

Four bombs recovered in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Meherpur police recovered four bombs from a filed at Chengarmath in Kushtia Sadar upazila yesterday morning.

Acting on a tip-off, a police team went to the field and recovered the bombs wrapped in a polythene bag.

The bombs were later defused at the police station, police said. No one was arrested.

Shailkupa UNO office besieged for fertiliser

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Hundreds of fertiliser hungry farmers besieged the Shailkupa Upazila Nirbahi Officer's (UNO) office for two hours on Thursday.

They laid siege to the UNO office demanding 500 metric tons (MT) of fertiliser. They alleged that earlier 800 metric tons of fertiliser was allocated for them in August but they needed 500 metric tons only in the current month (September).

When the UNO along with the farmers searched the fertiliser dealer's godown, he found it empty. He sent a message to the higher authorities to supply fertiliser without any delay to deliver the same among the farmers as soon as possible.

Hatem Ali, a farmer at Balladanga village said he has cultivated paddy on seven bighas of land this year. He got only 20 KG fertilizer while he needs 50 KG.

Golam Sarwar, another farmer at Aushia village said he did not get any fertiliser although he cultivated paddy on four bighas of land this season.

When contacted, Shailkupa UNO Mahmudul Hasan said the farmers assembled in front of his office demanding fertiliser. Immediately after the incident, he contacted the higher officials to supply the required quantity of fertiliser to farmers.

Mannan Bhuiyan's expulsion 'appropriate', says Satkhira BNP leaders

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Sixty leaders of Satkhira district BNP and its front organisations in a statement yesterday said expulsion of secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan by the party chief was 'appropriate' as he violated party constitution.

They hailed appointment of Khondokar Delowar Hossain as party secretary general. They also said stripping Abdul Mannan's party membership was a correct decision.

"There was no alternative for the party chief to expelling him (Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan) from the party in the interest of the party and the country as they were hatching conspiracy against the party and its chief Begum Zia.

"Some party men led by Mannan Bhuiyan were misleading party leaders and activists to divide the party", they said in the statement.

Supporting the expulsion, they said, "Begum Zia only implemented demands of lakhs of party leaders and activists".

Expressing their full support to Begum Khaleda Zia's leadership, they also congratulated the newly appointed secretary general Khondokar Delowar Hossain and said the party will not lose anything for expelling 'conspirators'.

The BNP leaders also urged party men to remain alert so that they are not misled by expelled Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan's statements.

Later talking to this correspondent, some of the leaders claimed that BNP leaders and activists at all levels in Satkhira are united under the leadership of Khaleda Zia.

Asked about Satkhira BNP president Habibul Islam Habib, who is on the run to evade arrest, they claimed that he reiterated his 'full confidence' on the Khaleda Zia's leadership.

District committee member and its former joint secretary Sitajul Islam alleged that Mannan Bhuiyan and others who rave rallied around him are 'corrupt'.

"They have taken recourse to reform only to hide their corruption and are misleading party men", he

said.

In the statement, the BNP leaders expressed grave concern over arrest of the party chairperson and former prime minister.

They said people of the country are disappointed at the arrest.

"The arrest is very unfortunate", the statement said.

Signatories to the statement are district BNP member secretary Samsuzzoha Bablu; district committee members Yusuf Ali, Shah Arifur Rahman, Abu Sayeed, Sheikh Manirul Islam, Abdul Khaleque, Abdur Rafique and Sirajul Islam; Satkhira poura BNP president Imamul Islam Sharif, organising secretary Kazi Abdus Sabur and law secretary Abdul Jalil; Sadar upazila BNP vice presidents Lutfor Rahman and Md. Yusuf Ali; district Mahila Dal president Hosne Ara Ahmed; district Krishak Dal secretary Abu Zahid Dablu; district Shramik Dal president Abdus Samad and secretary Khan Chowdhury Hymayun Maksud; Sechchasebak Dal president Ahsan Habib, secretary Asadur Rahman and organising

secretary Asad and Sheikh Masud Mostafa Sohel; district JASAS president Syed Eklesar Ali Bachchu and leaders Golam Azam, Rafiquzzaman, Ainul Islam Nanta, Aman Ullah and Khorshed Alam; district Zia Parishad vice-presidents Nur Mohammad Par and Altaf Hossain and secretary Sheikh Mizanur Rahman; district Juba Dal vice-president Tariqul Hasan and leaders Salah Uddin, Ashik Mahmud and Sheikh Saidur Rahman, Debhata upazila BNP president Nazibar Rahman and secretary Mahiuddin Siddique; Kalaroa poura BNP president Bazlul Karim; Kaligonj upazila BNP convenor Prof. Khoda Baksa; Shyamnagar upazila BNP convenor Abdul Wahed and member secretary DM Abdus Samad; and Tala upazila BNP organising secretary Shafiqul Islam.

Signatories to the statement also include leaders of BNP's other front organisations like Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, Jatiyatabadi Tanti Dal, Matshajibi Dal, Chhatra Dal and Sechchasebak Dal.



PHOTO: STAR

The hanging bridge in Kaptai Lake in Rangamati has gone under water as the lake swelled following heavy rains in the hills in last few days.

Arnab murder case:3 more PWs examined

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Three more prosecution witnesses (PWs) of the sensational Arnab murder case gave statements before a court here on Thursday.

District and Sessions Judge Court judge Ashish Ranjan Das recorded the statements and fixed September 16 the next date of hearing.

The witnesses are inspector Shah Jahan of Criminal Investigation Department (CID), constable Mosharrarf Hossain and Kartik Chandra Banerjee.

Earlier, the court recorded statements of 21 prosecution witnesses (PWs). They are: Samir Kumar Das, Murari Mohon Sarkar, Dr Abul

Hossain, Sheikh Mohammad Ali, Saidur Rahman Sardar, Fazlur Rahman, Nur Mohammad, a classmate of Arnab, former first class magistrate ANM Ahmad Ali now additional deputy commissioner (ADC) of Barisal, assistant superintendent of police (ASP) Khasrul Haque of CID, constable Tayebur Rahman, victim's father Bimal Krishna Das and others.

Eight-year-old Arnab Kumar Das, son of Bimal Krishna Das of Saihati village in Kaliganj upazila was abducted by a group of miscreants on June 18, 2000. Later, villagers recovered the trisected body of the victim on June 21, 2000.

DU VIOLENCE

BCL leader, 30 Sust students sued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A case has been filed against Mustafizur Rahman, organising secretary of the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (Sust) unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and 30 others for bringing out processions on the campus following violence at Dhaka University (DU) on August 22, police said.

Mustafiz is also a final year student of political studies.

Sub-inspector (SI) Shahed Uddin of Sylhet Kotwali police station filed the case on September 3, police said.

WORKERS' THREAT OF HUNGER STRIKE

BJMC chairman in Khulna for talks with high officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) chairman Ataharul Islam arrived in Khulna yesterday noon for talks with high officials of state-owned jute mills in Khulna-Jessore

area.

He will hold several meetings till Monday on the situation in the industrial belt arising out of non-payment of outstanding dues of retrenched workers and employees.

The BJMC chairman's visit follows a threat of hunger strike by some retrenched workers of seven state-owned mills from September 16 if their outstanding dues including gratuity and provide fund are not paid in full by September 15.

The BJMC chairman is accompanied by controller (finance) Mohammad Ali Chowdhury, general manager (Research and quality control) Abu Saeed, deputy general manager (production) Shamsul Huq and manager (Jute) Shah Rafiquddoula.

Earlier on Thursday evening, over 200 retrenched workers of seven jute mills held a rally in front of the administrative building of Crescent Jute Mills where they announced their hunger strike programme.

Meanwhile, the government has allocated more Tk 11.24 crore for six

mills to purchase raw jute. But Alim Jute Mill did not get any fund for jute purchase for reasons yet be known, said its Project Director Monwar Hossain.

Meanwhile reformist BNP leader and former whip Ashraf Hossain criticised the government policy as regards state-owned jute mills, saying it reflects IMF prescription.

Ashraf Hossain claimed that Brig (ret'd) Hannan Shah who was jute minister during 1992-96 BNP rule supported IMF prescription to privatise jute mills.

"I opposed the move", he told this correspondent yesterday.

"But unfortunately, I did not get support either from (the then) prime minister Begum Khaleda Zia nor any other cabinet member".

Former BNP lawmakers Ali Asgar Lobi and MAH Selim (now detained) backed IMF prescription to privatise nationalised jute mills, Ashraf Hossain claimed. He has urged the caretaker government to take proper steps to run the jute mills.

Urdu speaking people in Khulna to be voters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Sixty-one thousand Urdu speaking people in Khulna will be included in the voters' list as per a decision of an inter-ministerial meeting held recently in Dhaka.

Of them, 29,000 live in areas under five police stations of Khulna Metropolitan City.

District Election Officer Md Mujibar Rahman yesterday said he received a faxed letter from Chief Election Commissioner's office on September 3 for inclusion of Urdu speaking people in the voters' list.

"I have been directed by the CEC's office to include those Urdu speaking people in voters' list with photographs who have citizenship certificates and were voters in 2001 national election. "Those who could not enroll their names in the voters list made in 2000 will not have any problem this time to become voters if they can show genuine citizenship certificates from ward commissioners", the district election officer said.

Nazrul varsity Academic Council meets

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The first meeting of the Academic Council of Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam Biswabidyalaya was held at Darirampur in Trishal yesterday.

Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof Dr M Shamsur Rahman was in the chair.

The meeting approved the syllabus for the session 2006-2007. A decision was taken about opening of eight new subjects in the university.

The meeting also discussed to observe the 31st death anniversary of National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam in a befitting manner. Prayers were offered for eternal peace of the departed soul of the national poet.

In his address, the VC sought cooperation of the academic council members to conduct the academic activities in the university properly.

Treasurer, deans, heads of different departments, assistant controller and assistant registrar were present in the meeting.

5x2

Bridge collapses within a year

Use of substandard materials alleged

OUR CORRESPONDENT Kishoreganj

A Bailey bridge constructed by the Roads and Highways Department (R&H) collapsed within a year of its construction, allegedly due to use of substandard materials.

The bridge on a narrow tributary of Brahmaputra at Hossainpur Bazar in Kishoreganj inaugurated on August 10 last year collapsed on August 8 this year. It was built at a cost of Tk 15,94,900.

Talking to this correspondent during a recent visit, locals claimed that the bridge collapsed due to use of substandard materials, not for pressure of floodwater. Floodwater did not approach the bridge and even the soil on both sides of the bridge were not eroded by water, they said. The approach roads to the bridge were also not submerged by water, they said.

But officially it was shown that the bridge collapsed due to pressure of floodwater, sources at Roads and Highways Department said.

Soon after collapse of the bridge, the contractor who was given the construction work by allegedly ignoring the lowest bidder was again given the contract to remove collapsed materials of the bridge, R&H sources and locals said. This was done to remove evidences of substandard work, they claimed.

During the visit it was seen that connecting roads on both sides of the bridge were not eroded but its brick build structures on both sides were displaced that caused collapsed of the bridge.

Contacted, executive engineer Joinal Abedin of Kishoreganj R&H said, the contractor who built the bridge was engaged to rebuild the bridge on emergency basis.

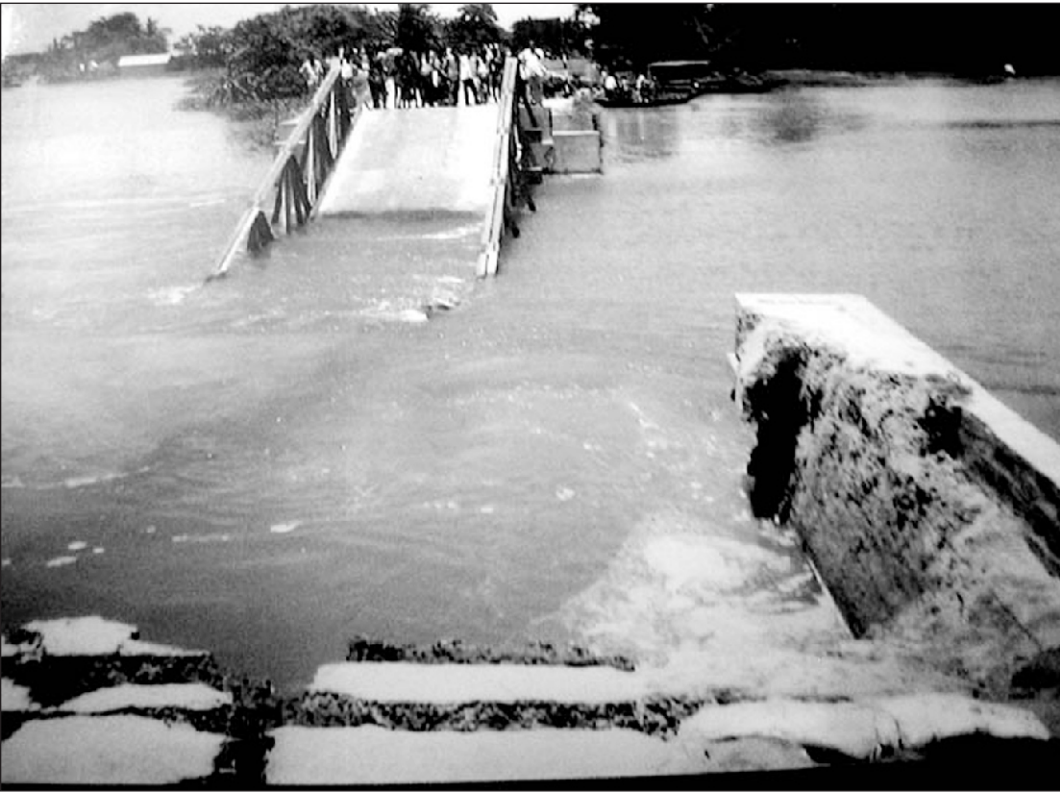


PHOTO: STAR

The Bailey bridge at Hossainpur Bazar in Kishoreganj that collapsed within a year of its construction.

12x3

6x2