

SNAPS

Tk 10 lakh touchstone statue recovered

RU CORRESPONDENT

A black touchstone statue worth over Tk 10 lakh was recovered by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) from Bilpara in Puthia on Sunday. One person named Chand Mia, son of late Jalam Munchi of Argunpur village in Natore Police Station was arrested. A Rab team recovered the statue under a mango tree near a pond of Waj Ali's house. Waj Ali escaped arrest. In another drive conducted in Karnaphuli Hotel in Naogaon, Rab members recovered one kilogram heroin, 3 litre wine and a sharp of weapon. Four persons, Bijoy Kundu, 44, Afsarul Islam, 56, Moazzem Hossain, 45, and Abdul Main, 35, were arrested.

Abducted girl rescued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

An abducted female Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinee was rescued from Moukaran village on Friday. Patuakhali Sadar police rescued Asma from the house of Abdus Sattar and arrested alleged culprit, Shahin, 25, son of Jabar Mia. Four culprits abducted Asma two days ago while she was on the way to her school.

3 hurt in RU JCD factional clash

RU CORRESPONDENT

A Jatiyatbadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader and two activists were injured in a factional clash at Nawab Abdul Latif Hall of Rajshahi University (RU) on Sunday.

The injured persons are hall unit acting president Morshad Ali Nayan and two activists Jim and Babu.

A faction of the BNP student front is being led by its former university unit president Motiar Rahman while the other group by its former general secretary (GS) Aslam Reza.

The clash ensued when Nayan arrived the hall with his two associates by a motorbike after a month. He stays off his room (No 223), according to a JCD leader.

Their rivals rushed to Nayan's room and asked him the reason of his arrival without information. They exchanged hot words. All on a sudden, they started beating Nayan and his associates with hockey sticks. They also tried to set fire to Nayan's motorbike.

When contacted with the GS, Aslam Reza, he told The Daily Star, he is not at all aware about the incident.

A large number of police have been deployed in front of the hall to avert untoward incident.

'Strengthen local govts'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Speakers on Sunday at a discussion meeting held here stressed on strengthening the local government institutions for decentralisation of power, equal distribution of resources, good governance and overall economic development.

Held at Shyamnagar Upazila Parishad auditorium, the discussion was organised by the Shyamnagar unit of National Union Parishad Forum in collaboration with the USAID funded Local Government Initiative (LGI) and implemented by ARD.

Bhurulia Union Parishad (UP) Chairman GM Liakat Ali presided over the discussion.

Speakers also called for increased budgetary allocation to local government institutions.

Among others, SM Jaglul Haidar (Chairman, Sadar UP), Abdul Kader (Atulia), Sadekur Rahman (Iswaripur UP), Alamgir Haider (Romjan Nagar), UP members AKM Mujibar Rahman, Anowara Haq, Aminul Islam and Abu Musa addressed the meeting.

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION PROGRAMME IN RANGPUR

'Most vulnerable' area skipped on deputy minister's order

RAFIQUE SARKER, Rangpur

The government's 'disaster risk reduction programme' has been shifted from a 'most vulnerable area' to a comparatively well-off area in Rangpur at the instruction of a deputy minister, creating a public resentment.

The decision to shift the programme from Kolkond union to Alam Biditor and Kholea unions in Gangachara upazila was taken at the January 18 meeting of the district relief and rehabilitation committee where Deputy Minister for Relief Asadul Habib Dulu was present, sources at the Deputy Commission-ner's office told this correspondent.

Under the programme, Tk one crore loans will be disbursed among flood affected poor people for rehabilitation. Each beneficiary will get at least Tk 10,000 loan at nominal

interest.

This is part of a countrywide programme to disburse Tk 34 crore loans in 23 districts including five in northern region.

District disaster management committees will implement the programme through upazila committees.

Kholka union was earlier included in the programme. The shift has created resentment in the area, according to local body leaders.

Besides, seven Union Parishad (UP) chairmen in Gangachara upzila have expressed their resentment and requested the Rangpur Additional Deputy Commissioner (general) to change the decision.

Kolkond UP Chairman Mostafa Kamal sent a memorandum to the Director General of Relief and Rehabilitation Department in Dhaka through Deputy Commissioner Rafiqul Islam on January 5

for changing the January 18 decision.

In the memorandum he stated that most of the people in his union are hardcore poor as all six wards in the area are affected by river erosion and flood almost every year.

"They are the poorest in the district and they deserve priority in any such programme", Mostafa Kamal told this correspondent when contacted yesterday.

But he is yet to get any response either from the Deputy Commissioner or from Dhaka.

If the government really wants to alleviate poverty from Gangachara, it should consider the people of Kolkond union first, he said.

He said about 80 percent area of Kolkond union was flooded last year and 65 percent people there are landless due to erosion by Teesta river.

The district committee had earlier selected Koldkond and

Lahkitari unions to implement the programme, the sources said.

"As per the decision, letters were sent to me twice from the Deputy Commissioner's office to send a list of flood affected people and I submitted a list", Mostafa Kamal claimed.

The DC is president of the district disaster management committee.

A member of Koldkond UP seeking anonymity claimed that the programme has been shifted to Kholea and Alambitor unions because the chairmen of these UPs are leaders of the ruling party.

The DC however said this is a pilot project and it will be implemented in phases. Kolkond union will be brought under the programme in the next phase.

He however said Kholea and Alam Biditor unions are also vulnerable and flood affected areas.

Down with dowry



Children, taking part in a 'dress as you like' sports programme at SK Government Girls High School, display anti-dowry posters. The sports meet was held recently at Shaheed Miraj Tapan Stadium in Manikganj.

PHOTO: STAR

3 grenades recovered from Thakurgaon defused

A CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The three explosives recovered from a paddy field in Barobari village in Pirgoaj upazila in Thakurgaon district on Wednesday were grenades, army explosive experts said yesterday.

The 10-member army experts who came from Rangpur cantonment defused the grenades three feet under ground near Pirgoaj Rest House yesterday. Thakurgaon ASP Hasanuzzam and Pirganj thana OC Shahidul were also present.

Capt Md. Nasir Uddin led the ten-member army team.

The explosives were seen by farmer Shyamol Chandra in his paddy field. He informed police, who recovered the explosives on Saturday.

The Thakurgaon Deputy Commissioner and the Police Superintendent also visited the spot.

When asked police officials declined to speculate on who brought the grenades there and from where.

They said investigating the matter. Shyamol Chandra and some others in the village were taken to the police station and interrogated. But no clue was found.

RUNNER EDITOR MURDER CASE

HC orders fresh investigation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A division bench of the High Court (HC) on Wednesday ordered reinvestigation of Jessore Dainik Runner Editor Saiful Alam Mukul Murder Case

The HC bench comprising Justice Sharifuddin Chaklader and Justice ASM Asgar Ali ordered this following submission of a petition submitted by the complainant.

Mukul was gunned down by criminals in Jessore town on the night of August 30, 1998. His wife Hafiza Akhter Shirin lodged the FIR with Jessore Kotwali Police Station on September 1 the same year.

Later, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police submitted charge-sheet to court accusing 22 persons on April 25, 1999. But complainant Hafiza Akhter submitted a petition to court rejecting the charge-sheet on July 11. The lower court refused to accept the 'na-raji' petition.

Jessore Sessions Judge Court also rejected the complainant's appeal and upheld judgement of the lower court on February 27,

2001.

The complainant again filed a writ petition with the High Court. The HC division bench issued rule upon the government on June 7, 2001. The HC bench ordered stoppage of trial of the case. The hearing on the 'rule nisi' was held on January 20, 2003. Then the complainant appealed to the chief justice for his intervention.

Four with arms arrested in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Four persons were arrested and three firearms and ammunition were recovered from their possession in Raozan upazila on Friday.

Raazan police arrested a criminal, Ajay Kumar Barua, 33, from Mahamani village of Pahartali union.

On his confession, police arrested three of his accomplices from the same village. They are Prasenjit Barua, 35, Enayet Ali, 26, and Wasim, 23. Two guns, a foreign revolver, five rounds of bullets and cartridges had been recovered from their possession.



The Tiger Pass road (left) and an anti-hartal procession by Jatiyatbadi Chhatra Dal in New Market area in Chittagong during hartal hours yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR

Fresh breach in Teesta project dam

IRRI-Boro on 1,500 hectares flooded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

IRRI-Boro crops on 1,500 hectares of land have been flooded due to new breach on the left embankment of Dinajpur Main Irrigation Canal under Teesta Irrigation Project here.

The breach has been detected in an area stretching about 100 feet along the Observation Road at South Deshibai village in Jaldhaka upazila on Saturday.

Normal movement of both people and vehicles along the road has also been disrupted.

When contacted with the Executive Engineer of the

Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) here, he admitted it to this correspondent saying its repair progresses on emergency basis. 'It may take at least three days for the repair work,' he told The Daily Star.

Local people alleged that the embankment had been constructed with soil instead of earth resulting in the damage.

About a week ago, another part of the embankment had been damaged at Deviganj of Chiribandar upazila in Dinajpur. Local people complained of below standard work of the embankment.

Public outcry over Jhenidah couple 'murder'

Police unmoved

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

The killing of a couple in an alleged arson has evoked protests in Jhenidah by human rights organisations and local people but any of the culprits involved in the heinous crime are yet to be nabbed eighteen days after the incident.

An alliance of five Jhenidah human rights bodies under the banner of Lokmorcha (people's alliance) formed a human chain, staged a sit-in, brought out a procession in the town and submitted memorandum to the district administration on Saturday for arrest of the culprits.

The alliance threatened of tougher agitation if the culprits are not arrested by Thursday.

Nazrul Islam and his wife Asma Khatun were fatally burnt in a fire incident while they were asleep in their house on the night of January 26 at Daharpukuria village in the Sadar upazila.

Nazrul died next day while being taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Asma died at DMCH burn unit on February 3, after seven days' fight for life.

Ahmed (The Bangladesh Observer) and others.

The speakers also expressed their heart-felt sympathy with the bereaved family.

A Madaripur Correspondent reports: Journalists here protested the incident.

They held a meeting at the Press Club with Golam Mowla Akond of Sangbadik Kalayan Samity in the chair.

Among others, Bazlur Rahman Khan (Amar Desh), Moinul Islam (Prothom Alo), Sheikh Samsuddoha (Sangram), Selim Farazi (BSS), Nityananda Halder (Sangbad), Forkan Ahmed (Inqilab), Mortuja (Ajker Kagaj) spoke at the meeting, followed by a procession.



PHOTO: STAR

Lokmorcha formed a human chain at Jhenidah town Saturday to protest the killing of a couple in an alleged arson.

Threat to newspaper agent for toll

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Janajuddho cadres on Thursday threatened a newspaper agent for payment of illegal toll amounting to Tk 50,000 or face death.

The criminals warned Sekander Ali Patwary not to seek police help. After the threat, Patwary sought help of senior Khulna Metropolitan Police officials. He did not lodge any written complaint with police fearing reprisal.