

Rivals attack dist BNP meeting, explode bombs

30 sued in Brahmanbaria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Rivals attacked a Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) district committee meeting and ransacked the house of advocate Haroon Al Rashid, district convener and central vice-president of BNP here on Saturday evening.

Haroon's younger brother Shahin Al Rashid yesterday filed a case with Brahmanbaria Sadar police station accusing 30 people of carrying out the attack.

A protest meeting was also held on the 'Poura Market' premises with district joint convener advocate Md Safiqul Islam in the chair.

Local BNP office sources said district leaders of BNP headed by advocate Haroon Al Rashid were holding a preparatory meeting on Saturday on the district conference scheduled for January 26. All of a sudden, a group of rival BNP men attacked Haroon's house, the venue of the meeting.

The attackers numbering about 30 damaged the house, glasses on tables, windowpanes and

Haroon's car. They also ransacked the documents of the office and exploded a few cocktails on the house premises. However, none was injured in the bomb attack.

Later at around 9:30 at night, the incumbent leaders and workers brought out a protest procession in the town. The rival group intercepted the procession near Tufayel Azam bridge by hurling a series of cocktail there.

Police fired 11 rounds of blank shots to bring the situation under control.

The law enforcers also recovered 28 unexploded cocktails from T A Road where the rival group carried out the bomb attack.

Yesterday's protest meeting was addressed by district joint conveners Haji Sayed Emranur Reza, Poura Mayor Hafizur Rahman Mulla Kachi, Zahirul Haque, Md Sirajul Islam and Khushpara Banu.

Contacted, Haroon said that a section of disgruntled party men was disturbing the peaceful atmosphere with an ill motive. They attacked the preparatory meeting with a view to spoiling the main conference of January 26, he said.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Buses carrying passengers to Kuakata sea beach lie scattered in a coconut orchard as there is no bus stand at the important tourist spot. The picture was taken on Saturday.

Promised upgradation of hospital yet to see reality

A CORRESPONDENT, Gopalganj

Health service at Gopalganj Sadar Hospital, the only full-fledged hospital for 13 lakh people of the district, remains in a deplorable condition mainly due to shortage of doctors.

Against 25 sanctioned posts, only 12 doctors are working in the 100-bed hospital while other posts including those of seven specialist doctors and three medical officers are lying vacant.

The post of emergency medical officer is also vacant for long.

At present there is no consultant at different departments of the hospital including surgery, medicine, ENT, gynaecology, eye, cardiology, anaesthesia and pathology, said sources at Gopalganj civil surgeon's office.

"During the last Awami League rule, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina announced that the Sadar Hospital would be upgraded to a 250-bed one. But the next BNP-led four-party alliance government did not allow opening of the hospital although the infrastructure had been built. Consequently, equipment worth crores of taka are getting damaged," said Dr Faridul Islam, resident surgeon at Gopalganj Sadar Hospital.

The hospital could function as a 250-bed one if necessary manpower was appointed but the process has remained stalled due to bureaucratic red-tapism, sources said.

Mujahidul Islam, a businessman in Gopalganj town, said medicine worth several crore taka has been bought in several installments for the hospital after the present AL-led government assumed office but the outdoor section

still sees shortage of quality anti-biotic medicines.

Sick people, even those with serious problems, are often turned down, locals said.

"Patients crowd in front of

the doctors' chambers in the hospital but doctors idle away their time on the upper floor in the name of tea break. And when noon approaches they say that time to see patients is over for the day," Pabitra

Saha, who was returning after failing to see a doctor at the hospital, told this correspondent.

"Present health adviser hails from Kashiani in Gopalganj district. When we tried to draw his attention to the problems in the health sector in the district he stopped us saying that he is aware of it. Even the prime minister's assurance of upgrading the hospital into a 250-bed one has not been met in last one year," said a doctor seeking anonymity.

A few others echoed the same.

The outgoing civil surgeon and Superintendent of Gopalganj Sadar Hospital Dr Mohammad Nurun Nabi said, "I have tried to overhaul the health system in Gopalganj during my tenure as civil surgeon. But many problems still persist."



PHOTO: STAR

Hairline cracks have developed on the wall of emergency ward at the new building of Gopalganj Sadar Hospital, below, a good amount of unused equipment rusting away as the hospital has not been upgraded to a 250-bed one despite completion of its infrastructure several years ago.

Tribesmen in India kill Bangladeshi

UNB, Sylhet

A Bangladeshi man was killed and two others were injured in an attack by Indian Khasia tribesmen along Jointapur border here on Friday.

The deceased was identified as Jamaluddin, 35.

Police said Jamaluddin, Abdul Mannan and Jamiruddin went to Kuatar in Meghalaya state of India crossing the border on Thursday in search of work.

When they were returning home late at night some people of Indian Khasia tribe attacked and beat them, leaving Jamaluddin dead on the spot and injuring his two companions.

Later, Jamir and Mannan returned with the body of Jamaluddin.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Sylhet Osmani Medical College and Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police arrested Mannan for crossing border illegally.



PHOTO: STAR

A giant sea turtle lies dead at Pachar Dwip in Cox's Bazar sea beach yesterday. Victim of environmental pollution as well as callousness of fishermen, sea animals are often floated dead to the shore.

10 BCL MEN SUED IN DEBIGANJ Govt officials, employees on indefinite work abstention

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Government officials and employees at Debiganj upazila headquarters in Panchagarh began an indefinite work abstention yesterday demanding arrest of some local Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activists who confined the upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) and project implementation officer (PIO) to their office rooms on January 21.

A group of BCL activists confined UNO Abu Jafar and PIO Motiur Rahman over recruitment of staff for a project under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The ministry is implementing National Nutrition Project (NNP) at Debiganj upazila through Thengamara shabuj Shangha (TMSS), a non-governmental organisation (NGO).

A committee headed by the upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) recruited 16 community nutrition organisers and 162 community nutrition promoters through a written test on January 17.

Local people and UNO office sources said a group of BCL activists, led by their leaders Swapon and Sohel, came to the UNO office on January 21 and hurled abusive language at UNO Abu Jafar for not recruiting their candidates. At

one stage, the BCL activists ransacked the UNO office and confined him in his room.

They then entered the office of Project Implementation Officer (PIO) Motiur Rahman, vandalised the room and assaulted him. The BCL men also locked the door of the office room, keeping the PIO inside. Later police went to the spot, dispersed the BCL men and rescued the UNO and PIO by breaking locks of the doors.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Abu Jafar filed a case with Debiganj Police Station against 10-BCL men, including Swapon and Sohel, the same day. But police could not arrest the accused as of filing of this report at 5:00pm yesterday.

Demanding immediate arrest of the accused, upazila officials and employees started an indefinite work abstention. Upazila Engineer Rabiul Islam and Upazila PIO Motiur Rahman said they will continue work abstention programme until the accused are arrested.

An upazila official seeking anonymity said police are not arresting the accused BCL men as they are involved with ruling party politics.

Contacted, officer-in-charge of Debiganj Police Station Mominul Islam said drive is on to nab the accused.

Five food poisoned

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

At least five people fell sick due to food poisoning at south Auliapur village under Patuakhali Sadar upazila yesterday.

They are Fatima, 75, her daughter Hasina, 50, granddaughter Marium Begum, 20, grandson Ali Akbar, 22, and grand son-in-law Monir Hussain, 25.

They were rushed to Patuakhali General Hospital.

Family sources said, the five went to bed after having dinner on Saturday night and in the morning neighbouring people found all still asleep. Failing to awake them they brought them to Patuakhali General Hospital.

The attending doctor said, they fell sick due to food poisoning.

Open newly built Dinajpur hospital without further delay

Interns plan agitation to realise demand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The interns and students of Dinajpur Medical College and Hospital have demanded that the government open the newly built 500-bed hospital building immediately to mitigate sufferings of the patient and facilitate the doctor to perform their duties properly.

They made the demand at a press conference at Dinajpur Press Club yesterday. Intern Md Iftakhar Hossain Chowdhury read out a written statement at the conference.

Interns and students of the medical college and hospital

also announced that they would wear black badges and form a human chain in front of Dinajpur Sadar Hospital on January 29 to press home their demand.

They said Dinajpur Medical College and Hospital started functioning at Sadar Hospital in 1992 and construction of the hospital building began in 1997 through laying foundation stone by the then prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

They alleged that construction work came to a halt in 2001 as the BNP-led four-party alliance government shifted the funds to Ziaur Rahman Medical College and Hospital in Bogra.

In wake of violent protest of the students and doctors, the construction of the building restarted in 2004 and completed in 2008. But inauguration of the building is being delayed due to bureaucratic tangles, alleged the interns and students.

Contacted, Chairman of Dinajpur Medical College and Hospital Managing Committee Iqbalur Rahim said the college and hospital will be shifted to the new building next month (February).

Sources said hundreds of patients of Dinajpur and its adjacent districts are being deprived of getting better

treatment due to accommodation problems at Sadar Hospital where the DJMCH is functioning temporarily.

During a recent visit to the hospital, this correspondent saw the patients are being treated in a scattering way at different places including verandas and corridors. He also saw awful condition at the hospital that has become a nuisance for patients, staff as well as visitors.

"Condition of the toilets is so bad that foul smell spreads to wards and corridors, much to the inconvenience of staff, patients and their attendants," said a doctor seeking anonymity.



PHOTO: STAR

Completed in 2008, the new building for the 500-bed hospital of Dinajpur Medical College and Hospital still waits inauguration, depriving the treatment seekers.