

JMJB cadre held in Bagmara

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police arrested a leader of Jagrata Muslim Janata, Bangladesh (JMJB) from Borobihanali village in Bagmara upazilla yesterday.

The arrestee was identified as Akbar Ali, 45, son of Rahim Uddin of Borobihanli village.

Acting on a tip off, a police team cordoned the village and arrested Akbor from a crop field.

Officer-in-Charge of Bagmara police station Mirja Golam Sarwar said, Akbar was involved with executed JMB leader Siddikul Islam Bangla Bhai.

He had a leading role in JMJB's march in Rajshahi city on May 23, 2004 and named as an accused in the charge sheet filed in JMJB torture victim Fazlur Rahman's case, said the OC.

On April 1, Fazlur Rahman of Hasanpur village filed the case accusing 27 people including former minister Aminul Haque and Ruhul Kuddus Talukhdar Dulu.

Akbar was produced before court, which sent him to jail.

One bullet-hit, 2 hurt by BSF

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A Bangladeshi cattle trader was bullet-hit Sunday night when Indian Border Security Force (BSF) opened fire on Ghona border in Satkhira Sadar upazilla. BDR also replied with shots.

Injured Khairul Islam, 25, of Ghona village in Sadar upazilla is being treated at Satkhira Sadar Hospital. Doctors said his condition is critical.

BDR sources said, BSF opened fire on a group of Bangladeshi cattle traders when they were returning with cattle.

In another incident two Bangladeshi nationals were injured yesterday when BSF allegedly tortured them when they were bathing in Ichamati, a common river. They are Amzad Hossain, of Sakhipur village and Alamgir, of Kora villahe in Debhata upazilla. They were taken to Satkhira Sagar Hospital and later shifted to Khulna Hospital as their condition deteriorated.

BDR sent a protest letter to BSF after the incident, said Maj. Nurul Momen Chowdhury, second-in-command of 41 Rifles Battalion.

Extortionist beaten dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

An alleged extortionist was beaten to death at Faridpur upazilla in Pabna when he went to collect toll yesterday morning.

The victim was identified as Babu, 35, son of Belait Hossain of Par Faridpur village in the upazilla.

Police and local people said Babu allegedly demanded Tk 20,000 from Motaleb Hossain of Kachuapara village. He went to the village yesterday morning to realise the money from Motaleb. He was caught and beaten to death by a mob.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Pabna General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Attacker on witness to Aug 17 blasts remanded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Abdul Aziz, arrested on Friday night for allegedly hacking Rawshan Ali, the lone eye witness to August 17 serial blasts in Satkhira, was placed on a five-day remand yesterday. Rawshan Ali is now fighting for life at Khulna Sadar Hospital with serious injuries.

Abdul Aziz, son of Yusuf Ali of Bakal Islampur village in Sadar upazilla, was arrested after the incident.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Enlivened by a bumper Boro production in flood prone Sherpur district this year, farmer households are busy now to take home the crop before onset of monsoon.

CHT leaders for full implementation of peace accord

JASIM MAJUMDER, Khagrachhari

Indigenous and Bangalee leaders in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) have welcomed the caretaker government's decision to hold a meeting of the CHT affairs ministry advisory committee.

The meeting is scheduled for May 31 in Dhaka would be the third in seven years. The advisory committee was formed by the then Awami League (AL) government which signed the CHT peace accord with Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) on December 2, 1997 that ended two decades bush war by PCJSS.

The first meeting of the advisory committee was held on February 11, 2001 and the second one on May 22 at the fag end of its tenure, sources said.

The BNP-Jamaat government did not hold any meeting of committee during its five-year rule.

Talking to this correspondent, leaders of Bangalee and Indigenous communities belonging to different political parties said it is a good sign that the caretaker government has taken initiative after seven years to 'at least reactivate' the advisory committee. This shows its positive attitude towards the people in hills, they said.

"We will raise implementation of the peace accord and several vital issues discussed in earlier meetings", said advisory committee member and former president of Khagrachhari district Awami League Nurunnabi Chowdhury.

The then opposition BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami opposed signing of the peace accord, terming it a threat to independence and sovereignty of the country, Nurunnabisaid.

The immediate past BNP-Jamaat government did not make clear its position on the peace accord. It has however

filled up some vacant positions as per the accord, but violated some of its clauses. Some of its steps also cut facilities of hill people, he said.

The last meetings during AL rule discussed issues including proper settlement of indigenous refugees who returned from India after signing of the peace accord, withdrawal of cases against Shanti Bahini (arms wing of PCJSS) members after surrender following the peace accord, activating the land commission, more coordination between the district administration and Hill District Councils (HDCs) and handover of police department to HDC, sources said.

The decision of the caretaker government has created new hopes among the people, they said.

Advisor Azizur Rahman from Bandarban said, "Even they (BNP-Jamaat government) did not appoint any full fledged minister for CHT affairs. Moni Sawpon Dewan was appointed state minister as an eyewash".

Advisor Mong King Raja Paihalaprue Chowdhury said, Awami League government could only form certain committees and set up some offices in their three and half years in power after signing of the peace accord.

Most of the internal refugees who returned home from India following signing of the peace pact are yet to get back their lands. No government took any meaningful initiative to rehabilitate them, he said.

Khagrachhari Hill District Council (KHDC) Chairman Monindra Lal Tripura said, "We have to consider interests of both the indigenous community and Bangalee communities. There is no alternative to implementation of the peace accord to change the lot of hill people.

"I will try to raise all the issues and ways for their solution", he said.

Advisory committee member and Rangamati Jatiya Party leader Mohammad Shahjahan said, "In last five years I did not know whether I was still a member of the advisory committee or not. I was surprised after getting the invitation letter to attend a meeting after six years".

"Lasting peace is not possible without total implementation of the peace accord," he said when contacted over phone.

"Calling a meeting (of the advisory committee) shows the caretaker government's good intention", he said.

Eight camel jockeys get compensation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

Eight Bangladeshi children who were trafficked to Dubai to work as camel jockey got compensation from its government at a function held here yesterday.

Kishoreganj Deputy Commissioner's (DC) Sultan Ahmed handed over cheques to parents of the children at a function held at the conference hall of this office.

Each child got Tk 1 lakh 4,000 as compensation from Dubai government.

Dubai government gave the compensation following an initiative taken by Bangladesh Mohila Ainjibi Samity (BMAS) through Bangladesh Government, said Advocate Onamika Rosy, In-charge of BMAS, Kishoreganj.

The children are Abdullah Akhter Badol, 10, son of Khalil Miah of Bashgari village in Bhairab upzila, Saddam, 10, son of Ramij Uddin of Shrinagar village in the same upazilla, Monir, 12, son of Rashed of Kamarganj village in the same upazilla and Arash, 8, and Parash, 10, two brothers and son of Madhu Miah of Shrinagor village in the same upazilla, Sattar Huq, 10, and Din Islam, 11, two brothers and son of Dulena Begum of Ghona para village in Karimganj upazilla and Rasel, 10, son of Kuddus of Pachdha Noapara village in Sadar upazilla.

BMAS rescued 151 minor boys from Dubai who were used as camel jockey there during a period from September, 2005 to March, 2006, said Onamika Rosy. Among the rescued, eight were from Kishoreganj district, she said.

Among others, parents of the ill-fated children, UNOs of respective upazillas, journalists, BMAS and NGO officials attended the function.

TWO LAID-OFF KHULNA JUTE MILLS

Workers refuse to join duty before arrear payment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

None of the workers of Crescent Jute Mills and Star Jute Mills joined duty at the sacking sections of the mills yesterday in protest against non-payment of their arrear wages and other financial benefits.

The two out of four laid-off state-owned jute mills resumed partial operation of their sacking sections on Sunday as per a decision taken by BJMC chairman who recently visited Khulna-Jessore industrial belt to devise ways to resolve the crisis.

It is learnt from leaders of Khulna-Jessore Regional Committee of Patkal Sangram Parishad (PSP) that workers will not join duty until their arrear wages are paid in full, lay-off order withdrawn and arrested workers released unconditionally.

The General Manager of Crescent Jute Mills (CJM) Shamim Ahmed told this correspondent yesterday evening that the crisis was deepening as workers did not join work in the sacking section. Same was the situation at Star Jute Mills where no worker joined work.

"I am smelling an unpleasant situation again in the industrial belt as some CBA leaders are fanning the trouble by instigating workers", said Shamim Ahmed who is also acting as coordinator of Zonal BJMC.

Meanwhile, posters were seen on walls of laid-off jute mills with slogans in support of 'another tough agitation' at Khulna industrial belt in protest against nonpayment of arrear wages and non-allocation of funds required to resume full production in all laid-off jute mills.

CBA leader Abdul Malek at Peoples Jute Mills demanded withdrawal of cases filed against workers under Emergency Power Act with Khalishpur and Daulatpur police stations.

"We have made it very clear to BJMC authorities that any move to reopen any of the laid-off jute mills without payment of arrear wages will bring no positive development to end the deadlock", Malek said.

BJMC Chairman Ataharul Islam visited the laid-off jute mills on May 20 at the head of a six-member high level team and held meetings with top officials of the eight state-owned jute mills on May 21 to find out ways to resolve the crisis.

He submitted a report to government recommending partial reopening of laid-off jute mills, sources said.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

A mobile court during a raid at Bibir Hat in Chittagong city yesterday detected a fake fan factory and seized all its equipment.