

# Agitation for power in dists

## REB offices attacked in Tangail, Chittagong

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Protests by people mounted in districts as frequent power outage made life miserable during Ramadan.

Angry demonstrators attacked REB offices in Tangail and Chittagong and damaged equipment protesting load shedding for hours together.

In Satkhira, Hindus are also protesting the power outage, saying they are concerned about security at puja mandaps during long hours of darkness.

Our Tangail Correspondent reports: Protesting frequent load shedding, agitated people ransacked the REB (Rural Electrification Board) office in Basail Saturday evening and damaged valuable equipment and documents.

They alleged that 5 to 7 hours' load shedding paralysed life in Basail upazila. Power outage in the evening is a usual phenomenon.

The local people had earlier appealed to the REB officials at the upazila to ensure smooth power supply during the month of Ramadan. As the situation did not improve, over 200 people brought out a procession after Ifar and attacked the Basail of REB office. They ransacked the office, damaged windowpanes, furniture, two motorbikes, one telephone set and official documents.

Being informed, Basail thana police rushed to the spot and brought

the situation under control. Later, Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) of Tangail Kazi Faizol Hossen visited the spot.

REB Engineer Guljar Hossen filed a case against the attackers with Basail police station.

On the same day, people went to the REB office at Delduar upazila in a procession demanding smooth power supply at least during Ifar, Tarabee prayer and Shehri.

They also threatened of tougher agitation if the situation does not improve.

Local people alleged that once gone, power does not return in 3-4 hours.

Local Power Development Board (PDB) sources said only 25-35 MW power is supplied against a demand for 71 MW in Tangail.

Our Staff Correspondent reports from Chittagong:

Load shedding of about 50 MW power continued in the port city through the Raozan Unit-2 resumed generation on Sunday. Frequent power outage during the Ramadan triggered violent demonstrations in different areas of the city since the beginning of Ramadan.

Power outage during Ifar on Saturday triggered an attack by local people on the New Mooring power distribution station in Bandar thana.

On Friday, demonstrators attacked power sub-stations at Sholoshahar

and Kalurghat protesting load shedding during the Tarabih prayer.

The demonstrators ransacked the sub-stations, damaged eight vehicles of Power Development Board (PDB), PDB sources said.

Sources said the power supply situation worsened in the port city after the Raozan Unit-2 tripped due to technical glitch Wednesday morning.

The demand for power in Chittagong is about 450 MW. Total power generation in Chittagong region was 275 MW on Friday. Of this, Raozan Unit-1 generated 100 MW, three units of Kaptai hydroelectric power plant provided 125 MW while some 40 MW was available from Shikolbaha thermal power plant and 10 MW from Shikolbaha barge mounted plant.

Another 100 MW was supplied from the National Grid raising the total supply to 375 MW.

Our Satkhira Correspondent reports: The holy month of Ramadan began in the district with long hours of power outage.

The demand for power in the district is about 32 mw but the supply is only about half of it, PDB sources said.

They said the power supply situation deteriorated as four generation units in the region are out of order.

Besides creating sufferings to people, the power crisis is also affect-

ing industries and forex-earning fish processing units.

Apart from urban areas, subscribers in Kaligong, Debhata, Assassuni, Tala, Kalaroa and Shyamnagar upazilas held demonstrations in the last three days demanding smooth power supply, reports reaching here said.

People came out on streets and rampaged RED offices at Jhhowdanga in the Sadar upazila, Gazirhat in Debhata and in Shyamnagar, Patkelghata and Kalaroa upazila headquarters.

Several thousands people laid a siege to the Satkhira PDB office last month, but the situation did not improve.

Over 150 Small industries, 49 fish processing plants, 98 ice factories and Sundarban Textile mill Ltd, the lone big industry of the district, are facing closure due to power crisis, sources said.

Devotees came out of Palashpole Jame Mosque and Katia Mosque after Tarabi prayers on Sunday night and brought out processions.

Leaders of Puja Udjapan Parishad also expressed grave concern at frequent power outage. "We feel insecure fearing that criminals may attack puja mandaps taking the advantage of darkness", said Monoranjan Mukherjee President of Satkhira District Puja Udjapan Parishad.

## BSF kills two Bangladeshis

A CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) killed two Bangladeshi youths and injured one Sunday night.

Those killed are Rafiqul Islam, 22, son of Abul Kalam and Rakibul Islam 22, son of Mahiruddin of Auliapur union in the Sadar upazila. The name of the injured youth could not be known immediately.

The two died on the spot when BSF opened fire near border pillar no 316/5, local Union Parishad Chairman Mofazzal Hossain Dulal said quoting BDR sources. The three youths were returning home from their relatives houses in India, he said. BSF took away the bodies.

After the incident, 14 Battalion BDR at Khanpur BOP sent a letter protesting the killings.

Cane growers formed human chain demanding reopening of Rangpur Sugar Mills.

## 'Reopen Rangpur Sugar Mills'

### 2km human chain formed in Gaibandha

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Several hundred sugarcane growers and workers of closed Rangpur Sugar Mills formed a two kilometre long human chain on the Mohimaganj-Gobindaganj road in Gaibandha on Sunday demanding re-opening of mill.

The demonstrators also held a protest rally on mill premises. Presided over by Abdul Latif, Chairman Mohimaganj Union Parishad, the rally was also addressed by Jinnat Ali Proddhan, Delwer Hossain, Abdur Rashid Khan, Munshi Rezwanur Rahman.

Termining the closure of Rangpur Sugar Mills a conspiracy, they demanded reopening of the mill under government management. Many other sugar mills are still running despite losses, they said, vowing to launch a tougher agitation to realise their demand.

## SUBSIDISED RICE

### UP chairman held for anomaly

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Police arrested Milonpur Union Council Chairman Abdul

Hamid for misappropriating government rice allotted for distribution at subsidised rate.

He was arrested after Mithapukur Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mokbul Hossen filed a case for anomaly in the sale of subsidised rice.

The UNO told The Daily Star that during a visit to Milonpur UP complex on Friday, some beneficiaries complained that the UP chairman gave each card holder 5.5 kg in place of 6 kg and charged Tk 25 instead of Tk 24.

An investigation into the matter proved the allegation.

The arrested UP chairman was sent to Rangpur jail and UP food godown was locked.



Patients being taken to Gobindaganj Upazila Health Complex on rafts as the hospital has been inundated with waist deep water. Most areas of Gaibandha district now reel under flood.

# 6 JMB men were involved in Aug 17th Netrakona blasts

## Arrested militant reveals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

activist.

Sanaullah told police that Sumon was the main organiser of the serial blasts. He supplied the bombs in Netrakona town on August 17.

This was disclosed by Sanaullah, an activist of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), during interrogation, police said yesterday. He was arrested by Netrakona police Thursday night.

Sanaullah, son of Mowlana Abdul Kaddus of Bisompur village in Mawra area of Gouripur in Mymensingh and a student of Mymensingh Ananda Mohon College came in contact with JMB leader Kawsar Alam Sumon of Gouripur one year ago and became its

Netrakona. Police believed, all clues of the serial blasts could be revealed if Sumon is arrested.

Sanaullah disclosed to police that one and a half months before the blasts, he along with five other youths took shelter at the house of one Liton in Kurpar of Netrakona town. The bombs were supplied to the six JMB activists at night on August 16.

When contacted, the Superintendent of Police of Netrakona, Ali Hossain Fakir confirmed that police got important information about the blasts from Sanaullah but declined to give details for the interest of inquiry of the case.



Sanaullah

# Diarrhoea spreads in Nilphamari

## 1,000 attacked, 2 killed: Food crisis causes disease, patients say

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Diarrhoea and other intestinal diseases are spreading in the district as flood water has started receding.

Everyday, people in more areas are being attacked with the diseases,

raising the number to at least 1000 yesterday.

The diseases killed two minor girls, according to sources at the District Health Department Control Room.

The victims are Abia, 6, and Rokeya, 4,

of Danga Para village in the Sadar Upazila.

The three worst flood affected upazilas are Nilphamari Sadar, Saidpur and Kishoreganj.

Sources at the control room said that 469 diarrhoea patients took treatment in all the government hospitals and at temporary treatment centres in the last seven days. Many others are taking treatment at home.

This correspondent during a visit to the diarrhoea ward at Nilphamari Sadar Hospital at about 1 pm yesterday saw many patients lying on corridors and floors as all the beds were occupied.

A family of four from Bangmari village in Sadar upazila was taking treatment on the floor. Day labourer Asraf Ali, 35, said he along with his wife Monowara and minor daughters Rasheda and Rumana were starving for two days as he had no work. On Sunday, they ate boiled arum root

mixed with salt. Within hours the whole family was attacked with diarrhoea. Neighbours brought all of them to the hospital, Asraf Ali said.

The worst diarrhoea affected villages in Sadar upazila are Polash Bari, Ramnagar, Gogram, Chapra, Chorai Khola and Sonarai. Other affected villages are Botlagari, Golahat and Hatikhana in Saidpur; and Nital, Magura and Rajib in Kishoreganj upazila.

The control room sources said 72 medical teams are working in the district to combat diarrhoea.

Assistant Civil Surgeon Dr. Abdul Majid said waterborne diseases like diarrhoea usually spread after flood. He further informed that there is sufficient stock of intravenous saline, oral saline, tetracycline capsule and other medicines. He however said there is nothing to be worried as the situation is under control.



Photo: Star

Patients lying on the floor at the diarrhoea ward at Nilphamari Sadar Hospital.

## MUFTI HANNAN'S MERCY PETITION

# Gopalganj BNP leaders deny press reports

A CORRESPONDENT, Gopalganj

Gopalganj district BNP President Saifur Rahman Nantu and its member Moniruzzaman Pinu at a press conference in the town on Sunday protested a news regarding Mufti Hannan's mercy petition, published in daily Prothom Alo and the Janakantha on Friday.

Moniruzzaman Pinu said that the information about their recommendation on the mercy petition of Mufti Hannan, published in those dailies, is not true.

"We didn't put our signature on that mercy petition. Both the signatures and seals were fake. We never saw or know

Mufti Hannan. Self-seekers used our names to malign us politically and to realise extra facilities", he said at the press conference at a local hotel.

Moniruzzaman Pinu also added that he was not a senior vice-president of Gopalganj district BNP in 2000, as stated in the published news item.

Hamidul Hoque Dulal, Shariat Hossain Beg, president and vice-president of Gopalganj Pura BNP, Sikder Shahidul Islam Lanin, Organizing Secretary of district Jubodal and Fazlul Kabir Dara and its convener in Sadar upazila were present at the press conference.

## INTERNAL FEUD

# Jhenidah AL council postponed again

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Jhenidah district Awami League (AL) council which was supposed to be held on Sunday was postponed again without announcement of any new date.

The district leaders postponed the scheduled meet as the list of councilors was not finalised due to internal feud, party insiders told this correspondent.

Earlier, the council was scheduled to be held on October 1, but it was postponed due to intra-party conflict. Later, the new date of the council was announced on October 10.

Party insiders said, because of internal feud, the list of councilors could not be finalised. But it is essential to select or elect new leaders in the council.

Party sources said to The Daily Star,

the leaders and activists are divided into two groups, one backed by Abdul Hai MP, and the other by former organising secretary Tayeb Ali Joarder. Both the leaders want their own men in the new district committee.

The internal feud surfaced last year when two rival factions clashed at the upazila and union level party councils.

However, the district AL convener Abdul Hai said, there is no internal feud in the party. There is rivalry over leadership, he said. A new date of the council will be announced soon, he said.

Postponement of party council twice in last 15 days have frustrated its dedicated leaders and activists.

The last council was held in 1997 where a committee was formed with Advocate Ayub Hossain and Abdul Hai as president and general secretary.

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