

# RU Syndicate postpones 'controversial' appointments

## Teachers demand cancellation of process

### RU CORRESPONDENT

The Rajshahi University Syndicate at its meeting Sunday night postponed the proposed appointments of three teachers in the Islamic History and Culture (IHC) department and also of 159 employees in the university.

The Daily Star on Sunday published a report on the 'controversial' appointment process.

The RU authorities recently selected three candidates for their appointment as teachers in the department, allegedly ignoring objection by the departments' planning committee members.

Five out of seven members of the planning committee objected to the proposed appointments, saying the department does not need any more teacher now.

They met the RU VC on August 8 and demanded cancellation of the recruitment process. They also

submitted a memorandum to the VC earlier protesting the proposed recruitment.

When contacted over phone, Chairman of Islamic History and Culture department Prof ABM Shahajan declined to make any comment about the postponement.

A high official at the university seeking anonymity said that the 'appointments have been postponed because some national dailies published news against the appointment processes'.

When contacted university register Prof Abdus Salam said that Islamic History and Culture department appointment process are not begin.

On the other hand, 178 RU teachers in a statement yesterday expressed deep concern over the IHC department's appointment process, ignoring objection by the departments' planning committee members.

They said that the proposed appointment of teachers would violate the University Act of 1973 that bars the Vice-chancellor to 'overrule' the decision of planning committee members.

They also said that recruitment of three teachers is unnecessary as the department is over staffed and some of the teachers do not get the chance to take even one class in a month.

They also protested the agitation and misbehaviour by 544 employees on Sunday at the administration building demanding confirmation of their appointments. They RU teachers demanded punishment to the employees.

They also called urged the RU authorities to cancel the appointment process in the Islamic History and Culture department.

On Sunday, the 544 third and fourth class employees laid a siege to the Vice-chancellors office and

kept him confined to his room for several hours. They were protesting the proposed appointment of more 159 employees while their services were yet to be confirmed.

Monday's Syndicate meeting was also scheduled to okay appointment of 159 people, most of whom are alleged to be relatives and wards of ruling party men in Rajshahi.

One of the three teacher candidates in the Islamic History and Culture department was Zahar-e-Tasnim Nila, daughter of RU Teachers Association President Prof Nazrul Islam, known as a pro-Jamaat man.

Another candidate Asiara Khatunis the wife of local BNP leader Chand Mia. The other candidate Yesmin Banu Shampais the daughter of Prof. Ehsan Ali, a teacher of the department.

## Satkhira PDB office besieged for power supply

### OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Several thousand people brought out a procession, held a rally and laid a siege to the of Power Development Board (PDB) office in Satkhira town yesterday demanding smooth power supply.

The procession was organised by the 14-party opposition alliance. Starting from Shahid Abdur Razzak Park, the processionists paraded the main streets of the town and gathered in front of the PDB office, where they held a rally prior to the besiege.

Police stopped the processionists as they tried to enter into the office premises.

They held a rally held in front of the PDB office, blocking the road. With Satkhira district Awami League General Secretary and Joint Convenor of the local 14-party alliance Nazrul Islam in the chair, the rally was addressed by, among others, Mustafa Lutfullah and Fahimul Haque Kislul of Workers Party and SM Lutfur Rahman, Shahidul Islam, Sheikh Nurul Haque and Firoz Ahmed of Awami League.

The speakers said besides causing a great menace to people, the severe load shedding is affecting cold storages, fish processing plants, ice factories and other business and industrial units.



PHOTO: STAR

People led by political party leaders besieged the Satkhira Power Development Board office yesterday demanding smooth power supply.



PHOTO: STAR

Construction of the TK 7.5 cr Suknakuri bridge in Durgapur was started in 1995. No body knows when it will be completed.

# Bridges not built in 10 yrs

## Durgapur delinked from Netrakona dist town

### JAHANGIR ALAM, Netrakona

Durgapur, a tourist spot in Netrakona having mineral deposits, is virtually isolated from rest of the country as construction of two bridges started long ago is yet to be completed and two others damaged by last year's flood are awaiting repair.

It is a surprise to local people why construction of the two bridges can not be completed in so many years. There is no move to repair the damaged bridges.

A frontier upazila near the Garo hills, Durgapur is inhabited mostly by indigenous people. It has deposits of china clay, coal and other minerals.

The biggest china clay mine in the country is in Bijoypur in Durgapur upazila. A ceramic industry based on the clay has been set up in Durgapur.

At least 40 tonnes of coal are collected every day from Sumeshowary river and supplied to other districts.

It is also known for the Birishiri Tribal Cultural Academy, the lone centre for tribal cultural activities in

greater Mymensingh. Famous communist leader Moni Singh was born in Durgapur and the Tanka monument was launched from there.

Durgapur supplies fruits like banana, pineapple but traders from other districts have to make a tedious journey and face so many hurdles to reach the producers.

Durgapur upazila headquarters is only 45 km from Netrakona district town. Construction of Suknakuri and Someshwary bridges was started in 1995 and 1998 respectively by the Roads and Highway Department (R&H) at estimated costs of Tk 7.50 crore and Tk 9 crore. But they are yet to be completed.

About 40 per cent work of both the bridges were completed, Netrakona R&H officials said.

There is no initiative to repair the damaged Gujalikanda bridge in Purbadhala upazila and Janzail bridge in Durgapur upazila.

Talking to this correspondent, M A Karim Abbasi, lawmaker from Durgapur-Kalmakanda constituency, said Durgapur has great

potentials for development but it is neglected. Besides its minerals, the area can be developed into a tourist spot. It can also make enormous contributions to the national economy. But everything depends on good communication system, which is lacking.

"I am trying my best to develop the road communication. People's life in the area can be changed radically only if the upazila headquarters can have smooth road link with the district headquarters, he said.

Dr. Mohammad Ali, lawmaker from Purbadhala-Dhubaura constituency, said he contacted higher authorities in R&D for reconstruction of Gojalikanda bridge, damaged last year. He said he got a positive response.

When contacted, Executive Engineer (EXN) of Netrakona R&D, said construction of Suknakuri and Sumeshowary bridges has been stopped only for lack of funds.

About reconstruction of the two other bridges, he said project proposals for those are yet to be submitted.

# 9 die of diarrhoea, pneumonia in Gaibandha

### OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

At least 9 people died of diarrhoea and pneumonia in the district in last 3 days, according to sources in Gaibandha Civil Surgeon's (CS) office.

Of them, 6 persons died of diarrhoea and three others of pneumonia.

They said 249 people have been attacked with diarrhoea and 35 with pneumonia. But unofficial sources put the figures at 337 and 65.

Those killed by diarrhoea are Masuma Begum, 29, Abdul Hakim, 7 months, both of Palashbari, Shilpi Rani, 12, Tahmina Begum, 25,

Marjina Begum, 35, of Sunderganj and Tumpa Begum, 8, of Gaibandha Sadar. Pneumonia victims are Azizul Islam, 11 months, Monowara Begum, 70, and Kanti Bhusan, 45, the official sources said.

With recession of floodwaters, water-borne diseases have broken out alarmingly in remote shoal areas of Palashbari, Sunderganj, Sadullapur, Shaghata, Fulchari and Gaibandha Sadar upazilas.

The sources said medical teams have been sent to the affected areas where drinking water is scarce. Medicines and saline packets are in short supply, they said.

## Four killed in Moulvibazar road mishaps

### OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Three people were killed and another five injured seriously in a road accident in Lochhanachherra on the Moulvibazar-Dhaka highway in the district yesterday.

According to witness and passengers, a Habiganj-bound bus from Srimangal fell into a roadside ditch as it was trying to overtake another bus.

Abdul Hakim, 30, driver of the bus and passenger Sumon, 20, died in the spot. Inured passengers were rescued and sent to Moulvibazar Sadar Hospital where another passenger Fulmati, 40, died. The injured are being treated at the hospital.

In another incident yesterday, a minor girl died under the wheels of bus in Kadupur on the same highway. Critically injured Smriti Rani Debnath, 10, was declared dead when taken to Moulvibazar Sadar Hospital. The killer bus sped away.

The bodies were sent to Moulvibazar Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy. Separate cases were filed, police said.

## 8-pt demand: Token hunger strike by college teachers

### OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

The Satkhira district unit of Bangladesh College Teachers Association staged a token hunger strike at Shahid Abdur Razzak Park in the town yesterday to press its 8-point demand.

Prior to the hunger strike from 10 am to 2 pm, the teachers held a rally on Shahid Minar premises with Prof. Mozammel Hossain in the chair.

Besides teachers, the rally was also addressed by Satkhira Awami League General Secretary Nazrul Islam, Workers Party Secretary Mustafa Lutfullah, Kazi Riaz of JSD, M Jaman Khan of Gana Forum and Kazi Saidur Rahman of NAP.

The political leaders extended their support to the demands of teachers and urged the government to fulfill those.

The teachers urged the Prime Minister to intervene so that their demands are met.

The demands include ten per cent enhancement of salary, house rent, medical and other allowances as committed by the government earlier.

# Saidee's meet held amid tight security

## Police foil protest procession in B'baria

### OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

The district conference of Bangladesh Madrasa Sikhkhok Parishad (teachers association) in which Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker Mawlana Delwar Hussain Saidee was chief guest was held in the town amid tight security yesterday.

The conference organised by Brahmanbaria Madrasa Sikhkhak Parishad was held at the municipal auditorium with its convenor Mawlana Abdul Mattalib in chair.

A large number of police men were deployed at the meeting venue and in different areas of the town as Saidee's presence sparked tension.

The Sommilito Sangskritik Jote, joined by political activists tried to bring out a procession in the town yesterday protesting Saidee's presence but it was foiled by police.

The Jote also brought out processions and held rallies in the town

earlier, calling upon the people to resist Saidee's visit to the town. On Saturday, police snatched microphones from the protesters.

BNP MP Haroon-Al-Rashid, chairman of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, was the special guest in the conference.

It was addressed by, among others Kamal Uddin Jaffi, joint convener of central Madrasa Sikhkhok Parishad, its leaders Joydul Abedin, and Gulam Sarwar Sayidee.

Addressing the meeting, Saidee said the August 17 bomb blasts were done by those who want to destabilise the government and create anarchy in the country. But the perpetrators are blaming the ulame (Muslim religious clerics) for this.

The government must punish the culprits, Saidee said.



PHOTO: STAR

The Prothom Alo Bandhu Sabha in Rangpur accorded a reception to GPA-5 achievers in the district at the Town Hall on Sunday. Parents of the students, officials and elite of the town also attended the function.