

SNAPS

6 houses looted in one night in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Six houses were looted from six houses at village Sariaduli in Daulatpur upazila by a gang of bandits on Monday night.

According to family sources, bandits numbering 15 stormed into the house of Matiur Rahman and looted cash, ornaments and goods worth Tk 50,000. The same gang looted cash and ornaments worth Tk 2 lakh from the houses of Sabul, Ahad Sardar and three other unidentified persons.

Separate cases were filed with Daulatpur Police Station.

Reception

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

A reception was accorded to Shakrail Government Primary School Managing Committee President Shah Mokhesur Rahman who has been selected the best school managing committee (SMC) president in the entire district for three years.

The District Primary Education Office selected him during the National Education Week held in the years of 1998, 2002 and 2003.

The school managing committee members and teachers accorded the reception on the school premises on Tuesday.

District Primary Education Officer Riaz Uddin Sarker was the chief guest while Manikganj Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Syed Belal Hossain was present as special guests at the function.

FACTIONAL CLASH  
Kushtia BSL council postponed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A clash between two factions of Kushtia district unit of Bangladesh Sechhasebak League (BSL) has resulted in postponement of its district council on Tuesday.

Ten BSL activists including the district unit general secretary of Awami League (AL) were also injured during the clash.

According to police and party sources, a faction was led by the district unit general secretary Asgar Ali while the other faction by its former general secretary and municipality chairman Anwar Ali.

The clash ensued when the activists loyal to Asgar beat up Altaf Hossain, Vice-President the district unit of Bangladesh Chhatra league (BCL) when he was on way to Kushtia Government College in the morning.

Activists loyal to Anwar Ali intercepted Asgar's motorcycle in the evening and asked him to explain the reason of beating Altaf.

At one stage, they beat him. As soon as the news spread, Asgar's followers rushed there and locked in a clash with their rivals.

Asgar was admitted to a private clinic in the town.

INTRA-PARTY FEUD IN BNP  
Former MP Wahab removed from Shailkupa party post

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

After months' of serious in-fighting marked with clash, a rival faction ahas removed former lawmaker Abdul Wahab from the post of Shailkupa upazila BNP president for his alleged 'corruption, tender manipulation and other activities that damaged the party image', party sources said.

Earlier on Friday, they declared Wahab 'unwanted' in Shailkupa in Jhenidah district.

The decision to remove him was taken at a 'close door' emergency meeting of the party unit, held at upazila parishad auditorium on

CHITTAGONG CITY CORPORATION POLLS  
AL won't back candidates with criminal record

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

After announcement of nomination for the Mayor post, local Awami League (AL) has finalised the list of AL candidates for the 41 ward commissioner posts in the upcoming Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) election.

However, their names would be made public after ruling BNP announces its ward commissioner candidates, AL sources said.

Though local body elections are not held on party basis, political parties back their men.

"There will be no criminals in the list of AL candidates this time", claimed a top AL leader in the city when his attention was drawn to election of some "listed criminals" belonging to the party as CCC ward commissioners in the polls held in

2000.

He however said being on the police list does not mean a person is a terrorist or criminal till he is declared so by court. Many innocent people are being accused in cases due to political vengeance, he said.

Among the AL-backed 38 incumbent CCC ward commissioners, there at least are four persons on the police list of criminals.

There are 17 criminal cases including three for murders against Mamunur Rashid Mamun of Shulak Bahar ward, five against SM Shahiudlah of Bakalia and two against Mohammad Hossain Hiron of Pahartali ward. Another commissioner --Md. Aslam of South Halishaharis reportedly a 'godfather' of smugglers.

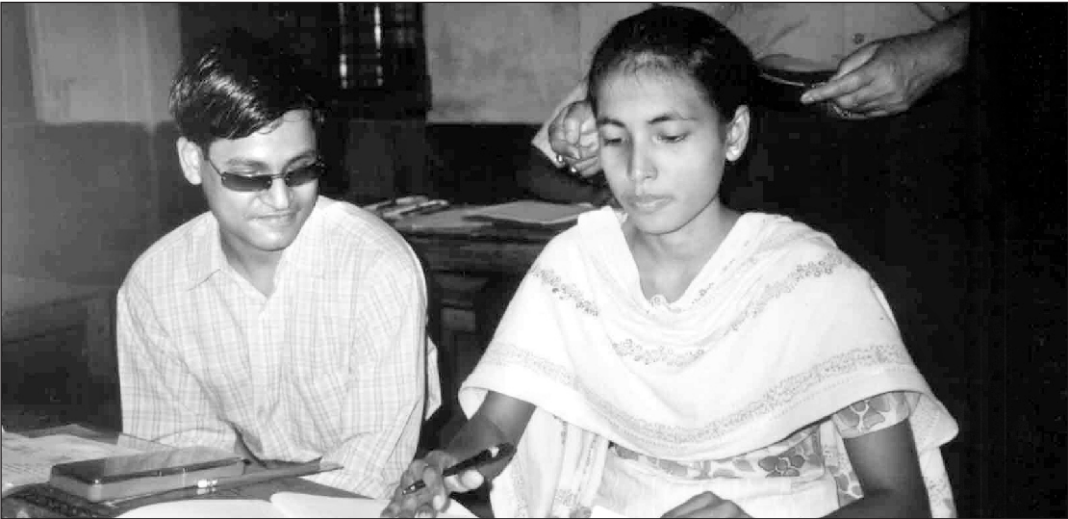
SM Shahidullah is now behind the bar and Mamunur Rashid is

escaping arrest. Mohammad Hossain was acquitted in one murder case (Sramik Dai leader Safi murder) and is on bail in the other case, police sources said.

According to sources, Mohammad Hossain and Aslam are preparing to contest the CCC polls with AL support to retain their posts.

BNP is now preparing a list of its probable candidates for ward commissioner posts though formal announcement may take some time, sources in BNP said.

They said two ministers and a former minister hailing from Chittagong will be the key persons in selecting the candidates. They are Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan, Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman and former commerce minister and Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury.



Kamal Hossain dictating answer to his aide during SSC examination being held at Brahmanbaria centre.

TALE OF TWO SSC EXAMINEES  
Blindness cannot hold them back

SHEIKH SHAHIDUL ISLAM, B'baria

Blindness is no barrier for Md Kamal Hossain and Iqbal Hossain. They are appearing at SSC (Secondary School Certificate) examinations at Brahmanbaria centre in the town.

They are helped by their aides, who tell them the questions and write answers as per dictation. They hope to good results like other students.

Kamal and Iqbal are students of Brahmanbaria High School, an old and famed institution in the town and stay at Alatunnesa ABC Student Hostel in the town, run jointly by the Social Welfare Department and Assistance For Blind Children (ABC), an NGO. There are ten students at the hostel.

When contacted, ABC Hostel teacher Abdul Wahid, who is also blind, said another blind student from the hostel- Babul Miagot "A" in SSC examination last year. Blind students of the hostel are doing good at classes and in public examinations, he said.

Admitted to Brahmanbaria High School in class six, Kamal and Iqbal did not face any problem in studies,

they told this correspondent yesterday.

There are some special arrangements for them at hostel, where their teachers are very cooperative, they said.

They learn their lessons through listening and reading and writing in "Brail System".

During a visit to the hostel, this correspondent saw blind students preparing lessons with assistance from a blind teacher.

The blind students are very sharp in hearing. If any body enters their room, they can easily sense his presence.

By using the sharp hearing, they also play a special type of 'mini cricket in the corridor of their Hostel in afternoon.

Iqbal said he can easily bat and catch a ball.

Kamal, eldest of two sons of Md Akbar Ali of Jamalpur district, lost his eyesight at the age of 10. His younger brother is masdrasa student.

Seeing his strong desire for education, his father helped him continue studies, he said.

After completing higher education,

he hopes to be a good singer, he says.

Iqbal, son of late Md. Akbar Ali of Chalkchandrapur village in Kasba upazila of the district, is the fourth among his three brothers and two sisters. Only he is visually retarded.

Iqbal lost his eyesight from typhoid when he was a student of class three. After higher education, he hopes to be a good teacher.

ABC Hostel Superintendent Md. Farook Hossain said many blind students from different parts of the country come to the hostel but he can accommodate them for sack of seat.

The hostel was set up in 1983 at the initiative of the then Sub Divisional Officer MAKarim.

CAPTION: Md. Kamal Hossain (sitting on the front bench) and Iqbal Hossain (in the back bench) are now appearing SSC Examination in Brahmanbaria Centre here. Their assistant are seen helping them in writing only. They hope a bright result like other able students this year.

Journalist Dip Azad bomb attack case goes to CID

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Dainik Jugantor journalist Dip Azad bomb attack case has been transferred to CID for investigation.

Former Additional Police Superintendent Mofazzel Hossain was also shifted to Kashimpur jail in Gazipur from Khulna District Jail, reportedly for security reason, according to Khulna District Jail Superintendent Forhad Mian. Mufazzel has been accduysed in the case.

The date for hearing on the case has also been shifted from March 14 to March 30. Sub Inspector Rafiqul Islam who is IO of the case said that charge sheet relating to the explosives part will be submitted to CMM court on March 23, accusing Mofazzel Hossain, outlaws Hasan, Shadhin, Miraj and Jubo League leader Khairuzzaman alias Tall Babu.

Outlaw Rafiqul Islam Chowdhury alias Hasan and the three other accused named Mofazzel as the mastermind behind the attempt on the life of Dip Azad.

A praiseworthy job by a UP leader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Md Hebzul Bari Bakshi, Chairman of Sharifpur East Union Parishad in Ashuganj upazila, has done a commendable job by stopping a child marriage.

Idris Mia of Uttar Tarua village in the union had settled marriage of his 10 year-old daughter Amena Begum with 14 year-old Md Mizan Mia, son of Md Osman Mia of Khalapara village in Ashuganj upazila.

Everything was set for the marriage ceremony Tuesday evening and relatives and guests including the UP chairman were invited.

Somehow, UP chairman Hebzul Bari cam to know that the girl and the boy were aged 10 and 14 respectively.

In the evening, shortly before the marriage, Bari Bakshi appeared at the scene and opposed the child marriage.

The parents and relatives of the bride and the bridegroom first protested but were later convinced when the UP chairman told them about the bad affects of child marriage. He advised them to arrange their education.

After a short speech by the UP leader, the people who gathered there promised to resist child marriage and send their boys and daughters to school.

MEHFIL, CONFERENCES  
Security blanket in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A security blanket has been clamped on Khulna city as a two-day Tafsirul Quraan Mehfil of Islami Samaj Kalyan Parishad began here yesterday and two important conferences are ahead.

The divisional conference of Jamaate-e-Islami will be held here tomorrow, to be followed union representatives' conference of BNP on March 23.

A series of bomb and grenade attacks in last one year in the city and in some districts of Khulna division have created a sense of insecurity among the people and made police officials deeply concerned.

According to Deputy Commissioner Akbar Ali of Khulna Metropolitan Police, tight security measures have been taken at all important places in the city.

Heavy contingents of police other law enforcers have been deployed in and around the Circuit House Maidan and adjoining Khulna Stadium where the Tafsirul Quraan Mehfil and divisional conferences of Jamaat and BNP will be held, he said.

Extra security measures have been taken at these important places of city.

Intelligence officials in large numbers have also been deployed in the city.

Talking to this correspondent yesterday, Akbar Ali said there is no reason to be panicked now as adequate steps have been taken any possible sabotage by any quarter.

A novel way of cheating in SSC exam

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Nilphamari Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) AKM Masuduzzaman on Saturday detected a novel way of cheating in SSC examination during a surprise visit to Nilphamari Government Girls' High School centre.

English Second Paper examination was progressing. When he visited Room No 5 at the centre, he saw an English teacher of Nagor Darwani High School under Sadar upazila named Waliullah on duty there where students of his school sat for examination.

According to official rule, no teacher can work as invigilator in any hall where students of the same school sit for examination.

At once, the UNO relieved assistant hall superintendent Abdul Jobbar Haidary from his duty.

However, he did not take action against the hall superintendent who is also headmistress of the school.

Sources said this arrangement was done to save the MPO of teachers of Nagor Darwani High School, which did bad results in consecutive years.

The district administration conducted an inquiry into the allegation on Wednesday. Nilphamari Deputy Commissioner (DC) also warned of stern action for 'irregularity' in SSC examination centre.



Some of the patients before treatment at a three-day eye camp organised by US Oil Company Unocal at Karimpur village in Habiganj, that concluded on March 13. Unocal Bangladesh President Andrew L Fawthrop open the camp.

UNOCAL'S SOUTH PAD IN HABIGANJ  
Land owners demand proper compensation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

About 250 families in Karimpur in Nabiganj upazila in Habiganj have demanded proper compensation and fair price of their lands to be acquired for gas exploratory work by US oil company Unocal.

Survey work in the area has already been completed and about 50 acres of land will be acquired for setting up Unocal's South Pad, sources said.

The site is near the Bibiyana Gas Field and the selected lands are adjoining the Sunamganj-Aushkandi and Syedpur-Inatganj roads.

The landowners at a press conference at Sylhet Press Club Tuesday evening alleged that certain quarters in the administration are trying to deprive them of proper compensation and fair price of their lands and homesteads.

They also threatened tougher

agitation, if needed, to realise their demands.

In a written statement they said, "We are proud of being the owners of lands fof national importance. We are also ready to sacrifice valuable ancestral houses and lands for that cause."

"But we want fair price as per law and proper compensation".

Some officials are trying to "cheat" us in the name of acquisition, which would be resisted at any cost, they warned.

All the families in the area will have to leave their ancestral homes. Some officials are now out to pay a 'nominal price' for the lands, they alleged.

Even, the price offered is 'far below' the price paid when Bibiyana Gas field was set up near a river bank in the area in 1997, they said.

The owners demanded that

prices to be paid should be higher than those given while acquiring lands for North Pad of Bibiyana Gas Field.

The press conference was addressed by Khaled Ahmed Pathan, Syed Manjur Ali, Md Mainuddin and Emdad Hossain.

Some employees from Unocal went to the area On Monday to see the site and to plan preparatory work.

But they could not do any work due to resistance by the villagers.

When contacted, Unocal officials also confirmed the incident.

They said they are ready to pay proper compensation to the land owners.

Besides building installation the Unocal might go for drilling in the area for gas, the officials said.