

# Ex-BNP minister's house attacked in Natore

## Five injured, 2 motorbikes set on fire

A CORRESPONDENT, Natore

The house of former deputy minister for land Ruhul Quddus Talukder Dulu was attacked allegedly by Awami League activists in Natore town yesterday.

Five leaders of BNP and its associate bodies were also injured. The injured are NS College Students Union VP Sanwar Hossain Tusher, Natore town BNP Joint Secretary Mamunur Rashid, Chhatra Dal leader Nasim Uddin, and Jubo Dal leaders Amanat and Ashraf.

As part of the BNP central programme to protest the killing of Dhaka City Corporation councillor and Jubo Dal leader Haji Ahmed Ali, Natore Jubo Dal and Chhatra Dal leaders and workers submitted a memorandum to the deputy

commissioner at noon. According to witnesses and local BNP sources, Awami League activists chased the Jubo Dal and Chhatra Dal men while they were returning to Dulu's residence, also the temporary office of the district BNP.

They attacked Natore town BNP Joint Secretary Mamunur Rashid in front of the local stadium and set his motorbike afire. At around 1:15 pm, AL men arrived in front of Dulu's house in 10 to 15 motorbikes and started hurling bricks at the house.

NS College Students Union VP Sanwar Hossain Tusher, District Chhatra Dal leader Nasim Uddin and Jubo Dal leaders Amanat and Ashraf were at the Dulu's residence during the attack and injured.

The attackers damaged the windowpane of Dulu's house and set fire to a motorbike in front of the house.

Police rushed to the spot, dispersed the attackers and brought the situation under control.

Former deputy minister Ruhul Quddus Dulu, also the president of BNP Natore district unit, alleged that the Awami League activists attacked BNP leaders and workers while they were returning to the party office after submitting a memorandum to the DC. He claimed five leaders of BNP and its associate organisations were injured in the attack.

Natore District AL General Secretary Hanif Ali Sheikh denied the allegation, saying that the incident was an outcome of BNP's internal feud.



Thai Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn will stay at this hut at Rasulpur char (newly emerged landmass) on the Jamuna Basin in Fulchhari upazila of Gaibandha district during her visit to the remote area tomorrow.

# Thai princess due today to see life of char women

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

All preparations are complete as Princess of Thailand Maha Chakri Sirindhorn along with a 34-member entourage will visit Rasulpur char on the Jamuna Basin in Gaibandha district tomorrow.

The Thai princess, who is visiting Bangladesh as a member of the research team of Bloomberg School of Public Health of John Hopkins University, USA, will see the life of rural women and work of Jivita Bangladesh on maternal and child health in remote areas.

The delegation, also comprising a team of Advisory Board members of Bloomberg School of Public Health, will come to Bangladesh from Thailand today and arrive at Saidpur airport tomorrow.

After visiting Jivita Bangladesh office in Rangpur, the team will move for Rasulpur on the sandy char (newly

emerged landmass) of Jamuna Basin to stay in the specially built resort comprising 35 huts made of bamboo fences and straw roof.

The resort at the 'mini model village' has been arranged on ten acres of leased land at Rasulpur in Fulchhari upazila of Gaibandha as the Thai princess earlier expressed desire to visit Bangladesh to know the life of women in remote char areas.

The 35 huts, made for accommodation of the Thai princess and her entourage, are equipped with modern amenities amid natural surroundings.

Carpet made of date leaves covered the floors of the huts that are decorated with village handicrafts.

Special vegetable and flower gardens have been raised on the premises.

A 25KV power generator and solar power panels will supply electricity to

the resort. Five other members of Thai royal family are also accompanying the princess.

During their five-day visit to Bangladesh, the team will see the research work of Jivita Bangladesh on child and maternal health in remote villages.

Sponsored by Bloomberg School of Public Health, Jivita Bangladesh conducted research work on health and nutrition of children and mothers in 19 unions of Rangpur and Gaibandha districts from 1999 to 2007. The aim of the project is to find a way for reducing maternal and child mortality in the areas.

Adequate security measures have been taken on the occasion of the visit by the Thai princess and her entourage, said Gaibandha Deputy Commissioner Md Shahidul Islam.



Farmers collecting boro seedlings at Partekur village in Shahjahanpur upazila of Bogra district. Boro seedlings have become very dear as this year's severe cold caused massive damage to seedbeds in the northern districts.

# Two injured as bombs explode in Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Two bombs exploded on Saturday in front of electricity office at Kotchandpur upazila injuring two pedestrians.

The injured are Moti, 30, and Abdul Malek, 35.

Moti has been admitted to Jessore Sadar Hospital in a critical condition. People caught one Mohi Alam of Tengra village under Shersha upazila while he was fleeing the spot after the blasts.

Meanwhile, Jhenidah Rab recovered a revolver and bullets yesterday morning.

Rab Jhenidah-6 raided the family graveyard of Mollahbari near Bhatol bazaar under Shailakupa upazila and found an Indian revolver and five bullets in an abandoned state.

UNB from Chapainawabganj adds: BDR jawans recovered one pistol, seven bullets and two magazines at Borohadinagar village in Shibganj upazila early Friday.

Acting on a secret information, they raided the house of one Lal Chand of the village at about 2:00am.

Sensing the presence of the border guards Lal Chand and his accomplices fled the scene.

Later, the BDR jawans recovered the firearm and bullets. A case was filed.

# Pirates clash

UNB, Bagerhat

Two pirate gangs locked in a gunfight at Chhaprakhal in the Sunderbans under Sharakhola police station on Saturday afternoon.

Sources said, the gangs, one led by infamous 'Manik Bahini' and another by 'Zulfikar Bahini', had a two-hour long gun battle over establishing supremacy in the area. However, no casualty was reported.

During the clash, the members of 'Zulfikar Bahini' swooped on the fishermen's colony at Chhaprakhal and beat up 15 fishermen.

They also abducted five from the area for ransom.

# Boro farming faces setback for acute seedling crisis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Farmers in the country's northern region are getting worried as boro cultivation is facing a serious setback due to acute shortage of seedlings and their high prices this season.

Admitting that a vast tract of land has remained uncultivated in the region, agricultural officials however said farmers have still time to prepare seedbeds and plant seedlings.

According to the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in the region, seedlings on around 30,000 hectares of land were damaged in the 16 northern districts due to severe cold and dense fog creating acute crisis of seedlings.

Officials of the DAE said it

now becomes uncertain to fulfil the target of cultivating boro paddy on 16,22,494 hectares of land in the wake of seedlings crisis while Boro production target in the region has been fixed at 65,45,873 metric tons (MTs).

Md Momtaz Uddin, deputy director of DAE in Bogra, said there is no need to plant 5/6 seedlings in a bunch for getting high yield. Two seedlings of a bunch are enough to get the same production, he added.

Mostafizur Rahman, a farmer of Portekhu village under Shahjahanpur upazila in Bogra, said he still could not cultivate three hectares of his land due to crisis of seedlings. He visited Sirajganj and Natore but could not collect seedlings.

Shamsul Islam, a farmer of

Khetlal upazila in Joypurhat, he is the only person who cultivated boro on one hectare land in his village. He had bought seedlings of Tk 1,500 to cultivate his one-hectare land last year while he spent Tk 6,000 for the same amount of seedlings this year.

Meanwhile, a group of miscreants took away seedlings from the seedbeds of Nazir Hossain, a farmer of Ruparkhamar village under Ulipur upazila in Kurigram, and left Tk 500 in the seedbed as compensation. In a short message, the gang wrote: "We are not thieves. We have taken the seedlings due to crisis of seedlings."

Poor and marginal farmers are facing problems in purchasing seedlings from local markets because of its high price.



Partial view of the 'mini model village' comprising 35 specially built huts and vegetable and flower gardens at Rasulpur char.

# Three housewives commit 'suicide'

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Three housewives allegedly committed suicide in Meherpur, Chuadanga and Sylhet districts on Saturday and the day before.

In Chuadanga, Rebeka Khatun, 22, who was married just five months ago took poison at Chotogangni village in Alamdanga upazila on Saturday evening, reports our Kushtia correspondent.

Daughter of Islam Ali of Bishnupur village in Damurhuda upazila, Rebeka was married to Mukul, a betel leaf trader. Villagers said, Mukul started torturing

Rebeka soon after the marriage. But Rebeka's family did not dare to protest as they were poor and helpless.

On the fateful day, Rebeka took poison at about 6:30 pm.

She was taken to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital where she died at about 10:30 pm.

Police said they are looking for Rebeka's husband Mukul to interrogate but he has gone into hiding.

In Meherpur, Monwara Khatun, 45, wife of Aroz Ali of Sailgari village in Sadar upazila took poison at about 11:30 am on Saturday.

Family sources said,

Monwara, mother of two children, was long been suffering from diseases. An unnatural death (UD) case was filed with Sadar police station.

UNB from Sylhet adds: A housewife allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself from the ceiling fan of her house in the city's Baluchar area on Friday night.

The deceased was identified as Rimi Akter Moni, 22, wife of Shahinur Rahman Shahin.

Locals said Rimi got married to Shahinur Rahman about 15 months ago. But after some months, Shahinur and

his family members started torturing her over trivial issues. They said failing to bear the physical and mental torture Rimi took her life by hanging herself from the ceiling fan of her bedroom at dead of night.

On information, police rushed in and sent the body to hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police also recovered a chain in which she blamed her husband Shahinur and mother-in-law Habibun Nesa for her death.

Police later arrested the two following a case filed by the victim's brother Mobashshir Ali.



Locals and students bring out a procession at Mongla in Bagerhat district marking the Sundarbans Day yesterday.

# Make vigorous campaign to put Sundarbans on wonder list

STAR NATIONAL DESK

The ninth Sundarbans Day was observed in Khulna and several other districts of the southwestern region yesterday with a call for vigorous campaign so that the world's largest mangrove forest can win the final race to have its position on the list of seven natural wonders of the world.

In Khulna, the day's programme included cultural function, documentary on Sundarbans, discussion meeting and prize distribution at Khulna Press Club organised by Sundarbans Academy, reports our staff correspondent.

Addressing the discussion as the chief guest, KCC Mayor Talukder Abdul Khaleque stressed need for united efforts to conserve biodiversity of the Sundarbans.

The mayor said he will try his best to involve the state

## Call for steps to protect bio-diversity of world's largest mangrove forest

machinery in the campaign for vote for the Sundarbans in the final race.

Executive Director of Sundarbans Academy Prof Anwarul Kadir, Divisional Commissioner Md Eunusur Rahman, Deputy Commissioner NM Ziaul Alam, Pro-Vice Chancellor of Khulna University Prof Purnendu Gain, President of Khulna Divisional Press Club Federation and Editor of Dainik Purbanchal Alhaj Liakat Ali, Adviser of Sundarbans Academy Swapan Guha, Editor of The Daily Tribune Begum Ferdousi Ali and poet Abu Bakar Siddique were pres-

ent as special guests.

Liakat Ali in his speech said the government should directly participate in the campaign for vote for the Sundarbans in the final race to be held in 2011.

Later, eight journalists of both print and electronic media were awarded Sree Satish Chandra Mitra prizes for their write-ups, highlighting various aspects of the Sundarbans.

They are Mamun Reza of Dainik Samokal, Rakibuddin Pannu of Ekushey TV, SM Habib of ATN Bangla, Taposh Kanti Das of The New Age, Rafiqul Alam Tutul of Diganta TV, Alamgir Hannan of Dainik Purbanchal, Ranajit

Barman of Dainik Patradut and Hedayet Hossain of Dainik Jugantar. In Patuakhali, a colorful procession was brought out in the town to mark the day. Society Development Agency (SDA), a local NGO, organised the programme. A discussion meeting was also held in the town. Chaired by SDA Director KM Enayet Hossain, it was addressed, among others, by Sadar upazila UNO and the divisional forest officer, according to our correspondent. In Bagerhat, Sundarban Dibash Udjapan Parishad organised a discussion at Bagerhat Sangskritik Foundation Auditorium in the afternoon. Colourful processions were brought out to celebrate the day in Bagerhat town and at Mongla, Morelganj and Sharankhola upazila headquarters.