Local people in the eight upazilas have long been demanding that the number of beds at the health centres be raised to 50, but to no effect.

Allegations have it that the mismanagement in health centres at upazilas persists due to corruption by a section of officials at the Barisal Civil Surgeon's office.

Syedpur twin murder case takes a new turn

Police now probe whether man killed his wife, daughter

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nitphamari

The case regarding the March 28 slaughter of a housewife and her 48 day-old daughter at Mollah Para village in Syedpur has taken a new turn after rescue of her another daughter from traffickers.

About six months back, Azizul had got his daughter Rumi admitted to Chouphothi Kaomi Girls Madrasa in adjoining Taraganj upazila under another name, Hure-Jamaat.

At home, he made it public that her daughter was abducted and filed an abduction case with Nilphamari police against Ekramul and nine others.

Monira's daughter Rumana Akhtar Rumi, 8, was rescued by BDR from traffickers at bordering Nandigram village near Hili in Hakimpur upazila on May 31.

Following her rescue, it came to light that Monira's husband madrasah teacher Azizul Islam had kept their minor daughter Rumi away from home and filed an abduction case against Kazi Ekramul Haq of the same village and nine others.

Azizul had a land standing land dispute with Ekramul, Syedpur BNP President, police said. Azizul and Ekramul so far filed around 20

cases against each other.

Police told this correspondent yesterday that they are now probing whether Azizul was involved in the sensational murder of his wife and baby daughter.

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On May 31, Rumi was rescued while being trafficked to India.

After rescue, BDR took her to their Basudepur camp where she told them her identity.

BDR handed over her to Hakimpur.

Being informed, Syedpur police rushed to Hakimpur and brought her to Syedpur. There she gave a statement under Section 101. She was then sent to the safe custody of Nilphamari police.

After the March 28 twin murder, Azizul lodged a case with Syedpur thana accusing Ekramul and nine others.

On the other hand, Monira's brother lodged another case against his brother-in-law Azizul accusing him for killing his sister.

Azizul had told newsmen and villagers earlier that the killers of his wife and baby were trying to mislead the probe by utilising his wife's brother. He also alleged that Ekramul, being a ruling party leader, was trying to influence the probe.

But after rescue of his so-called abducted daughter Rumana Akhtar Rumi and her statement, police now say they tend to believe that Azizul had kept her daughter hiding and filed a false abduction case.

Local people now believe that Azizul could be involved in the murder of his wife and daughter. Police are proving this.

While contacted, the Nilphamari Police Superintendent said rescue of the so-called abducted girl has "changed the situation and line of thinking". Action will be taken against the real killer after investigation, he said.

Attack on AL leader: 11 suspects held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Eleven persons were arrested as suspects of a gun attack on an Awami League (AL) leader at Noga para on Monday.

A protest rally held within two hours of the murder was addressed by leaders of political parties and trade bodies, representatives of the elite and the city Mayor.

Within two hours of the murder, police had caught the driver of the autorickshaw used by the killers. The driver told police that Shahed and Mokbul had hired his vehicle for the killing and followed the killers in a motorbike.

Shahed and Mokbul were wanted in a number of cases, police said.

2,000 lay siege to Satkhira WDB office

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Over 2,000 people laid siege to the office of the executive engineer of Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB), Satkhira on Thursday.

They laid the siege condemning an incident of cutting down a portion of a newly built embankment at Dherkhalia in Sadar upazila by BNP leader Abdul Alim and Labsa Union Parishad (UP) chairman Rezaul Islam. They cut the dam to ensure flow of saline water needed for shrimp culture. This has resulted in damage to 1,500 bighas of croplands at 35 villages in Sadar, Kalaroa and Tala upazilas where cultivation of crops won't be possible.

This has infuriated the farmers and villagers who brought out a big procession led by Balli Union Parishad (UP) chairman Abdur Rahaman. Afterwards they laid siege to the BWDB executive engineer's office.

Maulana Golam Rasul, Prof Mamanur Rahman, M Farooq and Dr Mizanur Rahman addressed the gathering before handing over a memorandum containing their six-point demands to the state minister for water resources through the executive engineer.

Anti-dowry meeting held in Gopalganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gopalganj

An anti-dowry meeting was held at Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni Primary School at Gobra village in Sadar upazila on Monday.

A non-governmental organisation (NGO), CCDB, Gopalganj organised the meeting.

CCDB project manager George Ashit Sengha presided over the meeting while Gopalganj deputy commissioner (DC) Mohammad Abdur Rouf was present as chief guest and Sadar upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) Mohammad Giasuddin Moghol was special guest.

Among others, Sheikh Mohammad Elias, editor of local daily Dainik Jugontha, Gobra Union Parishad (UP) chairman Arifuzzaman and an elite Moazzem Hossain addressed.



PHOTO: STAR