

NO SUPPLIES TO ATRA INDUSTRIAL BELT IN KHULNA SINCE APRIL 17

# Agitation for power, water from tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Workers, employees and locals in Atra industrial belt in Khulna city are preparing for agitation for supply of power and water, stopped since April 17.

They have formed a committee styled 'Action Committee to Realise Legitimate Rights' to launch an agitation programme from tomorrow. The programme will be finalised at its meeting today, sources in the committee told this correspondent yesterday.

A grave situation is prevailing in the industrial belt as over 10,000 people in the area are not getting water and electricity, they said, adding, there is no alternative to coming onto streets now.

There are four jute mills in the industrial belt. These are Alif Jute Mill, Eastern Jute Mill, Ejax Jute Mill and Mohsin Jute Mill. The former two mills are closed since April 17 for want of power supply and the latter two are shut down for long due to

financial crisis.

The government's Infectious Diseases Hospital in the area is also deprived of power as it is also under the same supply network.

Among about 10,000 people living in the industrial belt, 6000 are mill workers and employees, the sources said.

Leaders of the newly formed committee said they will go for agitation from tomorrow if power is not supplied today.

Lack of power keeps the mills inoperative and the whole area in darkness after dusk, creating an unbearable situation, they said. Suspension of power supply also stopped water supply.

Power supply is suspended due to 'mechanical fault' in the feeder line of the power sub-station that supplies power to the industrial belt, sources at the sub-station claimed. The sub-station is under the Western Zone Power Distribution Company Ltd (WZPDCL).

But talking to this corres-

pondent, some leaders of the committee and local people alleged that power supply has been stopped intentionally on the plea of mechanical fault.

They alleged that WZPDCL authorities so far turned a deaf ear to their sufferings despite requests by Khulna city Mayor Shaikh Tayebur Rahman and Whip Ashraf Hossain to restore power supply there.

They accused local Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker Mia Golam Parwar of creating the problem in connivance with a section of officials of the power supply authority.

They alleged that the Jamaat leader has done this to take revenge against the new owner of Afil Jute Mill, Shaikh Akram Hossain, who left Jatiya Party and joined Awami League last month.

The Jamaat lawmaker's younger brother Shibir leader Mian Golam Kuddus kept the privately owned Afil jute mill under his grip with the help of a large number of party cadres

from July 1, 2002 till June 30, 2004.

As the mill was limping allegedly due to misappropriation of funds, it was handed over to Shaikh Akram Hossain. It was running well under Akram Hossain, they said.

"Parwar has a hand in suspension of power supply", said a prominent leader of Afil Jute mill CBA, Mohammad Nashu Mia. "He did this to take revenge against Akram Hossain by keeping the mill closed", he alleged.

When asked, Parwar denied the allegation of his involvement in any way in creating the power and water crisis.

"I am committed to serve the people honestly instead of putting them to trouble", Parwar.

Officials of WZPDCL said feeder of the sub-station has gone out of order. But they could not say when it would be repaired.

WATER, POWER  
CRISES

## Procession, rally held in Rajshahi

RU CORRESPONDENT

Rajshahi city and district units of Bangladesh Juba Maitri yesterday brought out a procession in city and held a rally on Press Club premises demanding pipeline supply of gas to Rajshahi and smooth supply of water and power in the city.

They are also protesting the alleged attempt to lease the Rajshahi Sericulture Mills to a private company.

The rally was addressed by the party's district unit president Ashraful Haque Tota, general secretary Tofazzal Hossain, city unit secretary Anwar Imtiaz and organising secretary Abu Taher. Its city unit president Mahfujul Hasnine Hikol was in the chair.

The speakers alleged that some ruling party cadres are trying construct a multi-stored supermarket at the cost of the silk industry. They demanded reopening of the silk factory.

They said the government earlier promised to supply pipeline gas to Rajshahi but it failed.

Rajshahi city dwellers are suffering for power and water but the authorities have turned a deaf ear to the problems, they alleged and threatened to launch a tougher agitation to ensure the basic rights.

Rajshahi City Corporation has failed to supply water though it collects revenue from citizens.

The people are suffering though the authorities are bound to meet their basic needs. But their oblivious of their responsibilities. If necessary, the people will stop paying taxes, they said.

# Another RU teacher accused of sexual abuse

Agitation continue for removal of Botany teacher on same charge

RU CORRESPONDENT

Amid continued students' agitation for removal of a Rajshahi University botany teacher for alleged sexual abuse of a student, another student of sociology department has made a similar complaint against a teacher.

The sociology student (her name not mentioned) in a written complaint to department chairman Prof Faizer Rahman on Sunday alleged that she was sexually abused by Assistant Professor Sabyasachi Shah at his office room.

Following her complaint, the academic committee of sociology department at an emergency meeting yesterday formed a committee comprising three female teachers to probe the allegation and submit a report within 24 hours (Tuesday noon).

The committee members are Prof Sultana Mostafa Khanam, Prof Wardatul Akhman and Prof Mahbuba Sarker.

The committee also handed over a copy of the complaint to the accused teacher, asking him to reply to the allegation.

Talking to newsmen later at his office, sociology department chairman Prof Faizer Rahman said the meeting also decided to send a copy of the probe report, when available, to the university registrar as per law.

As news about the complaint came to light, students of sociology department staged a demonstration and demanded punishment to the accused teacher.

Some leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League at Rajshahi University also met with Prof Faizer

Rahman and demanded punishment to the teacher and threatened of tougher agitation for non-compliance.

When approached at the department, the accused teacher first tried to avoid newsmen. Pressed for comment, he said, "I did not do anything offending to the girl student".

Rajshahi University Vice-chancellor Prof Altaf Hossain told newsmen at his office that he was yet to receive any complaint against the sociology teacher.

"If the allegation is proved, he will be punished", the VC said.

Meanwhile agitating students of botany department under the banner of General Students Council held a rally, paraded the campus streets and staged a three-hour sit-in at the gate of the administrative building demanding removal of the teacher accused of sexually abusing a student.

Speakers at the rally threatened of an indefinite strike at the university if the probe report is not made public within 24 hours and the accused teacher--Prof Nurul Amin--is not removed.

On April 7, a fourth year female student of botany lodged a written complaint to department chairman Prof Shah Alam that she was sexually abused by Prof Nurul Amin in the laboratory.

On Saturday, botany students confined the VC at his office for six hours to press the demand.

The botany students, joined by others, on Sunday enforced a strike at the university. Earlier, they boycotted classes and staged demon-

strations and paraded the campus streets on several occasions.

## BNP leader, youth killed after abduction

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

Two persons including a BNP leader were murdered after abduction in two incidents in Baufal in Patuakhali district and Swarupkati in Pirojpur on Sunday.

The victims have been identified as BNP leader Shahjahan Majhi, 65, a businessman from Sohagdal village in Swarupkati and Sohag, 18, son of Khalek Chowkidar of Joita village in Baufal.

Police said Shahjahan Majhi, former president of Swarupkati upazila BNP and a cloth merchant at Swarupkati Bazar was abducted from Meyarhut area Sunday noon.

His floating body with marks of injury on neck and head was recovered from Meyarhut canal Monday morning.

Police detained two persons from the area for interrogation. They are Latif, 50, and Saidul, 19.

On Sunday night, some unidentified people abducted Sohag from home. His family found his slaughtered body near a canal later in the night.

## Road link with Moheshkhali this month

MUAZZEM HOSSAIN SHAKIL, *Cox's Bazar*

Direct road link between offshore Moheshkhali island and the main-

land is going to be opened this month, fulfilling a long cherished desire of people of the area.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia may inaugurate the Badorkhali-Janata

Bazar bridge on Kuhelia river during her two-day visit to the district starting on May 21, officials sources said yesterday. She may also inaugurate the submarine cable in Cox's

Bazar linking Bangladesh with the global information superhighway.

The 34.7 metre bridge has been built by the Roads and Highways Department at a cost of Tk 27.3 crore. The cost was initially estimated at Tk 17.85 crore. It escalated as the construction took five years instead of three years as was planned, RHD sources said.

Several governments in the past committed to construct a bridge on the river to connect Moheshkhali with the mainland.

In 1994, the then BNP government introduced a ferry service on the river. That was the first step to link Moheshkhali with mainland.

The government later planned a bridge and the then communications minister Col. Oli Ahmed laid the foundation of the proposed bridge.

The construction work began in 2000 during the tenure of Awami League government but was interrupted due to fund shortage, the sources said.

The bridge will boost economic activities in the long-neglected offshore island and bring about a change in the life of people there, local political leaders and traders said.



PHOTO: STAR

The newly constructed bridge on Kuhelia at Badorkhali.

## Jamaat was behind Galib's arrest, says Ahab

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Acting Ameer of Ahle Hadith Andolon, Bangladesh (Ahab) Dr Musleh Uddin Ahmed yesterday alleged that Jamaat-e-Islami, a key partner in the ruling coalition, provoked the government to arrest Ahab chief Dr. Asadullah Al Galib to cover up its links with militant outfits.

Denying allegations of Ahab's links with banned Jamaatul Mujahideen, Bangladesh (JMB) and other militant groups, he demanded unconditional release of Galib and other Ahab leaders.

"If Galib and three other central Ahab leaders are not released immediately, over three crore members of Ahab will not excuse BNP-Jamaat government. They (Ahab men) will teach the government a

good lesson in the next general election", he said.

He was addressing a rally at Kalaroa High School ground, organised by Kalaroa upazila unit of Ahab with its advisor Prof Md Nazrul Islam was in the chair.

Election victory of the two major parties (BNP Jamat) in many constituencies depends on our support, Musleh Uddin said.

He said Jamaat is gaining strength at the cost of BNP but its (BNP) leaders are yet to realise this.

He claimed that BNP will suffer a crushing defeat in the next election for 'torturing' Muslim scholars.

Jamaat is hatching conspiracy against Ahab fearing its increasing public support, he claimed.

3X3

5X3



PHOTO: STAR

Artistes rendering songs at a function at the Kuthibari in Shilaidaha, Kushtia yesterday, the first day of a three-day national programme to celebrate the 145th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore.

4X3

12X2