

An alliance partner made govt to arrest Ghalib

Ahle Hadith leader says
STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Acting Ameer of Ahle Hadith Andolan, Bangladesh, Dr. Muhammad Muslehuddin, has said a partner in the ruling alliance misguided the government into arresting its chief Dr. Asadullah Al Galib.

Without naming Jamaat-i-Islami, he said the party will eat up BNP. The party is gaining strength at the cost of BNP but its (BNP) are yet to realise this.

Addressing a party rally at the Zia Hall here, the Acting Ameer claimed that that BNP will suffer a crushing defeat in the next national elections for 'torturing' Muslim clerics. The Ahle Hadith and its supporters of his party will boycott next national elections if Dr. Galib is not released, Dr. Muslehuddin said.

The president of Khulna Zila Imam Parishad Moulana Abu Salah and central Organising Secretary of Islami Oyko Jote (IOJ) MA Sakhawat Hossain also addressed the rally. They demanded release of Dr. Galib.

They alleged that the government is ruling the country as per dictates of America.

The rally was presided over by Moulana Jahangir Alam, president of its Khulna district unit.

Outlawed parties recruiting slum boys, street urchins

They are being trained to make bombs, target victims, KMP officials reveal

QUAZI AMANULLAH, *Khulna*

Underground parties in the crime-prone south-western region are recruiting new members, mostly unemployed youths and teenagers, for criminal activities at 'minimum risk', police sources said.

Operatives of the underground outfits are recruiting boys between 13 and 16 years from different slums and floating people. These boys are being trained in making bombs and targeting victims. They are also given money.

Cadres of the parties secretly visit families of victims of crossfire and mob beating to persuade teenagers to join them, the sources in Khulna

Metropolitan Police (KMP) said. Boys from slums and street urchins are given priority for carrying small arms, hand bombs and grenades.

Unemployed floating youths are easily tricked by outlaws and tasked with collecting ransom and toll on behalf of them.

With the little payments they get, these youths and teenagers also use drugs or commit sexual crimes, said a senior KMP official.

He said the new recruits are more dangerous, and sometimes more effective, than the old and experienced underground operatives.

Citing an example, he said 15 year-old Jasim and Khalil hurled a grenade at the official vehicle

of the Khulna City Corporation Mayor on February 29 last year. They threw another grenade on a police sergeant in the city on March 5 last year.

Both the Mayor and the sergeant survived the attempts on their lives, as the grenades did not explode. But they threw the grenades very accurately, he said.

Outlaw Raja Chowdhury, 17, who was killed in 'crossfire' in September last year, had supplied the grenades to Jasim and Khalil, who also died in an 'encounter' with police on March 6.

Another teenager, Ujjal, 14, was injured in an explosion while making a bomb in Ice Ghat union in Rupsha upazila on January 23 last year.

The KMO official said both Janajuddha and M-L factions of outlawed Purba Banglar Communist party (PBCP) are recruiting boys to accomplish destructive missions at minimum risk.

Police picked up two boys in January this year with two bombs supplied to them to kill a physician in Shantidham under Kotwali Police Station.

KMP Detectives arrested two 12-year-old boys with two firearms in April from Farazipara under the same police station.

The new recruits are also involved in drug peddling, the KMP officer said.

Primer on Marma language developed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Bandarban*

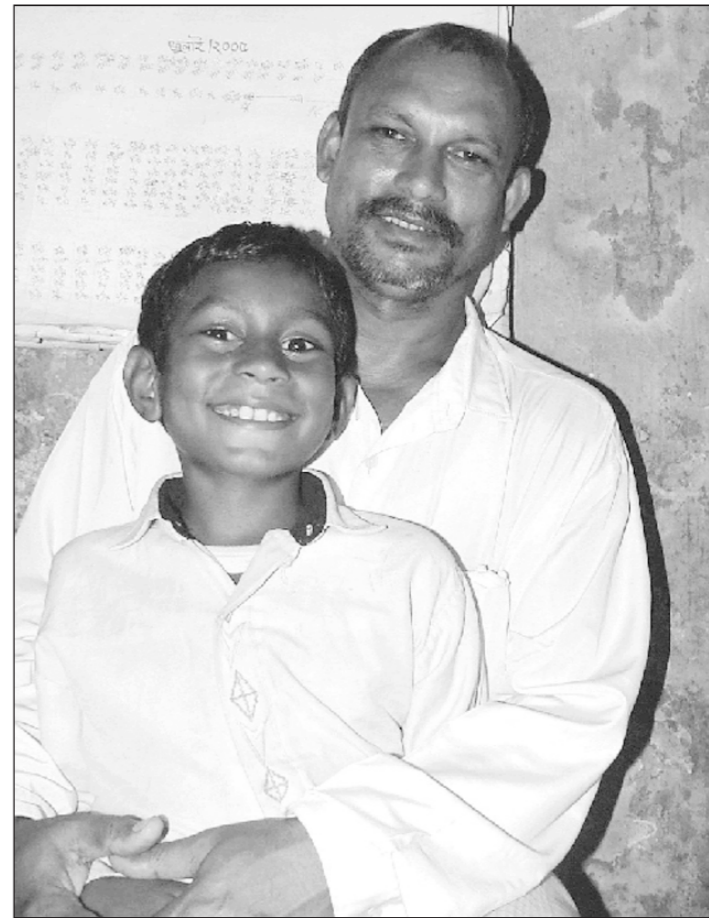
A primer of Marma language has been developed with a view to introducing it in schools for Marma indigenous students in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

The primer book was approved at a roundtable after a day-long discussion, held at Bandarban on Thursday. It was organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Theatre Arts (BITA), an NGO.

Kay Shoi Prue Khoka, who introduced the book, presented it at the meeting.

Abu Saleh, Co-ordinator of BITA in Bandarban, former chairman of Bandarban Hill District Council Kya Sha Hla, indigenous writer and Marma language specialist Mong Kya Sue Nue, The Daily Star Correspondent and cultural activist Monirul Islam Monu, Bandarban Tribal Cultural Institute Research Officer U Chaw Nue, teacher Dolly Prue and BITA Program Officer Ruprosree Newar Moni, among others, attended the conference.

The participants approved an amended version of the proposed Primer Book after a long discussion.



Shaheed Alam returned to his father's lap in Chittagong yesterday. Abducted from Monirbari area in Baddarhat, school student Alam, son of Musa Mia, was rescued by police from West Phulmati village in Phulbari upazila in Kurigram district on Wednesday.



Flooded village in Kurigram (left) and a minor boy taking home drinking water at Kaiyaer Hat village in Fulchari upazila in Gaibandha district.

25 acre govt land recorded in influentials' name

Survey team detects the irregularity in Nilphamari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Nilphamari*

About 25 acres of prime government land worth about Tk 12 crore have been recorded in favour of some influentials in Nilphamari town and in the Sadar upazila illegally by a section of corrupt land officials.

The irregularities done in 2002 and 2003 by officials at the Land Settlement Office were detected during the ongoing land survey being done by a team from the land ministry.

The lands are in Nilphamari Municipality area (town mouja), Nilphamari Bazar Mouja, Itakhola Mouja and Kanial Khata Mouja, according to sources in the survey team and at the Land Settlement Office.

The lands, earlier recorded as 'vested property' or 'khas land', have

been under illegal possession of the influentials, who built structures on those.

The team has given reports to the Land Ministry Secretary, Divisional Commissioner of Rajshahi, Director General of Land Record and Survey in Dhaka, Zonal Land Settlement Office in Rangpur and to Nilphamari Deputy Commissioner, the sources told this correspondent on Thursday.

Nilphamari Deputy Commissioner Rabintra Nath Roy Chowdhury said he has directed authorities concerned to recover the government lands and take action against the persons responsible.

A letter has been sent to the Zonal Land Settlement Officer in Rangpur in this regard, he said.

This correspondent tried to contact Zonal land Settlement

Officer Abdus Salam in Rangpur. Sources at the office said he was on leave. Land Settlement Officer-in-Charge Dulal Shah said he took over office a few days back and declined to say anything in this regard.

As per the survey team's report, the lands are 12.74 acres in Nilphamari Mouja, recorded in favour of 54 people; 9.74 acres in town mouza, recorded in favour of 35 people; 2.17 acres in Itakhola Mouza, recorded in favour of 4 persons and 0.10 acre in Kanial Khata Mouja, recorded in favour of one person.

Sources at the land Settlement Office said most of the people occupying the lands enjoy blessings of powerful groups having links with political parties.

Akhaura land port earns Tk 74 lakh revenue last fiscal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *B'baria*

Akhaura land port earned Tk 73,67,000 revenue in the last fiscal year against a target of Tk 81,82,000 despite various problems that kept the port inoperative for about five months.

A devastating flood kept the Dharkhar-Akhaura portion of the road near the port under water for months, suspending port activities. Later, collapse of a Bailey bridge on the road kept export-import stopped for about two months, sources at the land port told this correspondent yesterday.

A border tension following killing of a Bangladeshi girl and abortive bid by BSF to raise barbed wire fence on the no mans land in Akhaura border stopped port operation for about 10 days.

Pirates loot Hilsa

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

One person was injured and hilsa fish worth Tk 3 lakh was looted by pirates from two fishing trawlers at Haldikhali in Dakop upazila in the early hours of Friday.

Injured Naimul Huq, 34, was driver of one of the two fishing trawlers. He is undergoing treatment in Dakop Upazila Health Complex. The trawlers were on way to Khulna from Dublar Char near the Bay of Bengal. The fish belonged to MS Aminia Fish and MS Ajmeri Fish of Skid ghat in the city.

'Listed' criminal held in Bagerhat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) on Wednesday night arrested a 'listed' criminal from Baniakhali village in Morrelganj upazila of Bagerhat district. Three pipe guns were recovered from the pond of his house.

According to Rab, arrested Shah Alam is wanted in 11 criminal cases of Morrelganj police station including murder, toll collection and illegal occupation of shrimp enclosures.

Alam is the headmaster of Baniakhali Government Primary School and younger brother of Khulna City Corporation ward commissioner Mohammod Hossain Mukta.

CHANGE OF SITE, RAIN HAMPER WORK AT TENGGRATILA

Drilling of second relief well to be delayed by a week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Sylhet*

Drilling for the second relief well at Tenggratila gas field will be delayed by at least a week for different reasons including change of the site, an official working at the gas said on Friday.

July 25 July was the date set for starting the drilling. It is very unlikely that preparatory work for the second relief well will be completed by that time, they said.

The preparations are being hampered for a number of reasons including lack of co-ordination among people working at the site and the rains, an official said seeking anonymity.

Heavy rain in the last few days has made the proposed drilling pad and surrounding areas too muddy to continue the work, the official said.

A few months ago, the gas field authorities developed the marshy land with silt collected from riverbed nearby to drill a production well.

After the second blowout, the gas field operator, Canadian oil company Niko, selected the same site for drilling the second relief well. The spot is only about 230 metres off the main well where the first blowout took place on January 7 this year.

A team of US and Australian drilling experts while visiting the gas field area last week suggested changing the site. They asked the authorities to dig the well at least 300 metres off the main well. A new location has been selected at the suggestion of the experts who also said that the second blowout took place due to the short distance between the first relief well and the main well.

They had advised the authorities to complete preparations for the second relief well as early as possible. But Niko is yet to submit a fresh plan and design for the relief well, the source added.

Australian company Century has

been entrusted with the task of drilling the relief well as a sub-contractor. The company had successfully drilled three wells at Moulvibazar gas field under Unocal.

Niko had earlier appointed US company Parker for drilling the first relief well, which suffered the latest blowout and explosion on 24 June.

Meanwhile, fire at the main exit point has come down below five feet but small flames are still seen at least 30 points in the area. Besides, gas is still leaking, making innumerable bubbles on the marshy land to the north of the gas field.

The Petrobrangla Chairman on Thursday said July 30 has been fixed for digging the relief well but it may be delayed by a day or two.

Briefing the Parliamentary Standing committee on Public Undertakings about the Tenggratila disaster, he also said Niko has not yet submitted a design of the relief well as they are amending it.

Army destroys criminals' den in Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Bandarban*

Army personnel destroyed a den of criminals in Chakma Jiri area under Roangchhari upazila early Friday, army sources said.

ASBBL rifle, a blank magazine of AK47 rifle, army uniforms, a high-powered antenna, three covers of pistol and sensitive documents written in Marma language were recovered from the den, the sources said.

However, the criminals fled away.

Two held with wireless sets in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) jawans on Tuesday arrested two criminals and recovered two wireless sets from their possession at Niraya village in Kaliganj upazila.

The arrested persons are Fazar Ali and Krishnapada.

Acting on an information, a team of 7 Rifles Battalion led by Habilder Dipak Kumar arrested the two and recovered the wireless sets from them.

15 hurt in attack inside mosque

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushlia*

At least 15 people were injured when some activists of ruling BNP attacked on some people inside a mosque here on Friday.

The attack was made when Friday's prayer was going on. According to a case filed with Daulatpur police station, the BNP men stormed into the Thakurpara mosque at Saheb nagar village in Daulatpur upazila. They looked for some persons of the village who were attending the prayer.

Latter they attacked Rafiqul, 35, Masud, 20, Shid, 18, Manirul, Abbas Ali and injured them. All were admitted to Daulatpur Health Complex. The victim's also alleged that the BNP men snatched their wrist watch and money.

Police said the attackers had a previous feud with the victims. Police could not arrest any of the attackers till the report was filed yesterday evening.

MURDER OF 2 JOURNALISTS

Fresh probe into one case, another sent for speedy trial

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Jessore*

Dainik Runner Editor Saiful Alam Mukul Murder Case will be reinvestigated and Dainik Janakantha Journalist Shamsur Rahman Murder Case has been transferred to Khulna Speedy Trial Tribunal (KSTT), according to a decision taken by the Monitoring Cell of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The Additional District and Sessions Judge-1 of Jessore Md Mahbubur Rahman received the order to hand over the case documents to the CID on Thursday.

The case documents of Mukul murder case will be handed over to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) within a day or two while the case docket of Shamsur Rahman murder case will be sent to KSTT soon, court sources said.

Runner Editor Saiful Alam Mukul was killed near his office on the night of August 30, 1998 while he was returning home by a rickshaw. His

widow Hafiza Akhter Shirin lodged a case with Kotwali Police Station. At first the case was investigated by the then sub-inspector (SI) of Kotwali PS Fazlur Rahman. Later, it was transferred to the CID.

Assistant superintendent of police (ASP) of CID Dulaluddin Akand investigated the case and submitted a charge-sheet in the court on April 23, 1999 accusing 22 people including BNP central leader Tariqul Islam and Jessore poua commissioner Nurunabi. But Shirin disagreed with the charge-sheet and submitted a petition of disagreement in the court. But the magistrate's court dismissed her petition. Then she filed similar petitions to the district Judge's court and later to the High Court. This time also the petitions faced the same fate. Finally, Shirin appealed to the Supreme Court.

After a long hearing in the Supreme Court, it was decided to reinvestigate the case.

After hearing, magistrate Saidur Rahman asked Satkhira Police Station for an inquiry into the allegation and for further action.

Local journalists condemned the incident and demanded withdrawal of the case.

Sangbad Editor, two others sued in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

The Publisher, Editor and a Staff Reporter of Dainik Sangbad have been sued by a local BNP leader.

Court sources said, Satkhira district BNP leader and Alipur Union Parishad (UP) Chairman Abdur Rouf filed a case with the Court of Magistrate Saidur Rahman on Wednesday for publishing a report against him and others in the paper in its July 17 issue.

The accused persons are Sangbad Acting Editor Bazlur Rahman, its Publisher Al-Tamash Kabir and Staff Reporter Nazmul Haq Bellal.

After hearing, magistrate Saidur Rahman asked Satkhira Police Station for an inquiry into the allegation and for further action.

Local journalists condemned the incident and demanded withdrawal of the case.

Quest to cut irrigation cost, increase yield

BINA method to conserve groundwater

AMINUL ISLAM *Mymensingh*

The Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agriculture (BINA) has evolved irrigation and water management technologies which will reduce cost of crop production, increase yield and supply arsenic-free water.

The technologies will also help farmers extract arsenic-free water from a depth of 250 to 270 feet by using shallow tube wells, which is not possible now. Farmers will get water both for irrigation and drinking at a cost of only Tk 8,500, according to BINA scientists.

BINA has also developed a method called 'bleaching technology' to remove salinity from lands. This will make unculti-

vated lands in the southern districts suitable for growing all crops including paddy, pulses and vegetables round the year, according to Dr AA Hasan, Chief Scientific Officer and Head of Agriculture Engineering Department of BINA.

A farmer can reduce his irrigation cost by around 40 per cent by using the 'Alternate Flooding and Drying System' developed by BINA. In this system, a cropland is to be irrigated at regular intervals after drying it for five to seven days. This will reduce the irrigation cost and increase yield by about 30 per cent, Dr. Hasan said while talking to this correspondent recently.

Demand for irrigation water

is increasing but the underground water level is falling, which is an alarming sign. The new system will help conserve the groundwater, he said.

This system will be very useful in Barind areas where rainfall is less and groundwater level is lower than in other areas. Farmers in Barina will be able grow crops round the year by using this method, he said.

He said more than 75 per cent of irrigation water on fields is now misused or lost due to seepage, percolation and evaporation as farmers do not know the appropriate level of irrigation water and how to make best use of it.



Greens destroyed by fire following blowout twice in Tenggratila gasfield area.

PHOTO: STAR