

FIRST DEATH ANNIVERSARY HELD

Little progress in Balu murder trial

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The first death anniversary of Dainik Janmabhumi editor Humayun Kabir Balu was observed here yesterday.

In the morning, journalists and other newspaper employees, joined by Dainik Janmabhumi staff, brought out a mourning procession in the town, offered prayer and laid floral wreaths at his grave at Basupara graveyard in city.

This was followed by a discussion meeting, held at Khulna Press Club. Presided over by press club president Shaikh Abu Hasan, it was addressed by Khulna correspondent of the Independent Shahabuddin Ahmed, Bureau Chief of Dainik Samakal Mamun Reza, Correspondent of Dainik Sangbad Rakibuddin Pannu, Bureau Chief of Dainik Janakantha Amol Saha, Acting Editor of Dainik Janmabhumi Wadudur Rahman Panna, Secretary of the press club Md



Faruque Ahmed, Bureua Chief of Dainik Loksamaj Abu Tayeb, Senior Staff Reporter of Dainik Purbanchal Mohammad Shaheb Ali and Khulna Union of Journalists (KUJ) President Makbul Hossain Mintoo.

The discussion was followed by a rally organised jointly by members of the press club, KUJ and Metropolitan

Union of Journalists (MUJ).

The speakers demanded immediate arrest of the killers. They deplored that none of the accused could be arrested even one year after the brutal killing. They held police responsible for this.

They said journalism is the most risky profession in the country.

A Milad Mehfil was held at the press club after Asar prayer.

Humayun Kabir Balu was killed in a bomb attack allegedly by extremists on June 27 last year in front of his office-cum-residence at Islampur Road in the city.

A case was filed with Khulna thana in this connection by SI Maruf Hossain as complainant on June 28 which was transferred to the Detective Branch of Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP) on June 29.

Inspector Mohiuddin Chowdhury of Detective Branch of KMP submitted charge sheet in the case to the court of Chief

Metropolitan Magistrate under the Explosive Substances Act on August 29 last year, naming eight operatives of Janajuddho faction of PBCP (Purba Banglar Communist Party) as accused.

The charge sheet of the case under Section 320 of CrPC was submitted to the same court on April 26 this year, also naming the same eight extremists as accused.

The chargesheeted accused include founder of PBCP Janajuddho Abdur Rashid Mali alias Tapan. He is absconding, according to police.

Hearing on the charge sheet submitted will begin on June 30 in the court of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, while hearing on the charge sheet under the Explosive Substances Act will begin on July 13 in the court of the District and Sessions Judge, Khulna.

Over Tk 1 cr statue recovered: Gang of 10 held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) have recovered a statue made of touchstone worth over Tk one crore from being smuggled out to India, Rab sources said.

Two Rab teams arrested a gang of smugglers consisting of 10 members following raids conducted in different areas of Manikganj and Dhaka on Saturday and in the early hours of Sunday. After their confessional statement, Rab members recovered the statue from Bogra.

The arrested persons are Abdus Salam, Abul Kalam Azad, Rafiqul Islam, Suruz, Ahsan Ullah, Suvash Chandra Das, Polash, Saiful Islam Shamim, Abbas Ali and Majibur Rahman.

Plainclothes Rab members arrested Abdus Salam and his accomplice Suruz from Salam's house at Porra in Manikganj town on Saturday afternoon. They visited Salam's house several times in guise of purchaser of the statue and fixed its price at Tk 1 crore 10 lakh. It was decided they would pay him Tk 6,00,000 in cash during the period of handing over of the statue. The rest amount would be paid by DD of Prime Bank, Kawran Bazar branch.

Lawyer Abul Kalam Azad was arrested from his rented house at Gangadharpotty in the town while Rafiqul Islam, Ahsan Ullah, Suvash Chandra Das, Abbas Ali, Majibur Rahman were arrested from Manikganj Court premises.

Another team arrested Saiful Islam Shamim and Polash from the Kawran Bazar branch of Prime Bank in the capital.

All the arrested persons were handed over to Manikganj police.

Star Readers' Club formed in Tangail

A CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The Daily Star Readers' Club was formed here on Friday with a slogan to create enlightened citizens.

The club was formed at a meeting held at the office of Shuvo Unnayan Shingthai in the town.

Journalist Mirza Shakil presided over the meeting while head of English Department of Government Kumudini Womens' College Prof Rezaul Karim attended as chief guest. Club coordinator Rafi Hossain attended as moderator.

Among others, Shamsul Haque, assistant professor of English Department of Government M M Ali College Kagmari, Abdullah Khaled, assistant professor of English Department of Government Kumudini Women's College, Habibur Rahman, assistant professor of English Department of Lion Nazrul Islam College, Mirza Abdullah-Al Sani, lecturer of Major General Mahmudul Hassan College, Razu Ahmed, lecturer of Lion Nazrul Islam College, SM Sadat Hossain, lecturer of Lion Nazrul Islam College, Saidul Hassan Bappi, assistant teacher of Bindubashini Government Girls' High School. Saiful Islam, assistant teacher of Sristy International School and Shafiqul Islam Lavlu, assistant teacher of Sristy Academy addressed the meeting.

A large number of people, mostly teachers and students attended the meeting and expressed their willingness to become club members.

A 21-member committee of the club was formed with Babu Chanchal Nandi as convener and assistant professors Azad Khan, Khan Mohammad Mostak and Mabud Zahangir Nannu as joint conveners.

SANITATION IN CHT

People unaware as local govts inactive

ABDUL KADER, back from Rangamati

At Bogapara village in Gagra union under Kawkhali upazila, family members of tribesman Baggodhon use two pieces of wood on a hillock to defecate. The sewage from the so-called latrine mixes with water of a Chhora (stream) they use for cooking, washing and other household work.

"We have been using this latrine for long. We use water of the Chhora for household work," Baggodhon said bluntly.

When asked he said his family members are often attacked with diarrhoea and other intestinal diseases. But he does not know the reason.

Same is the case with most others in the village.

This is the usual scene in most of the villages in Rangamati and two other districts in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

Talking to the villagers, it was gathered that the lack of awareness is because neither the government nor the local bodies ever tried to make them conscious about sanitation and water borne diseases.

According to Unicef, only 12.4 percent people in Rangamati district use sanitary latrines, 16.5 percent use 'hanging latrines' and the rest defecate in the open.

The NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation made in a survey on 3785 families in Kawkhali and Zorachhori upazilas in the district. They found only five hygienic latrines in Kawkhali upazila, none in Zorachhori.

BSF bids again for barbed wire fence in B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bbaria

The Border Security Force (BSF) of India are making attempts off and on to erect barbed wire fence on the 'no man's land' along the border in Brahmanbaria.

BSF made several such attempts on Sunday and the day before but withdrew in the face of obstruction by BDR. Sources in BDR Battalion 1 said BSF attempted to erect barbed wire fence on the no man's land near border pillar No. 2005 at Laksmipur village in the Sadar upazila on Sunday and Saturday but abandoned it after BDR protest.

On Saturday, BSF also make another attempt near border pillar No. 2021 at Kalyonpur village in Akhawra upazila, but withdrew when BDR protested.

BSF also made such attempts near pillars No. 2012 (1S), 2012 (2s) and 2012 (3s) in the last three days.

Talking to this correspondent yesterday, Fakirmura BOP Commander Md Sahadat Hossain said BSF is not abiding by its commitment not to raise barbed wire fencing on the no man's land.

They are making attempts off and on but do not respond to BDR's proposal for flag meeting, other BDR

sources said.

On April 16, some BSF men along with Indian citizens illegally entered Hiapur village in Akaura, about 400 yards inside Bangladesh. They opened fire killing a 10-year girl named Nahida Aktar and looted valuables from five houses, sources said. This resulted in an exchange of fire between BDR and BSF.

The situation was normalised following exchange of visits by top officials of BDR and BSF. But the situation is warming up again due to their attempts to erect barbed wire fence, the sources said.

Earth cracks, building subsidises in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Panic gripped people as cracks developed on the earth suddenly yesterday at several places covering about one kilometre area in Putuni village in Keralkata union under Kalaroa upazila.

At least 50 small holes have been created on the ground.

A farmer, Tabibur Rahman, while ploughing his land was injured as he fall into a hole created abruptly when the cracks developed, villagers told this correspondent during a visit.

The Keralkata Union Health Complex building subsidised slightly and one of its walls and the roof also developed cracks.

Hundreds of panicked people from nearby areas thronged there to see the building, cracks and holes on the ground.

Sirajul Islam, Family Welfare Staff Emdadul Haq, injured Tabibur Rahman, Badar Uddin, Monowara Khatun and others of the village said cracks stretching 300 feet to 400 feet developed on the ground on the eastern side of the health complex all of a sudden.

Cracks stretching about 500 feet were seen on the yard of Sirajul Islam.

Islam and several other villagers said, similar crack developed on croplands in the village.

Kalaroa Upazila Nirbahi Officer In-charge SM Ashrafuzzaman visited the area and said he will inform the matter to the Geological Survey Department.

Kalaroa Uupazila Agriculture Officer Ashraf Ali said, it would not be possible to determine the cause of the cracks without investigation by experts of Geological Department.

"Indiscriminate extraction of underground water may be the



PHOTO: STAR

Some of the many holes created all of a sudden in Putuni village in Keralkata union under Kalaroa upazila yesterday.

cause," he said.

Agriculture Extension Department sources said, farmers in South Western districts use

2,92,253 pumps including 2770 deep tubewells and 2,60,160 shallow tubewells to irrigate their lands.

Rangpur-Dhaka train suspension decried

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Leaders of different political parties, social and business organisations in Rangpur have protested withdrawal of inter-city train Teesta which used to ply the Dinaipur- Dhaka route via Rangpur.

Bangladesh Railway (BR) has withdrawn the Teesta following introduction of Inter-city Drutojan on Saturday, which shuttles between Dinaipur and Dhaka via Parbotipur through the Jamuna Bridge without touching Rangpur.

The people of Rangpur are now deprived of inter-city train service to Dhaka, which is also hampering trade and

business in the northern districts, they told this correspondent.

BR sources said they have taken the decision as plying a inter-city express train via Rangpur is not cost effective. Moreover, ferry service was an extra burden for train passengers after commissioning of Jamuna Bridge, they said.

Jatiya Party (E) legislator from Rangpur GM Quader said the decision to sidetrack Rangpur in the new train service proves that the government is not sincere to the people of Rangpur and their statements on its development are only lip service.

GM Quader said he had sent a letter to Prime Minister, who

assured him that a connecting train from Rangpur to Parbotipur would be introduced before Drutojan is pressed into service. He hoped that the assurance will be fulfilled.

President of Rangpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry and former chairman of Rangpur municipality Kazi Mohammed Zunnun said withdrawal of Dhaka-Rangpur train service shows government's discriminatory behaviour towards the people of Rangpur.

Rangpur Municipality Chairman Abdur Rouf Manik protested the decision and urged the government to introduce a connecting train from Rangpur to Parbotipur.

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