

UP chairmen unite to remove UNO

Boycott Birganj upazila meetings as UNO Hasan Maruf files report against them

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Chairmen of all the 11 union parishads (UP) under Birganj upazila of Dinajpur district yesterday started boycotting meetings of Upazila Parishad demanding removal of Birganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Hasan Maruf.

The 11 UP chairmen also held a press conference at Dinajpur Press Club where they brought charges of 'bribery and misbehaviour' against the UNO. However, no specific incident of bribery was mentioned.

Sources, on the other hand, said that the UP chairmen got angry as the UNO, following his recent visit to the union information centres (UIC), reported to Dinajpur deputy commissioner about the chairmen's failure to make the UICs functional.

At the press conference yesterday, Md Badiuzzaman, chairman of

Bhognagar UP, read out a written statement signed by 11 UP chairmen of the upazila.

"We earlier brought the allegation of bribery and misbehaviour to the notice of local lawmaker Monoranjan Shil Gopal and Dinajpur deputy commissioner. The lawmaker sought seven days for removing the UNO. The period is over but the commitment is yet to be met," goes the written statement.

Following a letter issued by Dinajpur deputy commissioner on January 23, UNO Hasan Maruf recently inspected the UICs in the upazila.

On November 7 last year, all the 11 UPs in Birganj except for Shibrapur received Tk 1 lakh each for setting up an information centre equipped with a computer, a GP internet modem, a printer, a webcam, a scanner, a digital camera, necessary books, and furniture including a white board and signboard.

But during the inspection, the UNO found that the information centres were under-equipped and hardly provided any services. They lacked skilled operators. Even there was no signboard at nine centres. One centre was without any computer, sources said.

As the UNO wrote to Dinajpur deputy commissioner, describing the actual situation of the centres, the UP chairmen got angry, the sources added.

Visiting Bhognagar UP at 11:30 on Thursday, this correspondent found the UIC shut.

Talking to locals, it was found that very few people know about the union information centres.

When contacted, UNO Hasan Maruf said, "ICT centre at union level was officially launched on November 11 last year, but the chairmen of Birganj upazila did not perform their duty to make the centres functional."

Nipah kills one in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Nipah virus killed a young man at Kushtia General Hospital yesterday morning, raising the death toll to 31 in the country.

Fulchand Ali, 30, of Shimulia village in Mirpur upazila of the district, was admitted to the hospital with high fever on Saturday afternoon.

He died at about 10:00am Sunday, Dr Taposh Kumar Pal, resident medical officer of the hospital, said.

Family sources said Fulchand was attacked with fever after he drank date juice on Friday. It is the first case of Nipah encephalitis in Kushtia.

At least 30 more people died from the disease in six other districts -- Rangpur, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, Gaibandha and Dinajpur -- since January 31.

BIRD FLU

Poultry culled in Gaibandha

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Around a thousand poultry of a private farm were culled following detection of Avian Influenza at village Enayetpur under Sadullapur upazila Saturday night.

Upazila livestock office sources said a few poultry of Moinul Hossain's farm died in the last 3-4 days. Suspecting outbreak of bird flu disease Sadullapur upazila livestock officer Dr Rahamat-un-Nabi collected samples of dead poultry birds and sent them to Gaibandha regional animal disease diagnosis centre and it tested positive.

On confirmation of bird flu attack, a special team led by district livestock officer Dr Md Jahannur Rahman rushed to the farm and culled nearly a thousand poultry birds.

Youth jailed for harassing college girl

UNB, Bogra

A mobile court here on Saturday morning sentenced a youth to one year imprisonment for sexually harassing a female college student.

The convict was identified as Selim Reza, 20, son of Abdul Latif at Rahimabad village in Shajahanpur upazila.

Police said Reza used to tease a female student of Government Azizul Haque College on her way to college.

Reza was caught red-handed by some students of the college at about 10:00am when the girl was entering college.

Later, a mobile court led by executive magistrate Abdul Malek handed down the verdict.



Sundarbans, the mangrove forest declared a world heritage site, needs more attention for its preservation and protection.

Sundarbans Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The Sundarban Academy and Khulna Press Club will jointly observe The Sundarbans Day in a befitting manner today in all coastal districts of Khulna and Barisal divisions.

The day will also be observed in the northern districts for the first time this year.

Decision to observe 14 February as The Sundarbans Day was taken at the national convention on Sundarbans held on 14 February 2001 in Khulna city.

Today's programmes include discussion meeting, cultural function, documentary film show on the Sundarbans, awarding

prizes for write-ups and photographs on the Sundarbans, children's painting and essay competition, a roadshow from Pirojpur to Satkhira for inspiring people to cast votes for Sundarbans and launching of countrywide campaign to seek votes for Sundarbans to become one of new seven wonders of nature in the final race on November 11 this year.

Main functions of The Sundarbans Day will be held at Khulna Press Club auditorium where KCC mayor Talukder Abdul Khaleque will remain present as chief guest.

Lawmaker from Khulna-2 constituency Nazrul Islam Manju, convenor of Sundarban Supporters'

Committee (SSC), Bangladesh and editor of Dainik Purbanchal Alhaj Liakat Ali, vice chancellor of Khulna University Professor Dr. Md. Saifuddin Shah, deputy commissioner of Khulna Jamsher Ahmad Khandaker, conservator of forests Md. Akbar Hossain, director of Khulna environment department Dr. Tarun Kanti Sikder and divisional forest officer Md. Jahiruddin Ahmed will attend the inaugural function as special guests.

The executive director of Sundarban Academy Professor Anwarul Kadir demanded allout efforts and active cooperation both at state and private level to gear up campaign at home and abroad to help Sundarbans

win the final race to become one of new seven wonders of nature.

He made this demand at a press conference yesterday morning at Khulna Press Club VIP lounge.

Votes are not only required from Bangladesh alone but also from all over the world to win the final race. So, intensified campaigns through holding of awareness programmes both at home and abroad are also a must for it, he said.

The press conference was attended, among others, by the executive director of Rupantar Swapan Guha, president of Khulna Press Club Sheikh Abu Hasan and general secretary of Khulna Press Club Mohammad Shaheb Ali.



A bailey bridge on Bogra-Gabtolli Road collapses due to heavy pressure of a cement-laden truck in Kholisagura area under Gabtoli upazila of Bogra district yesterday morning.

SIX MOULVIBAZAR BNP LEADERS Expulsion order withdrawn

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

The central BNP has withdrawn the expulsion order of six leaders of Moulvibazar district BNP.

They are former mayor of Srimongal municipality Md Ahad Miah, former mayor of Kamalganj municipality Hasin Afroz Chaudhury, district leaders Bakshi Misbahur Rahman, Abdul Mukit, Iqbal Pervaz Chaudhury and Ashik Musharraf.

The party high command expelled them on January 8 this year following their alleged involvement in anti-party activities.

Md Ahad Miah and Hasin Afroz Chudhury had contested for the mayor post against party backed mayoral candidates. The party-backed candidates won the elections.

"Expulsion order of six Moulvibazar BNP leaders have been withdrawn as party chairperson Khaleda Zia gave the directive," Moulvibazar district BNP President M Naser Rahman told reporters at a press conference at Moulvibazar Press Club on Saturday evening.

Copies of withdrawal letters issued by central joint secretary general of BNP Md Ruhul Kabir Rizvi were served to the report-

ers at the conference.

Naser Rahman, also son of former finance minister late M Saifur Rahman, blamed BNP central organising secretary M Ilyas Ali for 'conspiracy' against the six leaders of Moulvibazar BNP and other 'anti-party' activities.

Meanwhile, 46 leaders of Moulvibazar district BNP and front organisations including Moulvibazar district BNP General Secretary Begum Khaleda Rabhani, Moulvibazar Municipality Mayor Fayzul Karim Mayun, Kamalganj Municipality Mayor Abu Ibrahim Jamshed, Srimongal Municipality Mayor Md Mohsin Miah Modhu, Baralekha Municipality Mayor Fakrul Islam, Kulaura Municipality Mayor Kamal Uddin Ahmed Juned, and central executive committee member of BNP Hazi Mujibur Rahman in a statement yesterday protested the comment of district BNP president Naser Rahman against central BNP leaders Ruhul Kabir Rizvi and Ilyas Ali.

They termed Naser's comment against Rizvi and Ilyas as 'extreme violation' of party rules and discipline.

Int'l meet on solid waste management opens in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The three-day second international conference on 'Solid Waste Management in Developing Countries' began at Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (KUET) yesterday.

KCC Mayor Talukder Abdul Khaleque inaugurated the conference at Civil Engineering Building at 3:00pm with Kuet Vice-Chancellor Prof Muhammed Alamgir in the chair.

Prof Md Saifuddin Shah, vice chancellor of Khulna University (KU),

Prof E Kraft of Bauhaus University, Weimar, Germany, and Prof Raffaello Cossu of Padova University of Italy addressed the inaugural session.

Prof Alamgir presented a key-note paper on organic waste management in the developing countries.

Khulna City generates over 450 tonnes of solid waste everyday and 40 per cent of which go straight to drains and are dumped on roadside and in water bodies, polluting environment.

Only 250 to 270 tonnes of solid waste are collected everyday and dumped on landfills in Rajbandh area under Batiaghata upazila of Khulna district, said Md Anisur Rahman, conservancy officer of Khulna City Corporation.

KCC has 10 trucks and 26 demountable container trucks to carry garbage. Besides, it has 260 rickshaw vans to collect wastes from houses. Some non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are also engaged to remove garbage.

The city corporation needs more logistic supports to improve the situation, said panel mayor-IAjmal Ahmed Tapon.

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS



A young girl, adorned with yellow sari and garlands, buys flowers in Thakurgaon town yesterday to celebrate Pahela Falgun, the first day of spring of Bangla calendar year.

Jatka seized, two held

UNB, Laxmipur

At least 3,600 kgs of jatka (hilsha fry) were seized and two people arrested at Meghna Ghat in Sadar upazila yesterday morning. Acting on a tip-off, a police team raided the spot at Moju Chowdhury market and recovered the jatka from three trucks. Police arrested truck drivers Mohammad Kamruzzaman and Shahjahan while another managed to flee.

One held with venison

UNB, Khulna

Police on Friday seized 10 kgs of venison and arrested a man in this connection at Chunkuri Kheyaghat in Dakope upazila. Police said, acting on secret information, a team led by SI Abdul Aziz conducted a drive in the area and arrested Mamun Sheikh, 28, along with the venison and a deer horn at 1:00pm. His accomplice Asabur Sheikh managed to flee.

OMS rice recovered

UNB, Sylhet

At least 300 sacks of OMS rice and 175 empty sacks were recovered from a godown of a market in Golapganj upazila early Saturday. On secret information, Rab members conducted a drive in the godown of Surma Complex at Uttar Bazar and recovered the OMS rice and sacks. None was arrested in this connection.

Fake major arrested

UNB, Faridpur

A fake major was arrested from near General Hospital here yesterday. The arrestee was identified as Mohammad Monir Hossain Molla, 37, of Khuduria village in Nagarkanda upazila. On secret information, Rab members raided the area and held Monir at noon. A fake picture with army uniform of captain rank, one motorbike, one gold chain, two rings and four mobile phone sets were also recovered from his possession.



Artistes of Tolpar Kristi Sangsad and Shilpa-o-Sahitya Sangsad staged street dramas at Kobi Mozzamel Town Hall in Bhola district headquarters and in Saidpur town of Nilphamari district yesterday and on Friday. The Daily Star and Pathanatok Parishad jointly organised the programmes marking the 40th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence and the 20th anniversary of the newspaper.

PHOTO: STAR