

SNAPS

Corruption in OMS dealership alleged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

OMS (Open Market Sale) of rice has failed to bring down its price in different markets here even after 17 days of its launching. Alleged politicisation in allotting OMS dealership, bribery of food officials and black marketing of rice are the main reasons behind the failure. According to wholesale rice traders, coarse rice is being sold here at Tk 18 per kg and fine rice at Tk 24 per kg. An OMS dealer of Bhaina in the town, Siddik Mosharaf Hossain brought an allegation of bribery against Magura Sadar Upazila Food Controller (UFC) to the Deputy Commissioner (DC) and the district OMS committee president. According to the allegation, the UFC is giving DO (Delivery Order) letters to the dealers of Magura Sadar upazila and municipal area in exchange of Tk 5,000 as bribe. He further alleged a few unscrupulous dealers in connivance with the UFC are selling OMS rice in black markets. When contacted with Magura Sadar UFC Habibur Rahman, he denied all the allegations brought against him.

Killing protested by erecting highway blockade

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Road communication on the Rangpur-Bogra highway was disrupted for eight hours as transport workers erected barricade on it protesting murder of a driver and hijacking of his car on Sunday night. Car driver Abul Kalam Azad was strangled by unknown assailants at Kalitola bridge. The assailants were travelling by the car in guise of passengers, according to police. They rented the car from Shawdhin Rent-a-Car of D B road telling their intention to visit Bogra. After the murder, the criminals fled away with the car. Police recovered the body from a roadside paddy field on Monday morning. But they are yet trace the missing car. The body was sent to morgue for autopsy.

Community policing brings down crime in Rangpur

Police did not record any criminal case in Mistripara, a crime zone of the town, following its launching two years ago

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

The law and order in Rangpur town has improved considerably since launching of community policing two years ago.

At present, crimes like theft, armed robbery and snatching occur seldom in Mistripara, Munshipara, Guptapara, Islambag, Keranipara and Dhap areas.

Mistripara was a crime zone in the town two years ago. The police authorities miserably failed to check crime from here. But after launching of community policing, police did not register any case of such crime from the area during the period.

Abdul Mojib of Mistripara said to The Daily Star, they have heaved a

sigh of relief following launching of community policing. Criminals do not dare to commit crimes due to ever vigilance of community policemen.

Hosnara Lutfa, president of Guptapara law and order committee told this correspondent, people in her area enjoy sound sleep due to decrease in theft, robbery and snatching.

Kotwali Police Station (PS) Officer-in-Charge (OC) Noor-e-Alam echoed the voices of Mojib and Lutfa. He told The Daily Star, community policing helped decrease crime in the town. He opined to bring more areas under the network of community policing. Community policing is being

managed by people in collaboration with members of the law enforcing agencies, mainly police. Local people form the committees at their respective areas to run its activities.

Community policing is being done here in two ways. The town dwellers of Mistripara and Munshipara guard their areas themselves by turn. In other areas, the local committee hire private security personnel as watchdog to combat crimes. In each committee, the Superintendent of Police (SP) is the president.

Kotwali PS OC Noor-e-Alam told The Daily Star, police personnel try their best to help community policemen despite limited manpower.

Rabbani murder: Deposition of 5 PWs recorded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal, Chittagong on Monday heard five more prosecution witnesses (PWs) in connection with the sensational murder of Korean Export Processing Zone (KEPZ) managing director and former port chairman Commodore Golam Rabbani.

Tribunal judge Hasan Imam heard deposition of 23 out of 49 PWs so far. He fixed March 12 and 16 as the next dates of hearing, according to court sources.

Five PWs who gave deposition are: Sub-inspector Jafar Ali Khan, first investigation officer, Dr Md Ashiqur Rahman Bhuiyan, on-duty doctor of the emergency ward of Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH), Lt Col Dr Tapan Kanti Das, who conducted the post-mortem of the victim at Combined Military Hospital, Sub-inspector Md Faruque, who attached the movable property of absconding accused, and Sub-inspector Mahbulul Alam, record keeper of First Information Report (FIR).

The tribunal will hear three more PWs on next two schedules. Commodore Rabbani came under attack by armed criminals on the busy Muradpur Road on April 11 last year. He was going to KEPZ on board a microbus. He was rushed to the CMCH first and then to Combined Military Hospital (CMH), Dhaka. He died at a Bangkok hospital after fighting for life for 13 days.

Ctg traders want withdrawal of Vat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Hundreds of traders here on Sunday formed a human chain in front of Chittagong Press Club demanding withdrawal of Value Added Tax (Vat).

They formed the human chain protesting 'illogical' imposition of Vat and repression on retail traders in name of its realisation.

They held a protest meeting and submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner (DC).



PHOTO: STAR

Hundreds of dwellers in Manikganj parade the streets of the district town in a procession demanding civic amenities from the municipality authorities on Tuesday.

Sailkupa BNP splits

A group is backed by municipality chairman Khalilur Rahman while the other one by former lawmaker Abdul Wahab

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Internal feud in Sailkupa upazila BNP in Jhenidah district for several months has resulted in its split.

One group is backed by local BNP leader and municipality chairman Khalilur Rahman and the other group by former lawmaker Abdul Wahab.

Initially, the internal feud in the party surfaced in June last year as two rival factions clashed over establishment of supremacy in the area.

At least seven incidents of clash took place between the rival groups in several months, according to party insiders.

The feud surfaced again on Thursday when Wahab's supporters, in a tender manipulation, allegedly prevented Khalil's supporters from buying schedules for leasing local hats and bazaars, witnesses said.

After a while, supporters of both the groups locked in scuffle and chased each other.

The rival groups, equipped with

lethal weapons, locked in a clash on Sunday evening. On information police and members of joint forces intervened and brought the situation under control.

On Monday afternoon, the rival groups held separate processions and chanted slogans against each other dividing the party.

The division has frustrated both the leaders and activists alike, sources in the party said.

Nine rivers need dredging in Barisal region

Four launch stations closed down due to accumulation of silt in riverbeds

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Four launch stations have closed down because of accumulation of silt in 30 kilometre area of waterways in greater Barisal region.

New shoals have emerged in the riverbeds of Kirtonkhola, Arial khan, Kalabadar, Shikarpur, Hizla, Naya Bhanguni, Sugandhaya, Sandhaya and Meghna as the intensity of current of rivers decreased considerably, according to Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), Barisal Port authority and launch owners' association.

The rivers need immediate dredging, according to BIWTA Deputy Director Md Saiful Islam, also Port and Transport officer of Barisal. But it cannot be done due to fund con-

straints, he added. The launch stations which have been closed are Bara Machhua of Mathbaria in Pirojpur, Kasherhut of Muladai, Bhabanipur and Dhamura of Wazirpur upazila in Barisal.

Navigability has been lost along three-kilometre area from Torki to Hosnabad in Gourmadi upazila, four-kilometre area from Saheberhut to Tungibaria and Saheberhut to Lahurhut, half-a-kilometre area from Barisal launch ghat to fishing port, two-kilometre area from Dapdapia launch ghat to Mridhabari in Barisal Sadar upazila, four-kilometre area from Char Nainda to Rajapur, two-kilometre area from the eastern part Bholanath Char to its western part in Mehendiganj upazila, four kilometre area from Tengramari to South Vuterdia, five

kilometre area from Mallikpur to Madhayerchar in Babuganj upazila, three kilometre area from Mahishakhola to Showla and Badartuni in Hizla and Muladi upazilas, one kilometre area from Banaipara town to launch ghat in Banaipara upazila and one kilometre area from Wazirpur town to launchghat.

The Deputy Commissioner of Barisal sent three letters to the concerned ministries and departments on different occasions for taking immediate steps to dredge the rivers. He sent a letter on December 29 last year and two other letters on January 8 and February 9 this year.

This situation is not only hampering river transportation, but also threatening the environment.

Militancy: Police trying to arrest imam of mosque in Nilphamari

Activities of Islamic Jihad increased at Vogdaburi and other villages in last six months

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Domar police is trying to arrest an 'Imam,' Muslim priest, of Patoarypara Ahle Hadith Mosque in Vogdabari union for his alleged involvement in the activities of an extremist group named Islamic Jihad.

Police launched the operation following a confessional statement made by Islamic outfit, Azizul Islam of village Sundarkhata in Panchagarh who was arrested recently.

While on remand, Azizul mentioned the name of Ibrahim Mia as his close associate.

However, police could not arrest him as yet, but recovered important documents and receipt books of illegal toll collection by searching his house, a source in Domar police told The Daily Star.

Local people alleged that Ibrahim had been engaged in collecting illegal toll in name of Islamic Social Development Fund for a long time. He also threatened them for their failure to comply with his order. He collected the money to carry out extremist activities, they added.

According to people, the activities of Islamic Jihad increased at Vogdaburi and other villages during the last six months.

Patwari Para Ahle Hadith Mosque committee members told newsmen, Ibrahim took leave for four days after Azizul's arrest. But he

did not turn up even after 10 days of unauthorised absence.

He might have taken shelter in the mosque six months ago to carry out his outlawed activities, people apprehended.

Ibrahim hailed from Kaliganj village of Deviganj upazila in Panchagarh.

Grameen Bank client 'beaten'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

A tense situation prevails at a village here after an unfortunate incident of manhandling of a Grameen Bank client by its official on Sunday.

The Centre in-Charge of Grameen Bank of Ramganj Hat in Sadar upazila, Saiful Islam assaulted his client Belal Hossain, son of Hakimuddin at Tupamari Bandar village for his failure to repay his installment of loan on time. Belal prayed for more time for realisation of his loan due to joblessness.

Witnessing it, local people beat up Saiful. At this stage, he begged pardon from Belal, but they detained him till the high officials of Grameen Bank intervened.

Belal told newsmen he repaid his loan installments regularly. But this time he could not repay the installment due to economic crisis, he added.