

SNAPS

A gesture of fellow feeling

CU CORRESPONDENT
The Chittagong University (CU) Fine Arts Department will donate the sale-proceeds of its annual art exhibition for treatment of a masters class student of the department.
The student, Md Aminur Rashid sustained severe injuries in skull and an eye during a shuttle train accident on April 4. He needs immediate surgery at a cost of huge amount of money.
The weeklong art exhibition began at the 4th gallery of the Arts Faculty building on Saturday. Vice Chancellor Professor AJM Nuruddin Chowdhury opened the exhibition as chief guest.

Six motorcycle lifters nabbed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi
Police on Friday arrested six motorcycle lifters from Mohonpur bridge in Godagari upazila here.
Earlier, Kamal, 40, and Shafiqul, 35, of Chapainawabganj were arrested while stealing a motorcycle.
Following their confessional statement, police arrested four others named Babu, 40, Tariqul, 30, Bazlar Rahman, 35, and Alaur Rahman.
Police also recovered two snatched motorcycles and sharp weapons from their possession.
However, two of their accomplices escaped.
A case was filed against eight persons with Godagari thana.

24-hour strike at jute mills on July 5 threatened

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong
Labour leaders of state-owned jute mills in Chittagong on Friday threatened a 24-hour strike from 6 am on July 5 to press their 18-point demand.
It was declared at a press conference organised by Chittagong State-owned Jute Mills' CBA Coordination Council at the local press club.
The demands include declaration of grant commission and pay commission, payment of all dues including gratuity and provident fund, adequate fund for jute procurement during purchasing season, enhancement of subsidy from 7.5 per cent to 30 per cent for export of jute and jute-products, 10 per cent dearness allowance to workers and promotion of employes and workers according to rules.
CBA leaders Tafazzal Ahmad, SM Jamaluddin, Abul Bashar Bhuiyan, Alam Badshah, Nurul Amin, Salamat Ullah, Abul Kalam, Iskander Ullah, Rafique Uddin and Azizuddin Ahmad Chowdhury were present at the press conference.

Medicine worth several lakhs taka looted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal
Medicine and goods worth several lakhs of taka were looted from the District Reserve Store (DRS) of Medicine of the Health and Family Planning Department here on Saturday.
According to police and departmental sources, the dacoits entered the store by breaking open the collapsible gates and its main door at dead of night.
Two night guards Abdul Malek Sarder, 35, and Abur Rab, 34, were injured by the dacoits.
In absence of the civil surgeon of Barisal, Dr Abdul Malek, deputy civil surgeon Dr Jahangir Hossain replied to the queries of journalists and admitted the fact. The extent of loss is yet to be ascertained, he told them.
Police and health officials visited the spot.

PIB training on environmental journalism begins

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj
A four-day training course on environmental journalism began at Manikganj Press Club here yesterday.
The Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) organised the course.
PIB director general Dr Rezwan Hossain Siddiqui opened the training course, while PIB senior trainer and course co-ordinator Shahana Huda, Manikganj Press Club president AFM Nurtaj Alam Bahar, PIB assistant trainer Shakawat Noon addressed the inaugural function.
In the second session, the PIB DG spoke on the technique of environmental reporting and identifying the topic, while the director (programme) of Environment and Social Development Organisation (ESDO) Siddika Sultana spoke on bio-diversity.
Twenty newsmen of print media and electronic media take part in the course which ends on June 23.

Dubious police role in sensational Khulna murder cases

Masterminds, godfathers dropped from charge sheets

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna
Charge sheets submitted by investigating officers (IOs) in sensational murder cases have been put on big question marks as these do not mention names of godfathers and masterminds who planned the killings and financed the killers.
Different quarters have expressed surprise at the role of police allegedly to save the godfathers and masterminds.
The killers of BNP leader Amir Azam, journalist Manik Saha and Awami League leaders Manzurul Imam, Manjur Morshed Labu and Kamrul Islam Kutu will possibly escape due to the role of police, they apprehended while talking to this correspondent on Saturday.
They were murdered by hired

killers, police sources said.
Khulna city Awami League president Advocate Manzurul Imam was gunned down on August 25 last year. Charge sheet in the case was submitted in February against four accused persons.
But the complainant, Manzurul Imam's son Rumi, rejected the charge sheet and filed a naraji petition with the court, alleging that it did not have names of culprits who planned the murder and financed the killers.
The court is yet to order re-investigation. So there is not progress in trial of the case.
City Awami League leader Kamrul Islam Kutu was killed in bomb attack on September 4 last year near the party office. But IO is yet to track down the culprits who

hired the killers.
Awami League leader Manzur Morshed Labu succumbed to bomb attack on January 31 this year. Six accused have been charged in the murder case. But the main culprits who planned and financed the killers were not named in the charge sheet, according to sources close to the complainant. Labu's wife is the complainant in the case.
Journalist Manik Saha was killed in bomb attack on January 15 this year near Khulna Press Club. The charge sheet in the case was pressed against 13 people on April 13. But it does not have names of the masterminds, the complainant claimed while talking to this correspondent.
BNP leader Amir Azam Khan

was killed in a bomb attack on January 29 this year, allegedly by outlaws.
After arrest, the outlaw who killed the BNP leader confessed to police that he got Tk 2000 for the murder. He also named the masterminds. But IO in the charge sheet did not name persons who gave the money to the killer.
This is quite unfortunate that investigating officers are saving masterminds of the sensational murders due to political reason, said prominent lawyer Advocate Feroze Ahmed.
When asked, acting police commissioner Sajjad Ali expressed his inability to point out reasons for not mentioning names of masterminds of these murders committed by hired killers.



Sandbags are being dumped at Titporal to protect Shariakandi upazila headquarter from erosion by the Jamuna (left) and a section of BNP leaders and workers demonstrating against alleged irregularities in giving the work to some 'selected contractors' (right).

WDB tries to tame the swollen Jamuna

Belated sandbag dumping begins to protect Shariakandi: Local BNP leaders fall apart over sharing Tk 1.5 crore work

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra
With the Jamuna and the Bangalee rivers in spate now, the Water Development Board (WDB) has started some temporary work to protect Shariakandi and adjoining areas from erosion.
The Shariakandi upazila headquarter is about 100 metres from the erosion point now.
The WDB has started dumping of sand bags at Titporal, Dhap, Dabdanga, Kalitola and adjoining area on the right bank of the Jamuna, involving an expenditure of Tk one crore 50 lakh.
The WDB move came after the

mighty river devoured lands and made about 500 families homeless in the areas in the last one month days.
The erosion is serious in Dhap and Kalitola areas, according to Shariakandi Upazila Nirbahi Officer Akbar Hossain.
Some WDB official talking to this correspondent said it is not possible to take permanent protection measures now as the rivers are in spate. The erosion is affecting the embankment in about 10 kilometres area from Partitporol to Dabdanga.
They however claimed that erosion at Partitporol point has

been stopped following dumping of sandbags.
Protection of Shariakandi upazila headquarter is vital, because if it is washed away, the Jamuna and the Bangalee will merge, causing a disaster in the area.
This will threaten the western approach road of Jamuna Bridge, WDB Chief Engineer Saydur Rahman told newsmen last month.
The two rivers are about half a kilometre away from each other now.
The 10 kilometre embankment from Partitporol to Dabdanga was

built at a cost of Tk 577 crore.
The WDB submitted a Tk 130 crore project earlier for protection of the embankment.
The World Bank in a report to the government in 1997 cautioned that the western approach road of the Jamuna Bridge will be affected if the Jamuna and the Bangalee rivers merge.
Meanwhile a section local ruling BNP leaders brought out a procession in the area, protesting alleged irregularities in giving the work to contractors.
But sources said they brought the allegation as they did not get share of Tk 1.5 crore work.

Magura college students want principal's exit

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura
Over 100 students of Magura Government Mohila College locked the principal's office room and boycotted classes yesterday demanding her removal for her alleged involvement in corruption and embezzlement of fund.
They also staged a rally and submitted a memorandum to the Education Ministry secretary through Magura deputy commissioner (DC).
Later, they held a press conference at Magura Press Club where they announced their action programme.
The programme includes strike and procession from June 20 to 26, closure of the academic building on June 27, boycotting the annual examination, two-hour token hunger strike at Magura Press Club and hunger strike from 10 am to 5 pm on July 10.
On contact, Principal UKM Hosneara Begum denied the allegations of corruption charges brought against her saying 'the students are being used by self-seeking teachers who want to maligner'.

'Abductor' held, 2 children rescued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona
Local people caught an alleged trafficker at Tarati village in Iswarganj upazila in Mymensingh on Friday and rescued two 'abducted' children.
Police said the alleged trafficker -- Abdul Mannan -- was handed over to them by the villagers. He was caught with 11 year-old Ershad, son of Mohammad Ali of Tarati village and ten year-old Abdus Salam, allegedly abducted from Tongi railway station in Dhaka.
The children had been confined at a house in the village for trafficking, police said quoting the villagers.

No internet in Barisal for 3 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal
Several thousand internet users in Barisal can not use the facility for the last three days as services provided by the government's T&T department the Chien Cyber Net (CCN), a private operator, are not operating.
Newsmen are the worst sufferers as they can not send news. Cyber cafes in the city are virtually closed as they can not provide service to customers.
The CCM has suspended its operation because of disruption in line. CCN authorities said that due to sudden fall in speed, they have closed the line for checkup. They can not say when the line will be operational.
Divisional Engineer of Barisal T & T Jagadish Chandra Mondal also could not say when the line would be reopened. The head office in Dhaka has been apprised of the situation and everything depends on them, he said.

Newspaper office ransacked at B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria
The office of a local Bangla daily, Dainik Projabandhu, was ransacked by some armed miscreants in the town on Saturday for publishing a news.
The attackers allegedly led by Helim Mia and Kazi Anu Mia damaged the press, computers and beat some newsmen, police said.
On information, police rushed to the office near the Sadar thana and arrested the two. Others escaped, police said. A case has been filed with police under the Speedy Trial Act.



The Chandmari Road in Barisal city, snapped on Saturday. The condition of other main roads including the Zila School Road, Alekanda Road, Amanatganj Road, Sadar Road, Fakir Bari Road, Kaunia Road and Kali Bari Road are no better. It seems the City Corporation does not have any headache with the rugged roads, difficult for pedestrians and vehicles to negotiate.

Tender vandalism by ruling party men in Rajshahi

Padma Erosion Control Project in Godagari to cost Tk 4.16 cr more as WDB officials 'forced' to re-tender at higher rate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi
Some ruling BNP leaders and contractors loyal to them, allegedly in connivance with a section of Rajshahi Water Development Board officials, have shared among themselves all the works of the Padma Erosion Control Project in Godagari upazila by compelling the authorities to do 'irregularities' and go for re-tendering.
This has increased the project cost to Tk 22.16 crore from Tk 18 crore as the re-tendering was done at a rate seven percent higher than the first tender.
All these were done following alleged threats and intimidation to "drop genuine construction firms and distribute the works among the privileged contractors", said a WDB seeking anonymity.
"Tender vandalism is not new here, but WDB officials did gross irregularities in distributing the works among BNP leaders", he said.
"Tenders schedules were not properly checked, tender papers were not sold to WDB contractors outside Rajshahi and unqualified construction firms were given the works", he said.
A high official of WDB told The Daily Star that they were "threatened by the BNP leaders and forced by ruling party lawmakers to do the

irregularities".
He also alleged that some WDB officials were also beaten for their stand to remain righteous in the tender process. The works were distributed on June 8.
Those who got the works include Paradise Traders, Khondokar Construction, AB Construction, M/S Intiaz Ahmed Samshul Huda, Usha Construction and some individuals.
Post and Telecommunication Minister Aminul Haque inaugurated the project work on June 11.
The first tender was floated on February 29. A total of 537 construction firms from different areas of the country had submitted schedules by March 28. Experienced and qualified firms were selected after scrutiny.
But names of selected firms and contractors could not be declared for 20 days as armed musclemen of BNP leaders staged a showdown on WDB office premises.
Some BNP leaders along with their contractors and musclemen ransacked and damaged some office rooms after names of selected contractors were declared on April 20. Senior officials could not attend office for 20 days because of threat. The musclemen virtually laid a siege to the office for seven days, sources

alleged.
Later, on April 25, the tender was cancelled and a fresh tender was floated on April 27. About one thousand contractors bought schedules but only 116 submitted their schedules.
It was learnt that some BNP leaders negotiated the works with contractors by distributing Tk 5 crore works among them.
Forty schedules with alleged flaws, submitted by BNP leaders or their men were not cancelled during scrutiny, the sources said.
Only firms which had experience of doing work involving amounts up to Tk one crore in the last five years were invited to bid. But this criterion was not followed during scrutiny, the sources claimed.
A top BNP leader in the district was given several works though he had no experience as was sought in the tender, the sources claimed.
When contacted, WDB Executive Engineer Habibullah said the authorities have nothing to do if contractors negotiate work outside the office.
Chief engineer Abdul Malek Mia, claimed by many to be involved in the irregularities, denied the allegations and said government instructions were followed during tender process.

Govt hatchery raises hope among shrimp farmers

Distribution from Patuakhali hatchery starts: 40 lakh fries to be produced annually

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali
A government shrimp fry production project in the district, set up with assistance from DANIDA, has raised great hopes among shrimp farmers in the southern districts.
A large number of fish farmers from far away areas like Bhola and Barguna gathered at the district headquarter for shrimp fries when the distribution began on June 13. Patuakhali Deputy Commissioner Prasanta Bhusan Barua inaugurated the distribution while Project Director Wahidunnabi Chowdhury, Project Advisor Aril HJ Quize and other officials were present.
Distribution of shrimp fries from the hatchery began this year for the first time.
In the first phase, about 10 lakh shrimp fries have been produced. More 30 lakh fries will be produced this year in the second and third phase, project officials said.
The lone hatchery for Patuakhali, Bhola and Barguna districts has been set up under the Patuakhali Barguna Aquaculture Extension Project (PBAEP). This is the largest hatchery in the country.
About 40 lakh fries will be produced and distributed among shrimp farmers in the area every

year, they said.
About 2500 shrimp enclosures have been set up in the three districts and more 6000 are in the offing, depending on fries to be produced in the hatchery, they said.
At least 150 tonnes of shrimp worth about Tk eight crore will be produced in the enclosures, they

said.
Talking to this correspondent, Ramjan Ali, who came from Bhola for fries said he has set up a farm at his village. He will prefer fries from this farm because he thinks those will be better in quality, said. Many others in his village will be interested in shrimp cultivation if he becomes successful, he said.



A shrimp farmer receiving fries from Patuakhali Deputy Commissioner Prasanta Bhusan Barua at the hatchery.

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Correction

The IACIB, a local NGO in Nilphamari, has given a correction to its statement given earlier. It told The Daily Star in a report published on June 10 that the Ministry of Health had given it a grant of Tk 20,000 for a Filaria hospital run by it at Syedpur. The donated amount was actually Tk 2.5 lakh, it said in the corrected statement sent to The Daily Star office yesterday.