

SNAPS

Kalaroa AL to boycott district party council

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Sonabaria union Awami League (AL) President Abdur Razzak on Friday announced that the leaders and activists of the party's Kalaroa upazila unit will boycott the council session of Satkhira district unit scheduled to be held on February 23 or 24. He announced this at a press conference held at Satkhira Reporters' Club. Citing the party constitution, he told that the district council of the party is supposed to be held on completion of all upazila councils. But the council of the party's Kalaroa upazila unit was not held due to unknown reasons, he disclosed. He demanded of the party central leaders for taking measures to hold the unit's council session immediately.

Kibria's killing protested in Manikganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Manikganj*

The 14-Party Alliance led by Awami League (AL) on Thursday brought out a silent mourning procession and held a meeting here protesting the killing of former Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria. The procession started from the district Awami League office at 12:30 PM. Processionists paraded the main streets of the town and held a meeting at Manikganj Press Club. The meeting was presided over by Manikganj Awami League President Golam Mohiuddin.

Villagers flee homes as outlaws demand toll

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Many villagers at Kalapota in Tala upazila and adjoining villages have fled from their homes fearing attack of Janajuddho cadres. Panic grips the area following demand for illegal toll amounting to Tk 3,20,000 from the villagers. The demand came through letters sent by post to schoolteachers Ashok Kumar Dus, Amal Das and Kamruzzaman on Friday. They threatened the villagers of the dire consequence for non-payment of the demand.

Manikganj BCL leader arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Manikganj*

Manikganj Sadar police on Friday arrested a local Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leader from the town on charge of burning a taxi on the Patuaria-Dhaka highway on January 29. The arrested person is Mahabubur Rahman Jony, President of the Manikganj district unit of BCL. When contacted, Manikganj Sadar Thana Officer-in-Charge (OC) SM Kamruzzaman confirmed the incident to this correspondent.

Indigenous people demand separate ministry, JS seats

Large gathering marks Aborigines Day in Chapainawabganj

ABU KALAM *back from Nachol, Chapainawabganj*

Indigenous people at a gathering at Nachole in Chapainawabganj have demanded a separate ministry for their development and reserved seats in parliament and in local government bodies.

They have demanded constitutional recognition of their language and enactment of appropriate laws to protect their traditional culture. The demands were made at the gathering, held at Nachole Degree College playground on Friday in observance of Aborigines Day.

The programme was jointly organised by Uttar Bangla Adivasi Lahanti Network and Adivasi Unnayan Sangha (AUS). A large number of indigenous people from northern districts joined different programmes there.

The days programme began with a big colorful procession. The processionists paraded different roads in Nachol town, chanting various slogans and carrying banners and fastoons highlighting their demands.

At the meeting, AUS Coordinator

Rangit Saran read out a resolution containing the demands, which were approved by the indigenous people.

Adivasi Unnayan Sangshta President Bhagabat Tudu presided over the meeting.

Advocate Mical Saran was present as chief guest while advocate

Norandranath Tudu, Dr Degindronath and Babu Komla Minge were special guests.

The gathering was also addressed by, among others, Chapainawabganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Mijanur Rahman; Prof Golam Mostofa of Nachol Degree College; Abdur Rauf, Executive Director of BMDO; Hasib Hossain, Executive Director of Proyas; Mansur Ali Executive Director of BDC and Akbarul Hassan Millat, Executive Committee Member of AUS.

Speaking on the occasion, leaders of indigenous people said they have a distinctive culture and heritage, but those are fading away due to lack of government patronisation and "aggressive" activities of local Bangalees.

Taking the advantage of illiteracy and poverty, lands of indigenous people are being grabbed by local Bangalees at many places.

The victims often can not take legal protection because of poverty. As they are minority, Bangalees often victimise them and even threaten them, the leaders said.

The indigenous people do not get justice as a section of officials in the local administration are influenced by influential Bangalees, they alleged.

Their rights are often violated. They also urged the government to enact appropriate laws to ensure their rights.

Addressing the gathering, Chapainawabganj UNO Mijanur Rahman said the government has taken up various development programmes for aborigine people.

He called upon them to come forward and take part in government's development activities.

The day's programme concluded with a colorful cultural function. Krisna Minge, Badergachi government primary school teacher conducted the programme.



Indigenous women performing a dance at a cultural function organised as part of Aborigines Day programme. PHOTO: STAR

13 get life in 2 murder cases in Nilphamari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Nilphamari*

Thirteen murderers were awarded life term rigorous imprisonment (RI) in two cases by two courts here on Tuesday and Monday.

The Additional District and Sessions Judge of Nilphamari Zahedul Islam, in a verdict pronounced on Tuesday, sentenced 11 persons including the father-in-law of a man to life term RI for killing him.

The victim is Oliar Rahman of Kumarpura village in Dimla upazila. The convicts are Montajuddin, father-in-law of the victim, present Union Parishad (UP) member Foizuddin, former UP member Shahid Mia, UP Choukidar Lebu Mia, Jamiar Rahman, Hamidul Islam, dulal Hossein, Motaleb Hossen, Aminar Rahman, Ismail Hossein, and Abdul Mozid. The convicts were also fined Tk 10,000 each, in default, to suffer

five years more RI.

Montajuddin invited his son-in-law Oliar Rahman to come to his house on March 9 in 2001. But after passing several days Oliar's wife Tomijonnesa could not find her husband. She filed a case with Jaldhaka police accusing 11 persons including her father.

In another verdict on Monday, the District and Sessions Judge of Nilphamari, Md Rabiul Hasan sentenced two killers to life term RI.

The victim is Mobarok Ali. The convicts are Hamidul Islam and Batkuru. Each of them were also fined Tk 10,000, in default, to suffer imprisonment for one year more.

Mobarok Ali of Klikapur Majhapara village in Kishoreganj upazila was missing from the night on June 2 in 1999. Later, his body was recovered from a bamboo cluster in the neighbouring Ghonpara village.

11 chargesheeted in Satkhira rape case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Eleven persons were chargesheeted on Friday in a sensational rape case here.

The chargesheeted persons are Abdur Razzak, Mahfuz Ali, Abul Kalam, Abdul Majid, Ismail Hossain, Babu, Fazar Ali, Ashrafur Islam, Laxman Kumar Das, Majid Gazi and Ataur Rahman.

The miscreants raped two daughters of a freedom fighter.

Miscreants armed with deadly weapons raided the house of freedom fighter Akbar Ali of Magura village in Tala upazila at night on October 23 last year. They tied the house owner and his wife and raped two of their daughters.

Police arrested Abdur Razzak, Mahfuz, Mazid, Ismail and Kala. Ultimately, the case was sent to DB for investigation on November 13.

Five honoured in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushtia*

Five persons from the district were given a reception here on Friday for their outstanding contribution in their fields.

They are Prof Dr Abul Ahsan Choudhury of Bangla Department in Islamic University (IU), Singer Abdul Jabbar, advocate SM Ansar Ali, vice-president of Bangladesh Shooting Federation, athlete Jems Joy Mallik and football player Md Musa. Dr Ahsan is an internationally reputed litterateur and researcher in Bangla folk literature. He wrote 52 books including 23 research books and edited another 22.

Advocate SM Ansar Ali, was vice-president of SAARC Shooting Committee in 2002-2004.

Athlete Jems Joy Mallik got champion award five times in 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967 and 1968 in the then East Pakistan. This record is still unbroken.

Md. Musha played football for 30 years and got awards from IOC and FIFA for his performance.

High officials, educationists and professionals attended the reception accorded by MEDHA, (Medical Education and Health Development Association), a voluntary organisation.

Islamic University Vice-chancellor Prof Rafiqul Islam was the chief guest at the reception, chaired by MEDHA President Bijoy Kumar Kejriwal.

The function was addressed by Rashida Begum acting Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Kushtia; Police Superintendent Sahabuddin Khan; Mojibur Rahman, Chairman of BRB Group of Industries; Manjur Ahsan Choudhury, Editor of local daily Andolonar Bazar and journalist Matiur Rahman Laltu.

Failed BSF bid to raise barbed wire fence on no man's land

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *B'baria*

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) had attempted to raise barbed wire fence on the no man's land along border pillars No. 2019 (8F) and 2019 (9F) in Azampur in Brahmanbaria Sadar upazila last night but withdrew with equipment following BDR protest.

Lt. Col. Syed Quamruzzaman, Commanding Officer of 7 BDR Battalion, told this correspondent that being informed, he rushed to the spot when BSF was raising the fence under cover of darkness.

He at once sent a message to his BSF counterpart. The BSF commander regretted and ordered withdrawal of BSF men from there.

Tension is prevailing along the border as BSF earlier on January 24 had attempted to raise barbed wire fence on the no man's land near border pillar No. 2018(2S) in Nolgori village in Brahmanbaria Sadar upazila and pillars No. 2018(4S) and 2018(5S) in Rajapur village in Akhaura upazila.

BSF stopped the work as BDR protested.

A Company level flag meeting was held on January 27, but to no result.

Another flag meeting was scheduled for Friday but it was not held as BSF officials did not come for the meeting, other sources in BDR said yesterday.

Another meeting has been scheduled for February 8, they said.

Subader Abdul Khaleque, BDR Company Commander at Akhaura Headquarter will lead the Bangladeshi side and Jon Kumar, BSF Company Commander in Bashganj in Tripura will lead the Indian team.

The sources said BDR personnel are ready to protest and resist if BSF tries again to raise barbed wire on the no man's land, they said.

Acid thrown on housewife

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Netrakona*

Police could not arrest any of the culprits accused for throwing acid on a housewife in Kiraton Bilpara village in Karimgonj upazila.

The victim, Haracha Begum, 40, wife of Abdur Mannan, was sent to Dhaka from Kishoregonj Sadar Hospital on Friday in a critical condition, hospital sources said. She is being assisted by the Acid Survivors Foundation.

Some miscreants threw acid on her when she came out of her house on Thursday night.

A case was filed accusing five persons including Fazlu and Altu. Police said they are trying to nab the culprits.

Cold spell claims 8 lives in Dinajpur

A CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

Cold spell, the third in the current winter season, so far claimed eight lives in Dinajpur.

The victims include Bishwa Nath Chandra Roy, 66, Mohinee Bala, 68, Fukku, 64, Rahman Ali Shah, 68 and one year-old Arif.

Identity of three persons who died in Chirirbandar upazila could not be known.

Many people, particularly children, have been attacked with diarrhea and pneumonia due to cold, doctors at the Sadar Hospital said. At least 100 people have been admitted to the hospital, they said.

700 fall sick from food poisoning in Jhalakati

BSS, *Barisal*

At least 700 persons fell sick after taking food at a 'chehlum' in Nalchhitya upazila under Jhalakathi district on Thursday.

One person namd Hashem Majhi of Purba Malipur village invited people to attend the Chehlum of his wife on the day, according to police.

Most of the guests complained of stomach pain and were attacked with diarrhoea as soon as they took meals. Seriously affected persons were admitted to local health complexes and clinics for treatment.

Elderly woman killed while saving son

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Unidentified miscreants slaughtered an eighty-year old woman at her house at Nebugati village in Monirampur upazila in Jessore on Tuesday night.

The dead victim is Shubhasi Biswas, widow of late Krishnapada Biswas.

She was killed while trying to save her son Parimol Biswas, 45, from the clutch of abductors. The abductors killed her for raising a hue and cry to foil the abduction bid.



A child learning computer (left) and tiny tots playing on the compound of Shishu Bikash Gobeshona Kendra PHOTO: STAR

A laudable effort in a remote village

Poor children learn computer use free of cost

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Magura*

Tiny tots from poor families are learning computer use along with basic things in life free of cost at a pre-primary school in a remote village in Magura.

The Shishu Bikash Gobeshona Kendra (Child Development Research Centre) (CDRC) recruits 25 children up to five every year.

The curriculum is different from traditional primary schools. The children also learn about nutrition, cleanliness and sanitation at the school.

One special feature is that the children learn these things while playing, without use of any book. They have also recreation facilities.

The unique institution at Kazoli

village in Sreepur upazila, 25 km off the district town, was set up in 2003 by the Research Initiatives, Bangladesh, a Dhaka-based NGO.

Parents do not have to spend any money for their children, who go to the school from villages nearby.

Sorts, cultural and recreational activities are routine programmes along with academic teaching with the help of pictures.

The institution has earned reputation in the district within two years.

Dipali Sarkar, headmistress of the school, is called didi moni (elder sister) by her students. She teaches them with a mother's affection.

"We teach pre-primary students with pictures while in any other schools

they are taught with alphabets", said Dipali who is working with CDRC as a researcher and a teacher. The teaching style is different from other schools, CDRC officials also said.

Talking to The Daily Star, Chief Research Officer of CDRC Bashir Ahmed said, "We are doing research to see whether pre-primary students can be taught without using cane and books".

The children stay at school from 8-30 am to 12-30 pm. After lessons at the classroom and games, the students are served vegetable hotchpotch and taught about nutrition.

Working under risky roof

Five injured as a portion of Gaibandha Poura building roof collapses: Employees agitate

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Gaibandha*

Agitated employees of Gaibandha brought out a procession in the town and held a rally demanding immediate steps for construction of the proposed new pourasabha building after five of their colleagues were injured as part of the roof of the old building collapsed recently.

The meeting was held on Wednesday on the pourashava office premises. Gaibandha pourashava office is housed in a 72 year-old 'abandoned'

building. The engineering section of the pourashava in 1998 declared the building abandoned.

Then, municipal authorities submitted Tk two crore plan to the Local Government and Rural Development Ministry for construction of a new multistoried building.

Accordingly, preliminary work including soil test were completed. But the work is yet to start as funds are yet to be allocated, sources at the municipal office said.

The Gaibandha pourashava building was constructed in 1937.

Portions of the ramshackle roof collapse at times. Sunlight enters through holes. Fresh cracks are appearing. The entire building may collapse any time, they said.

The five persons were injured as part of the roof collapsed on February 2 during office hour.

"Despite repeated appeals funds are yet to be allocated for construction of the new building or renovation of existing one," said Gaibandha Pourashava Chairman Anowerul Hasan Sabur.

"A disaster may occur any moment".



Gaibandha municipal employees demonstrating in demand for construction of a new office building (left) and rubbles of the collapsed portion of the roof which hurt five employees. PHOTO: STAR



Journalists stage a sit-in on a road in Chittagong city protesting the police action during hartal hours yesterday. PHOTO: STAR