

# Influential quarter 'grabs' forestland for salt beds

A CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A local influential quarter has allegedly grabbed about five acres of forest department land to prepare salt beds at Lemshikhali under Baro Ghop union of Kutubdia upazila in Cox's Bazar.

About 9,000 young trees, planted on the land by the coastal forest department, have also been uprooted.

"Taking advantage of indifference by the administration other influential people are conspiring to uproot young plants on about 70 acres of mangrove forest at Lemshikhali for preparing salt fields. It will cause environmental disaster," said M Hasan, assistant conservator of forest (ACF) of Cox's Bazar region under Coastal Forest Department.

At around 9:00am on November 17, about 30 miscreants led by Abul Kalam Bahaddar, an influential person of Bar Ghop union in the upazila, occupied about five acres of land where about 8,888 young plants (kewra and bair) were planted to protect the sea coast, said forest department officials and witnesses.

Informed that the young plants were being uprooted, a team of forest staff led by local Beat Officer Abu Taher rushed to the spot and tried to prevent the criminals.

Holding sharp weapons, the criminals chased the forest men and forced them to leave the spot by giving death threat.

Abul Kalam Bahaddar's son Belal Uddin and his brother Monir Alam led the miscreants, said Beat Officer Abu Taher.

On November 17 night Abu Taher went to the local police station to file a complaint against about 20 people including Abul Kalam Bahaddar, Belal Uddin and Monir Alam but police refused to record it as a case.

Denying the allegation, Abul Kalam Bahaddar said he took lease of 4.70 acre abandoned land at Lemshikhali from the land ministry in 2006 and now he is preparing the land for salt bed.

When contacted, Kutubdia Police Station Officer-in-Charge Yousuf Siddiqui said police will take action after a full-fledged investigation as primary inquiry shows that Abul Kalam Bahaddar leased the land from the land ministry for 10 years in 2006.



PHOTO: STAR

Patenga sea beach in Chittagong buzz with tourists yesterday as Eid holidays continue to offer people a respite from the din and bustle of day-to-day life.

## Arrest of municipal councillor sparks protest at Bogra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Locals brought out a procession in Bogra town yesterday protesting the arrest of a municipal councillor in a 'false' case.

Councillor Harun-or-Rashid of ward no 17 under Bogra municipality was arrested on November 27 following a case filed by a man named Abdul Majid on the night of November 26.

Majid filed the case after a clash over capturing of a disputed land at Matidali Fakirpara area in the town against Harun-or-Rashid.

Locals termed the case filed against councillor Harun false and also submitted a memorandum to the deputy commissioner and police superintendent (SP) alleging that the officer-in-charge of Sadar Police Station ordered arrest of

the councillor after taking bribe from the complainant.

They also demanded probe into the allegation they brought against the OC and immediate release of the councillor.

Contacted, OC Jahangir Hossain said no one can make an accusation of taking bribe against him. "I never took bribe in my life," he said, adding that police arrested the councillor as he is a bad person.

On November 25, Md Ehsane Rabbi Khokan of the area filed a case against three people with Sadar Police Station after a clash over capture of the land. OC Jahangir Hossain directed SI Rawshan to investigate the case.

But the following day, another clash took place between two groups centring the filing of the case. On the day, Abdul Majid filed a case against Harun-or-Rashid whom police arrested on November 27.

## SI among 7 hurt in AL factional clashes

A CORRESPONDENT, Natore

At least seven people including a police official were injured as Awami League (AL) factions clashed in different parts of Lalpur upazila in Natore in two days.

Locals and police said, the clash ensued when activists of a faction led by Sagor, son of a woman lawmaker Shefali Momtaj, assaulted their rival district AL vice president Abul Kalam at Abdulpur Bazar in Lalpur upazila on Saturday night.

As Kalam's supporters retaliated, both the groups locked in a bloody clash. On information, police rushed to the spot to bring the situation under control. While trying to quell the situation, sub-inspector (SD) Porimal was injured. The next morning, rivals set fire to a flourmill owned by a supporter of Kalam.

Additional police forces have been deployed in the area to avert further clash.

## Rivals form counter body of Rajshahi BNP, hold separate councils in Pabna

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Opponents of the 'mainstream' Rajshahi BNP formed a counter committee of the party's district unit while two rival factions of Pabna district unit BNP held two separate councils at the party office yesterday afternoon.

Rajshahi district BNP has now two separate committees as followers of city BNP president Mizanur Rahman Minu formed another committee yesterday, four days after formation of the first committee headed by former BNP lawmaker Nadim Mostafa, reports our staff correspondent from Rajshahi.

Former district BNP president Azizur Rahman, a loyalist of Minu, was made president of a BNP faction that held council at Bhubon Mohon Park.

Started at 2:00pm, the process of electing the committee members was completed in half an hour.

Abu Sayeed Chand, Charchat upazila BNP president, was made general secretary of the committee and Akhtaruzzaman Tapan organising secretary.

The council, however, saw presence of only councillors from Charchat upazila out of nine upazilas in the district, said BNP insiders.

No senior leader of BNP, not even Mizanur Rahman Minu, was present at the council that drew several hundred BNP workers from Durgapur, Puthia

and Rajshahi.

"The central BNP in a circular announced that no council will be considered if it is held after November 30. Minu and other senior leaders could not join the district council as we had to organise it hurriedly," Azizur Rahman told The Daily Star.

Terming the council held at Bhubon Mohon Park invalid, Nadim Mostafa said, "The central BNP has already approved district BNP committee that was formed four days ago. The committee led by Azizur was dissolved and they have no right to hold a so-called council."

At the district BNP's council held at a city community centre on November 26, Nadim Mostafa was made president of the committee and Quamrul Monir general secretary in presence of councillors from all nine upazilas of the district.

The names of the committee members are to be announced today (Tuesday) at a city community centre where followers of Nadim have called an Eid reunion.

Our Pabna Correspondent reports: The 'mainstream' leaders of Pabna district unit BNP and their rivals held two separate councils at the party office yesterday afternoon.

At around 2:00pm, the rival faction marched to the party office and held a rally there.

"Hearing that devoted activists of BNP would be deprived in the council organised at the district BNP

office, we have assembled here to resist the so-called council," said SM Ferdous Monju, former office secretary of Pabna district unit BNP, also a leader of the rival faction that occupied Pabna district BNP office.

After forming a 101-member district unit committee with Abdus Samad Khan Montu as president and Saiful Islam Badsha secretary, the faction leaders and activists left the venue.

Shortly afterwards, the mainstream Pabna district unit BNP held their council at the same venue. Engineer Habibur Rahman Tota, convener of Pabna district unit BNP, chaired the council attended by 48 councillors of eight upazilas, said party sources.

Earlier Sujannagar upazila unit committee could not be formed due to intra-party feud.

"We are holding the council according to democratic rules. Councillors will select their leadership to form the district unit committee. They (rival faction) have no right to form any such committee," said Habibur Rahman Tota.

The council was going on as of filing this report at about 4:30pm.

Meanwhile, party leaders did not disclose the time and venue of the council as of 11:00am.

Additional police was deployed in front of Pabna district unit BNP office to evade any untoward situation.



PHOTO: STAR

Ten shops at Moyarpotti in Faridpur town on the Kumar River suddenly subsided on Saturday night.

## Jubo Dal man, 2 outlaws killed in Pabna during Eid holidays

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A BNP activist and two underground operatives were killed in separate incidents in Pabna during Eid holidays.

The are Jubo Dal activist Azam, 24, of Fateh Mohammedpur village in Ishwardi upazila, Jamrul Islam, 38, of Shakharipara village in Ataikula upazila and Md Mahatab Uddin, 32, of Ramkrishnapur village in Bera upazila. Jamrul and Mahatab were members of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist

Party (PBCP-Janajudhho faction).

BNP activist Azam was killed in a factional clash on Friday. Police said the clash occurred between Jakaria Pintu group and Mokhesur Rahman Bablu group of upazila BNP unit at around 11:00pm on Thursday.

At least 10 people, including Azam and Sajal, from both sides were injured in the clash. Azam and Sajal were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital where Azam died Friday morning.

PBCP cadre Jamrul Islam

was killed by his rivals in the party near Eidgah maidan at Shakharipara village in Ataikula upazila at around 11:30am on Saturday.

Being informed, police rushed the spot, recovered the body and sent it to Pabna General Hospital morgue for autopsy. Mahatab was hacked to death by his rivals near his house at Ramkrishnapur village under Bera upazila at around 10:00am on Sunday.

Police said internal feud in the outlawed party might be the reason behind the killing of the two outlaws.

## Jubo League leader killed

UNB, Sunamganj

A Jubo League leader was murdered at Tajpur in Chhatak upazila of Sunamganj district yesterday.

The dead, Jamir Ali, 40, was a leader of Jubo League Chhatak upazila unit. Family sources said, Jamir went out of his house on Sunday noon and remained missing since then.

Locals found the body at Tajpur on Chhatak-Gobindganj road yesterday morning.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Sadar hospital morgue. The motive behind the killing could not be known.

## Patuakhali clashes leave 1 killed, 12 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

One person was killed and 12 others, including five women, were injured in a clash at Daspara and Chandrapara villages under Baufal upazila of Patuakhali district on Sunday.

The dead, Amjad Ali, 45 of Daspara village under Baufal upazila, received injuries during a clash between two groups over a missed call from a cellphone.

He was admitted to Baufal

Upazila Health Complex and succumbed to injuries while being shifted to Barisal Medical College Hospital, family sources said.

The remaining nine, who received injuries during the clash, were admitted to Baufal health complex.

Another clash at Chandrapara village between two groups over a trivial matter yesterday leaves two people injured. Separate cases were filed with Baufal Police Station.



PHOTO: STAR

Garo artistes perform their traditional dance at a cultural event at Gaera village in Modhupur upazila of Tangail district.

## Firearms seized in Rajshahi, Natore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) have recovered four firearms and two bullets from different places in Rajshahi and Natore districts in two days.

On a tip-off, Rab raided three places and recovered the arms and ammunition in an abandoned state.

A Rab team from Rajshahi railway colony recovered a Burmese shutter gun and a pipe gun with two bullets from Bara Adimpur of Shingra upazila in Natore district on Saturday.

The same team recovered a locally made pipe gun from behind a house at Hajpur in Rajshahi city on Friday.

On the same day, another Rab team from Binodpur camp recovered an Indian shooter gun from near a house at Ekborpur village of Shibganj upazila in Chapainawabganj district.

Earlier, Rab arrested two arms traders -- Gias, 36, of Joypur and Muhammad Ali, 27, of Halidagachhi of Charchat upazila from Halidagachhi on November 24.

A foreign made pistol and two magazines loaded with seven bullets were also recovered from possession of the arrestees.

## AL-BNP clash over capture of Meghna char, 20 injured

A CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

At least 20 people were injured as the activists of ruling Awami League (AL) and opposition BNP clashed over capture of a Meghna char in Gajaria's Charbalaki Nawagaon on Sunday.

Over 50 houses belonging to the members of the both sides were ransacked during the clash.

During the clash, the AL and BNP men used lethal weapons and chased each other. On information, police rushed to the spot and dispersed the clashing groups. Police have been deployed in the area.

Although police brought took the situation under control, another clash took place at the adjoining villages yesterday.

In Tungibari upazila, 15 people were injured in a clash between two groups of people yesterday noon.

Both sides hurled brickbats and chased each other during the clash that continued for two hours.

Buyers and sellers in Tungibari market ran helter-skelter in panic.

Police brought the situation under control at around 2:00pm. The injured were admitted to the local hospital.

## One to die for murder

UNB, Sherpur

A court here yesterday sentenced a man to death in a murder case.

According to the prosecution, Sultan Ahmed, 35, of Bazithkela village in Sadar upazila strangled his wife Marjina Begum, 30, mother of a daughter, on June 30, 2006 as she refused to bring dowry from her parents.

Later, Sultan hung the body from a nearby tree to prove that she had committed suicide. Victim's brother Motahar Hossain filed a case with Sadar police station.

Police submitted charge-sheet against seven people including Sultan in November, 2006.

## SNIPPETS

### Body of shrimp trader found

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police recovered the beheaded body of a shrimp trader at a shrimp enclosure at Shitarampur village under Dumuria upazila of Khulna district yesterday morning. The victim was identified as Ashraf Ali Morol, 40. Police said He had been missing from his house since the night of November 28. Ashraf's wife Jasmin Nahar, member of Gutudia Union Parishad under the upazila, told police that outlaws of New Biplobi Communist Party demanded Tk 10 lakh from him recently. She filed a case with Dumuria Police Station at 3:00pm yesterday.

### 2 killed in separate incidents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Two people were killed in separate incidents in Dhunat and Sariakandi upazilas on Saturday night and early Sunday. Tapan, 25, an auto-richshaw driver, was shot dead by unidentified miscreants near his house of Baspara village under Dhunat upazila at around 10:00pm on Saturday. The reason behind the killing could not be known as of 6:00pm yesterday. In Sariakandi upazila, miscreants killed a villager named Abul Kalam, 50, at Charvera Mara village under the upazila early Sunday. Locals said a gang of miscreants broke into the house of Abul Kalam at around 4:00am and stabbed him. He died instantly. A case was filed with local police station, but no one was arrested in connection with the murder as of filing of this report at 6:30pm yesterday.

### Seven shops gutted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Seven shops were gutted in a fire at Rahonpur Bazar under Gomostapur upazila of Chapainawabganj district Sunday morning. On information, fire fighters from Chapainawabganj and Shibganj rushed to the spot and extinguished the blaze with the help of local people. According to fire fighters and traders, the fire originated from an electric short circuit at a shop at around 5:00pm and soon engulfed the adjacent seven shops.

### Six hurt as rival groups clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

At least six people were injured in clash between two rival groups over a trifling matter in Madanganj area under Bandar upazila yesterday morning. One of the injured was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) while the rest to Narayanjan General Hospital. In another incident, miscreants stabbed a youth named Abdul Haque, 32, at Nunertek area under Sonargaon Police Station on Eid Day as a sequel to previous rivalry. They also ransacked the house of another youth named Shahjalal and injured his niece Rojina, 20.

### Schoolboy drowns

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A schoolboy drowned in a pond at village Chunati under Lohagara upazila of the district on Sunday. The boy, Rafiqul Hossain Rafi, 12, was a class VI student of Chittagong Cantonment Public School and College. Son of Hasan Mahmud Shamsher, assistant personal secretary to Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, Rafi went to their village home at Chunati on Friday to celebrate Eid-ul Azha with his family. He went to a nearby pond to have a bath at around 12:30pm on Sunday and drowned. Later, the body was found floating, sources said.