

SNAPS

Govt's failure condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rajshahi city and district commands of freedom fighters on Friday accused the government for failure to ensure 30 per cent quota for them in government jobs and admission in educational institutions. They alleged that dishonest officials were making money by selling reserved seats for freedom fighters in most government jobs on the plea of qualification.

'Top' criminal nabbed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

'Top' criminal Iqbal Hossain, 30, was arrested by Rab on Friday evening from his house at Tulshir Mahalla in Faridpur Sadar Thana. A nine mm pistol was also recovered from his possession, according to a handout issued from Khulna Rab headquarters. The arrested criminal was wanted in several criminal cases including murder cases.

Landless people want right over khas lands

3,000 hold demonstrations in Rajbari and Goalando; submit memos to DC, UNO

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 3,000 landless people held a demonstration in Rajbari town on Saturday seeking help from the administration in recovering 'khas' lands from land grabbers' clutch.

The demonstrators also submitted a memorandum containing various demands to Rajbari DC (deputy commissioner) on the day.

A similar demonstration was held at Goalando last week which ended through submission of a memorandum to the UNO (upazila nirbahi officer).

During the period from 1986 to 2001, the government allocated

about 41.41 acres of shoal lands of the Padma to 53 landless families at Charkashimpur, three-kilometre off Doulatdia ghat (terminal) in phases.

Samata, an NGO working for the landless, has been rendering all-out support to the landless in their struggle for a right cause.

However, landless people could not take possession of the lands from the clutch of influential persons and land grabbers till date due to 'indifferent attitude' of the administration.

During the ongoing rabi (winter crop) season, landless people cultivated 'Maskalai,' a winter crop, on 92 acres of land without any

resistance from administration or land grabbers.

But they are now passing their days with a sense of insecurity apprehending police arrest anytime. They also expect land grabbers' wrath.

They placed the demands to the establishment with a view to averting untoward incident during harvesting season of 'Maskalai' in the middle of January next year. Their demands include their safety and security of life, especially during crop reaping period.

Earlier, armed miscreants hired by land grabbers attacked them. A good number of landless people and workers of Samata sustained severe injuries during the attack.

Despite all odds, landless people expressed their determination to establish their just rights.

A blind landless person named Ahmed Ali told The Daily Star, "None can stop us, if needed we are ready to sacrifice our lives to establish our rights on 'khas' lands."

Freedom fighter Nurunnahar informed that her one acre of land which she got from the government in 2001 is still in grip of land grabbers. But she said she won't give it up to them.

Local BNP leaders opposed the government decision to distribute 'khas' lands among themselves because they considered themselves as Awami League (AL) activists only due to their 'freedom fighter' identity, alleged many landless people.

Hamid Mridha, a BNP leader in Daolatdia union, always backed local land grabbers in a motive to distribute the lands among party activists, disclosed another landless person, Belayat Hossain.

Government is well aware about the actual situation, but the ruling party activists foiled their initiatives in the past, Abul Hossain, another landless person revealed.

Local administration should come forward to resolve the issue, otherwise it will be very difficult to recover 'khas' lands from the clutch of land grabbers, according to Jahid, programme coordinator of Samata.

'At present about 1,400 acres of 'khas' lands are lying unutilised at Charkarnesan and Charkashimpur. Samata has been striving to recover the lands under its land rights programme,' he added.

Earlier, the landless people went to Charkashimpur in the upazila to recover government 'khas' lands on October 9.

The lands were under illegal occupation of local influential people and land grabbers for years together.

Diarrhoea: 25 killed, 4,000 attacked in Netrakona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Diarrhoea has broken out in an epidemic form at Durgapur, Purbadhala, Mohongonj and Sadar upazila.

Twenty-five persons were killed and about 4,000 were attacked in last 10 days. The worst affected upazila is Durgapur where 11 persons were killed and about 2,000 others were attacked by the deadly disease.

The dead victims are Ashma, 5, Sajada Khatun, 2, Nurunnahar, 18, Tanjina, 7, Jahara Khatun, 70, Sahara Khatun, 40, Moyna, 2, Khokon, 6, Aysha Khatun, 35, Kohinur, 9, and Salma Khatun, 22, in Durgapur upazila.

In Purbadhala upazila, the victims are Halama Khatun, 11, Maleka, 8, Rahman, 60, Shimul, 4, Bahadur, 2, Nazma, 35, Aklima, 6, and Sazedra, 22 while five victims are from Mohongonj upazila and another from Netrakona Sadar upazila.

However, Netrakona civil surgeon (CS) office sources told this correspondent the situation is 'not out of control'.

The CS office sources said, 4,000 patients were treated in Durgapur Upazila Health Complex, Purbadhala Upazila Health Complex, Mohongonj Upazila Health Complex and Netrakona Sadar Hospital in 10 days.

Eighty medical teams are working in the affected upazilas, the sources added. But local people complained that the medical teams do not have adequate medicine and saline packets.

The CS office admitted that field workers are capable to treat patients at their primary stage. All the hospitals are crowded with patients. At least 250 patients are coming to different hospitals daily, the sources added.

KCC contractor arrested by Rab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Members of Rab (Rapid Action Battalion) on Friday arrested Eskander Ali, president of Khulna City Corporation Contractors' Welfare Association from his B K Roy Road house in Sonadanga police station in the city.

Eskander was wanted for harbouring armed cadres of outlawed Janajuddha faction of PBCP (Purbo Bangla Communist Party). The outlaws were used for the purpose of running an illegal syndicate formed for tender manipulation, according to Rab.

However, 'top' criminals and armed cadres of PBCP (J) Shoiab and Shumon, both sons of Moulana Abdul Wahab, popularly known as Bulbul-e-Bangladesh managed to escape through the back door of Eskander's house.

They are wanted in several murder and bomb attack cases in different police stations in Khulna and Bagerhat.

Arrested Eskander Ali is also wanted as one of the accomplices of notorious criminal Ershad Shikder. He is the custodian of Ershad Shikder's arms, Rab sources said further. He is being interrogated at Rab headquarters at Khalishpur.



A big procession was brought out in Gaibandha town to mark the World Food Day on Saturday. The Department of Agriculture Extension and Gano Unnayan Kendro, an NGO, jointly organised the procession.

Three pushed down from bus, one dies in Nilphamari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

One person was killed and two others were seriously injured when a bus supervisor pushed them down from the running vehicle on Thursday.

The dead victim is a rickshaw-puller named Shafiqul Islam of nearby West Dharmapal village in Jaldhaka upazila.

Eye-witnesses told this correspondent, a Dhaka-bound bus set for its destination from Domar at about 8 in the morning. At one stage the driver stopped his vehicle at Battoli.

Here three passengers asked bus supervisor Khokon to repay Tk 500 to Shafiqul Islam, a rickshaw-puller by profession. All the three Shafiqul Islam, Nizam Sardar and Taiob Ali hailed from nearby West Dharmapal village in Jaldhaka upazila. But Khokon denied to repay the money.

At this stage Khokon became angry resulting in hot exchange of words among the rivals. The driver began to drive his vehicle at a high speed. All on a sudden, Khokon pushed down the three from the running bus. As a result Shafiqul Islam died on the spot by being crushed

under the wheels of the bus while two of his colleagues Nizam Sardar and Taiob Ali sustained serious injuries.

Hearing the hue and cry of passengers, local people intercepted the bus. Sensing danger, the supervisor fled away. But angry people got the driver, Abdul Hannan and beat him severely. Later, he was hospitalised. Two other seriously injured, Nizam Sardar and Taiob Ali were also admitted to Domar Upazila Health Complex for treatment.

A case was lodged with Jaldhaka police.



PHOTO: STAR

Rajshahi City Corporation mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu MP, handed over an ambulance to Rajshahi University vice chancellor Prof Faisal Islam Faruki on the campus on Tuesday. The ambulance was given according to a promise of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

11x3



PHOTO: STAR

State Minister for Education and Minister-in-Charge of Nilphamari district opens the newly constructed academic building of the Government Women's College in the district town on Saturday.

13x3

4x2