

SNAPS

Iranian film festival begins

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A four-day film festival of the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) began at the Aswani Kumar Hall in the city on Monday.

Mayor Majibur Rahman Sarwar MP was the chief guest and Prof Dr Reza Rashemi, Cultural Counselor of the Iranian embassy in Dhaka attended the inaugural function as special guests. Former municipal chairman Golam Mawla presided.

A film named 'Arus' (bride) was shown on the first day. Nine films will be shown during the festival.

Fake LPG cylinder: One more held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Police on Sunday night arrested Mohiuddin Khan, distributor of Kleen Heat LPG in Barisal, in connection with supply of fake LPG cylinders of different companies.

Police earlier seized 229 fake LPG cylinders of the company and arrested Zakir Hossain, its local marketing manager.

Both were sent to jail.

SI Faisal Zaman lodged a case as complainant.

The company had long been supplying customers gas cylinders partly filled with water.

B'baria law and order reviewed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Additional DIG of Chittagong Range AKM Mahfujul Haque recently visited Brahmanbaria and reviewed law and order at a meeting with police officials.

The meeting also reviewed cases filed with all eight thanas in the district.

Sources said the Additional DIG was satisfied over the law and order in the district following steps by SPATM Tarek and asked officials to improve further.

He urged policemen to completely stop drug peddling and to recover illegal arms.

The meeting highly appreciated the move by the district police to launch a drive against crimes and a campaign against smoking.

Kolkata bound bus robbed near Paturia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikgonj

Armed dacoits looted US dollars and Bangladesh currency valued at about Tk 20 lakh 50 thousand, valuables, mobile phones and 14 passports from passengers of a Kolkata-bound BRTC bus on the Dhaka-Paturia highway in the early hours of Tuesday.

The dacoits had boarded the bus at Kamalapur in Dhaka in the guise of passengers.

Ghior and Shivalaya thana police said the dacoits numbering six took control of the bus holding the driver hostage on gunpoint when it reached Baniajuri under Ghior thana.

They left the bus near Arpara, three kilometres from Paturia ferry ghat, and escaped in a microbus.

Police said the bus (Dhaka-Metro-Ba-11-1332) had left Kamalapur in Dhaka at about 11 pm with 32 passengers. The six had boarded the bus without passport.

Police arrested bus driver Solaiman and supervisor Tarek after one of the passengers filed a case.

Saving environment, profiting from waste

Once labourer Abdur Rahman recycles disposed of plastic materials at Brahmanbaria town

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Disposed of plastic materials including harmful injection syringes are no more useless. They are being recycled into useful products, protecting the environment, keeping the town clean and creating jobs for many.

The initiative came from Abdur Rahman, who earlier worked as a labourer at a plastic factory at Islampur in Dhaka for three years.

He now employs 70 people at his factory at the Nandanpur BSCIC Industrial State in the town and generates livelihood for over 200 others, who collect waste plastic materials.

The factory buys the waste plastic materials collected from ponds, canals, ditches, fields, drains and dustbins at between Tk 12 and 16 per kilogram, depending on category. It purchased 12,197 kilograms of waste plastic materials from the collectors in the last 15 days, factory manager SK Jamal Uddin said.

These are washed, dried, mixed with chemicals and then turned into granules in machines.

A portion of the granules is used for making plastic pots and the rest is supplied to some plastic factories in Dhaka.

The factory produces around 1000 water pots and cans a day and supplies around 500 kilograms of granule to Dhaka at the rate of Tk 10 to 15 per kilogram.

Abdur Rahman said he has not plot in the BSCIC estate and has set up the factory with his partner Ataur Rahman Pinto who owns the plot.

He has a plan to expand the factory soon. "Only hard work and sincerity pays", he said.

Besides keeping the town clean of such waste materials, this has removed water-logging problem from many areas as drains and sewerage lines no more remain clogged.

Plastic pots, filled with rainwater, are also good breeding grounds for Aedis mosquito, carrier of deadly Dengue virus.

Numerous waste plastic bottles were seen floating on waterbodies in and around the town earlier. This is not seen now.



Heaps of waste plastic materials collected from different areas of the town (left) are being processed into plastic granules at Abdur Rahman's factory (right).



PHOTO: STAT

Coriander farming makes them wealthy

Abdul Jabbar earns Tk three lakh in a year from two acres: Products exported

JAHANGIR ALAM, back from Karimganj (Kishoregonj)

NETRAKONA: Borachor is a remote village in Karimgonj upazila in Kishoregonj district. Once, most of the villagers were very poor. Now they are wealthy.

They have changed their lot by cultivating coriander, a leaf used as spice. All lands, earlier left fallow, are now coriander fields.

The coriander they produce are supplied to markets and big hotels in Dhaka and exported to some Middle East and western countries including Britain and Canada.

About 300 families out of 350 in the village are now engaged either in cultivating the vegetable or trading on it. Now, about 70 acres of land are under its cultivation.

The credit goes to Chaddu Mia, who initiated the cultivation in 1998 on a fallow land near his house. It brought him a big surprise. He earned Tk 10,000. The expenditure was very negligible, he said.

Now Chaddu Mia is a big coriander farmer. The leaf can be grown on fallow high land in all seasons, but summer is most suitable, Chaddu Mia told this correspondent during a visit to the village.

This year, he cultivated the vegetable on half an acre of land and earned about Tk 50,000 so far. More about Tk one lakh will be earned, he hopes.

Last year he earned about Tk 1,20,000 from the plot. Chaddu mia said most of the villagers were very poor. They have changed their lot by cultivating coriander. Even the smallest farmer in the village earns at least Tk 20,000 a year, he said.

Coriander worth about Tk one crore is produced in the village, he said.

Abdul Jabbar, a big farmer, said he grew coriander on two acres of land last year and earned over Tk three lakh. He spent only Tk 20,000.

This year, he sold 85 maunds and earned about Tk two lakh so far. He hopes to sell more 50 maunds.

He said they sell coriander at Tk 60 to 75 per kilogram to traders coming from Dhaka and other districts. The price is around Tk 90 per kg in Dhaka wholesale markets, he said. At times he supplies the vegetable to a big hotel in Dhaka at Tk 120 per kg.

Abdul Kadar grew coriander on one acre of land this year.

All of them said the cultivation is very easy and requires no fertiliser and pesticide.

Ruhul Amin, a trader from Dhaka said coriander is in good demand in Dhaka and abroad. It can be marketed round the year, he said.

When contacted, Kishoregonj Agriculture Extension Department (AED) officials said they would take all possible measures to promote cultivation and marketing of the vegetable.



PHOTO: STAR

Abdul Jabbar and his three sons working at their coriander field at Boro Char village.

3 killed for toll in Kushtia, Meherpur

Orthopedic doctor among injured

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Extortionists killed three persons and shot 10 others in Kushtia and Meherpur in separate incident on Sunday night.

According to police, a gang slaughtered Faraz Ali, 35, a tobacco trader at Simulia in Mirpur upazila in Kushtia as he failed to pay a toll of Tk one lakh.

Family sources said the gang allegedly belonging to an outlawed party had demanded toll to Faraz Ali, but he declined.

At about midnight Sunday, the gang stormed into his house, took him to a nearby field and slaughtered. Police recovered the body and sent it to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy.

In another incident Sunday night, a gang shot dead one Abu Affan at Masaura village in Daulatpur upazila.

Police and family source said, an armed gang stormed into his house and started looting valuables at gunpoint.

At one stage of the looting, an inmate managed to slip out and cried for help.

Hearing screams, villagers rushed to the spot and chased the miscreants. The fleeing gang opened fire on the villagers, killing Abu Affan, 40, and injured 10 people with bullets.

Four of the injured were admitted to Kushtia General Hospital. They are Abdul Hamid, 30, Mokhles, 30, Ali Hossain, 45 and Musa Karim 22.

In Meherpur, alleged outlaws shot dead one person and injured a doctor at Nityanandapur village in Gangni upazila on same night.

Sources said a gang demanded Tk two lakh from Sakario Mondol, a doctor of Orthopedic Hospital in Dhaka, who came home some days ago.

As Sakario declined to pay, the gang threatened to kill him, family sources said.

On the night, the gang stormed

into his house and demanded the toll money.

Sakario offered them Tk 20,000, but the gang remained firm on their demand.

As the gang tried to pick him up, his nephew Tony Mondol resisted.

The gang shot them and fled away.

Both were taken to Meherpur Sadar Hospital and later sifted to Kushtia General Hospital where Tony died next morning. Dr Sakario is now out of danger, doctors said.

12 MAJOR BOMB BLASTS IN SYLHET

19 killed in 7 years, no headway in probes

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

Twelve major incidents of bomb blast in Sylhet killed 19 people and injured scores in the last seven years.

Cases were filed after each incident. Police and intelligence agencies including CID and DB probed all the incidents but could not find any clue in most of the cases.

Neither the people involved in making bombs nor their networks could be detected, albeit their masterminds and godfathers.

The latest bomb blast took place on Sunday at a public meeting of Awami League leader Suranjit Sengupta MP at Derai upazila headquarters in Sunamganj, killing one and injuring at least 50.

On May 21, a grenade explosion at the shrine of Hajrat Shahjalal (RA) in the city claimed three lives and left 70 injured, including British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Anwaruzzaman Chowdhury.

The dead included a security official of the British High Commission.

The Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet was also injured.

Investigators could not find any clue to the incident even in a month though this was the second deadly blast in the 700 year-old shrine area in a year.

In the first incident on the night of January 12, five people were killed and 50 injured during an Urs at the shrine. Twenty-four people were arrested and taken on remand by the Kotwali police, but nothing could be unearthed.

Sources said the probe report is lying with the police headquarters in the capital. The report was not made public.

In 1997, two explosions took place at Sagardighirpar and Amabarkhana areas of the city. Chhatra league leader Ali Ahmed was killed in the Sagardighirpar blast. Several houses were damaged in the Ambarkhana blast.

On March 15, 1999, an explosion took place while bombs were being made in the house of then the ruling party lawmaker Muhibur Rahman Manik at Chhatak upazila headquarters in Sunamganj district, killing three persons.

The MP, his elder brother, a cousin and a Juba League leader and Ward commissioner along with some others were arrested and charged sheed.

Four persons were killed in a bomb blast at a public meeting of Suranjit Sengupta at Shulla upazila headquarters on September 26, 2001.

Within four hours, another blast occurred at a house at Fazilchist in Sylhet city. Two persons engaged in making bombs were killed in the blast while Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina was addressing a big public meeting at nearby Alia Madrassah Maidan.

3 unions flooded by Teesta

WDB starts dam repair work at Chhalapak



PHOTO: STAR

Water gushing through the breached Teesta embankment at Chhalapak in Gangachara upazila in Rangpur. Cracks developed in embankment a week ago due to pressure of water and rain but the Water Development Board did not take any step to protect the dam repaired last year. The photo was taken yesterday morning.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

The Water Development Board yesterday began repair of the damaged Teesta embankment at Chhalapak in Gangachara upzila.

About 2000 families have been displaced and vast croplands inundated in Gajghanta, Chhalapak and Mornea unions following breach in the embankment Sunday evening.

"The repair work can be completed in a week", WDB Executive Engineer AKM Moazzem Hossen told this correspondent.

The affected people have taken shelter on high lands, roads and embankments as their homesteads have been inundated.

The district administration is yet to give them any relief, the affected people said.

They said more areas are being inundated as water from the swollen Teesta is gushing through the breach.

The Teesta rose because of onrush of water from across the border and incessant rain in the last three days.

Local people said the embankment could be protected had the authorities taken measures earlier.

The dam collapsed last year also. WDB repaired it at a cost of Tk 16 lakh.

A WDB source said the dam could be saved if bank revetment work was done at Chhalapak last year. A Tk six crore project was submitted to the Water Resources Ministry. It is awaiting Planning Commission approval.

Chairman of Gajghanta union Khalilur Rahman said the affected people are passing days amid hardship as relief is yet to be supplied.

Sources in the Department of Agriculture Extension said seedbeds on about 500 hectares of low land in three unions are now under water.

British Council IELTS test in Comilla on June 26, 28

STAR NATIONAL DESK

The British Council (BC) is opening an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) test centre in Comilla.

The first test will be held on June 26 and 28 at the BARD Auditorium.

Registration for the test can be done through courier/post. The candidate only needs to collect an application form (from web site or a coaching centre) and return it to the BC with three colour photos, copies of first four pages of passport and a bank draft for test fee of Tk 5,750, payable to British Council.

Candidates may email BC for assistance on IELTS registration at ielts@bd.britishcouncil.org.

The following will be available for further assistance in Comilla: British Council's Liaison Officer Mahmud Hasan Shamim, Bhuiyan Computers Ltd., 686/618 (KA), Jawtala, Comilla (cell phone 0172 248 403); Aptech Worldwide, 186 Nazrul Avenue, Kandirpara, Comilla and APTWorld - International, 312 West Dhamra Sagar.

Test results will be published within 14 days and if requested, dispatched abroad or to universities for candidates free of charge.

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