

'Faulty' SSC questions

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

"Faulty" question papers of Mathematics was supplied among SSC (Secondary School Certificate) examinees under Jessore Education Board on Saturday.

As a result, no examinees could work out two sums, which has created disappointment among examinees and their guardians.

According to a number of examinees, part 'c' of question No. 3 and 'a' of question No. 15 in 'B' set question papers were "faulty" and no student could work out the two sums.

When contacted over phone yesterday, Controller of Examinations of the Board, Md. Aminul Alam Khan told The Daily Star that an inquiry committee has been formed to find out who is responsible for the "mistakes" in the question paper.

He said the marks for the two questions will be distributed among other questions.

Bidding bye to child marriage, polygamy



PHOTO: STAR

Marriage registrars, Imams of mosques and Union Parishad leaders at a meeting at Aur Kaur village yesterday, which decided to say goodbye to child marriage and polygamy.

SHEIKH SHAHIDUL ISLAM, B'baria

A great decision was taken at a remote village in the district, which will go a long way in curbing child marriage and violence against women.

Thirty-six marriage-registrars, Imam of mosques and Union Parishad leaders at a meeting held at Aur Kaur village in the Sadar upazila said good bye to child marriage and polygamy.

The meeting on 'Role of Community to Implement Muslim Law' was organised by 'CHANGE', a local NGO with assistance from Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA).

Moderated by Advocate Kamrul Huda of BNWLA, the meeting was addressed by, among others, lawyers Jobaida Pervin and Aleya Chowdhury of BNWLA, Md Abul Bashar of CHANGE, KHM Rashidul Islam, lawyer Islam Uddin Dulal, UP

leaders Md Mubarak Munshi, Nadira Begum, Helena Begum, Anwara Begum, Md Bahar Uddin, Momotaz Chowdhury, Romana Begum and Namita Rani Deb, marriage registrars Reaz Uddin, lakub Ali and Md Nazrul Islam, Poet Joydul Hossain, Md Abu Bakar Siddiky and Nurul Islam.

They all vowed to work against dowry, child marriage and polygamy in their respective areas.

They also called for building a social movement against these vices.

People of all sections should come forward to free the society from the vices.

UP member Navera Begum said she stopped a marriage when she came to know that the boy and the girl were aged 14 and 10 respectively.

A large number of local people were also present at the meeting.



PHOTO: STAR

Journalists with faces covered with black cloths marching Rajshahi city streets yesterday, protesting government leaders' remarks on media.

3 lakh brace for a repeat of flood

Breached Bhogai river dam at Hatipagar in Sherpur not repaired for only Tk 4.34 cr

JAHANGIR ALAM back from Nalitabari, Sherpur

Netrakona: Over three lakh people in about 100 villages in Nalitabari upazila in Sherpur district and Fulpur and Haluaghat upazilas in Mymensingh district brace for a flood havoc this year also, only because the breached Bhogai river embankment at Hatipagar in Nalitabari have not been repaired.

A Tk 4.34 crore project was submitted in November last year for repair of the embankment but it is yet to be approved by the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), official sources said.

Last year's flood caused by water rolling down the Bhogai river

from India's Meghalaya state damaged crops on several lakh acres, besides causing miseries to people. Vast areas of cropland were covered with thick layers of sand, making those uncultivable.

With the wet season approaching, people in the three upazilas are worried, taking it for sure that their IRRI-Boro crops will be lost this year also. This correspondent visited the area on Friday and talked to many people, who said last year's flood displaced several thousand people and made as many affluent farmers pauper as their sand-covered lands are uncultivable now. Lands in about 25 villages in Nalitabari upazila became uncultivable.

They said they did not want

relief. They wanted repair of breached embankment, which was not done in the dry season due to alleged negligence of the authorities and public representatives.

The Daily Star published three reports on the damage on December 29 last year and on January 9 and February 14 this year.

When contacted, Whip Jahad Ali Chowdhury, lawmaker from the area, said the project has been approved by the Chief Engineer of LGED but the papers are yet to reach the office of Sherpur LGED Executive Engineer (EXN). These will reach offices of Sherpur EXN and Nalitabari Upazila Engineer soon, he hoped.

Asked when the work will begin and whether it will be completed before the rainy season, he said, "I will try my best. I have nothing to do if it (breached embankment) can not be repaired before the rainy season".

Nalitabari Upazila Engineer Ashraful Haque said, "Higher authorities in LGED assured us of approval of the project but we did not get any papers regarding this."

"Even if the project is approved and funds placed, it will not be possible to repair the breach before the rainy season", he said. Hill waters from across the border may cause flash flood in the area any time.

Mohammad Jamal Hossain, EXN of Sherpur LGED, said he did

not get any papers regarding sanction of the project. Repair work should start in November, he commented.

He said last year's flood affected 25 villages in Nalitabari upazila and covered vast croplands with sand. This will repeat this year, he said.

Yunus Ali, Chairman of Nayabil Union Parishad said last year's flood made several hundred acres of land uncultivable in his area, besides displacing many people and damaging ready-for-harvest IRRI-Boro crops. As their lands have become uncultivable, many people left homes and went to Dhaka and other cities for survival. More lands will be covered by sand when waters roll down the Bhogai

river, he apprehended.

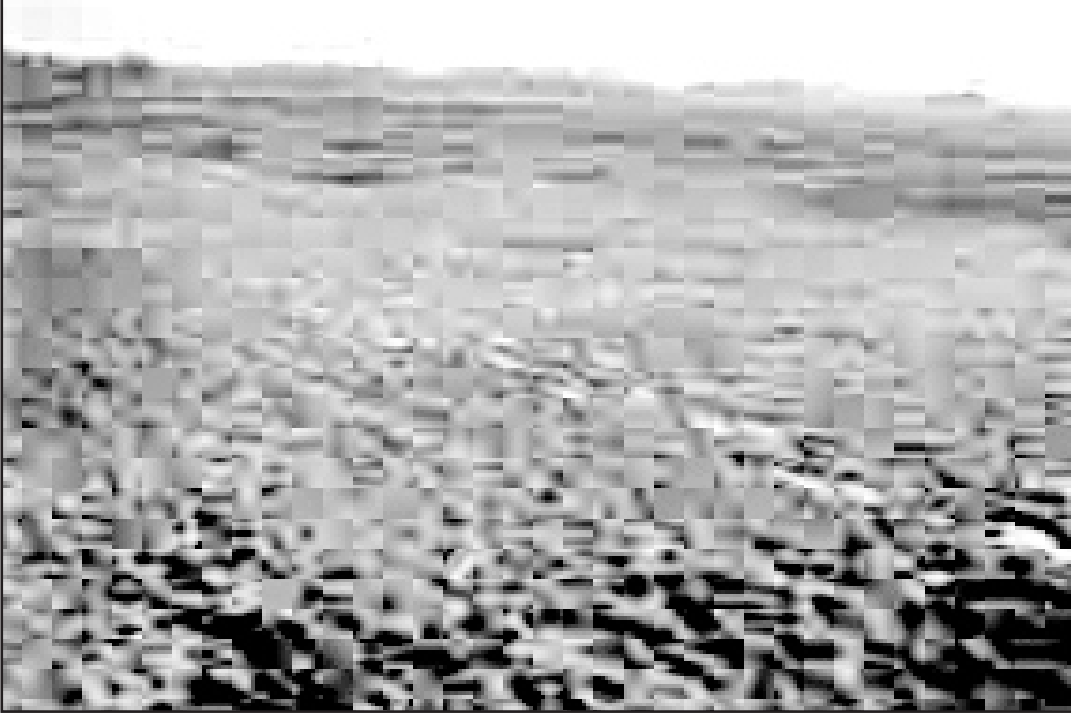
He said local lawmaker Jahad Ali could get the project sanctioned in time had he been sincere. He also blamed LGED for this.

During the visit this correspondent saw many people in Nalitabari preparing to leave homes before floods come.

Widow Karimunnasa, living in a hut at Andaru Para village in Nalitabari upazila, said last year's flood covered her small cultivable land with sand. She will go to Sherpur town before rains start in about a month this year, she said.



A portion of the breached Bhogai river embankment in Hatipagar(L) and land covered with thick sand layer.



STAR FILE PHOTO

SNAPS

Rab nabs Jubo Dal leader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested two 'top criminals' wanted for by police in Jhalakathi and recovered arms from their possession in the early hours of yesterday. Rab sources said, acting on a tip-off, a team of 16 members led by ASP Miraj raided Manikpur area in Nalchity Paurashava in Jhalokathi district at about 3 am and arrested Khairul Islam Jaid, 26, of Kulikhati village and Mahfuzur Rahman, 25, of Manikpur village. They later recovered a foreign made revolver from their possession. Jaid is son of Kulkati Union Parishad chairman and Mahfuzur Rahman is Jubo Dal president in ward no. 1 in Nalchity municipality. Police wanted them for long in cases for abduction, toll collection, robbery and other crimes. They were handed over to police and an arm case was lodged with Nalchity thana.

Free legal aid for disabled

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Bogra Advocates' Bar Association will give legal support to disabled people free of cost, its president Mir Iqbal Hossain has said. He was addressing a discussion meeting on full implementation of the Pratiband Kalayan Ain-2001, held at the Zila Parisad auditorium on Saturday. It was organised by Bogra Zila Pratibandi Committee (committee for assistance to the disabled). With Md Shaiful Islam in the chair, the meeting was addressed by, among others, Zahidur Raman Zadu, Assistant Editor of The Daily Karotea, Journalist Hasibur Rahman Bilu, Advocate Abdul Latif Bobby, Shati Hannan, Rasidul Alam, Area Coordinator of Action on Disability and Development (ADD) Aziz Ahmed, human rights activist Fazlul Haque and Convener of Bogra Andha Shangstha Mir Morsaid Ali. The speakers called upon the government to fully implement the Pratiband Kalayan Ain-2001 to establish rights of the disabled in the country, numbering over 1.40 crore.

Demise of a children's park in Bandarban

Mute procession by children, memo submitted to DC

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Over 100 children on Saturday took out a mute procession in the hilly town in protest against a bid to establish a ladies' club by removing a children's park set up by the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTDB) on 22 decimals of land in 1995.

The club is being constructed by the Bandarban Parbattya Zila Parishad at a cost of Tk 10 lakh.

Following the procession, the children submitted a memorandum to Bandarban Deputy Commissioner (DC) Sheikh Alauddin. The memorandum contained children's demand for retention of park at its original site or selection of an alternative site for the park.

The park is the lone place for recreation of local children.

Actually, the ladies club and the district Shilpakala Academy are joint owners of the land,

according to sources in the Land office.

Zila Shilpakala Academy General Secretary Monirul Islam Monu has suggested a mutual settlement either by setting up the park at an alternative place or by shifting the construction site of the ladies club elsewhere.

However, the Ladies' Club authorities are yet to make comments.



PHOTO: STAR

Bandarban Parbattya Zila Parishad is constructing a ladies club in a children's park in the town.

Harijans demand equal social rights

Rally, human chain, bicycle procession held in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Over 5000 members of Harijan community brought out a bicycle procession, formed a five-kilometre human chain in Satkhira and held a rally yesterday in observance of the International Day of Elimination of Racial Discrimination, demanding equal rights.

The human chain was formed from Patkelghata to Shobhashuni on both sides of Satkhira-Khulna road.

Earlier they submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister through the Deputy Commissioner to press their 22-point demand.

They also held a discussion meeting at Patkelghata auditorium in Tala upazila, where the speakers said the Harijans are facing all sorts of racial discrimination in the country and are deprived of basic rights ensured by the Constitution.

They vowed to launch agitation to realise the demands, denied by the civil society in absence of their enforcement by the government.

The demands include implementation of Sections 27 and 28 of Constitution, treatment like other communities, reserved seats in public universities, quota in government service, their inclusion in development activities, representation in local bodies, bank loan on easy terms, allotment of khas lands and punishment to those violating their rights.

They also demanded declaration of

March 21 as a government holiday for eliminating racial discrimination. The programmes were organised by 'Paritran', a local NGO.

Paritran President Uday Kumar Das presided over the meeting, addressed by, among others, Dr. Hamida Hossain, vice-president of RIB, an NGO; Dr. Meghna Guha Thakurata of Dhaka University; Principal Asit Kumar Majumdar; Rafiqul Islam of Rupantar, an NGO; Milan Das of Paritran and Sardar Gias Uddin.

Dr Hamida Hossain called upon all sections in the society to come forward to guarantee equal social rights of the Harijans.

Meghna Guha Thakurata called upon the government to enact laws to ensure their rights.

BDR jawans donate blood

A CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A blood donation campaign was organised jointly by 14 and 15 Rifles battalions here recently.

Prime Minister's mother Begum Taiaba Majumdar inaugurated the campaign as the chief guest while Dinajpur Sector Commander Colonel Kaiser Uddin and Dinajpur Pourasabha Chairman Safiqul Haque were present as special guests.

Eighty-five BDR jawans donated blood during the campaign.

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