



PHOTO: STAR

Authorities of Chittagong port remove illegal structures made by the city corporation on the char (newly emerged landmass) at Firingibazar on the Karnaphuli River yesterday.

FRESH NETRAKONA BNP COMMITTEE

Rivals lock office, burn new leader's effigy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Internal feud in Netrakona district BNP surfaced anew after formation of a full-fledged committee of the unit on Tuesday.

The district unit split into two factions after party Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain made advocate Nuruzzaman Nuru and Abu Taher Talukder, president and general secretary of the unit, on June 27 last year.

One faction is led by former lawmaker Ashrafuddin Khan and the other by advocate Nuruzzaman Nuru. Ashraf-led group also took out a procession in the town soon

after announcement of the names of Nuruzzaman and Abu Taher by the party secretary general.

On Tuesday, Nuruzzaman and Abu Taher formed a full-fledged district unit and submitted the names of the office-bearers to BNP central committee for approval. Hearing the news, local leaders and activists belonging to Ashraf group brought out a procession in the town, locked the district BNP office and burnt the effigy of Nuruzzaman.

Former general secretary of district BNP advocate Mahfuzul Haque, president of Netrakona Sadar upazila BNP Mujibur Rahaman, president of BNP Netrakona

municipality unit Kamal Ahmad, former senior vice president of the district unit Abdul Mannan Talukder are siding with Ashrafuddin.

Nuruzzaman is backed by incumbent general secretary of district BNP Abu Taher Talukder, former assistant secretary of the unit Imran Khan Chowdhury and district BNP leader Salauddin Khan Milky.

When contacted, Nuruzzaman said some Jatiya Party men, who recently joined the BNP, locked the district office.

Ashrafuddin said Nuruzzaman and Abu Taher are not capable of leading Netrakona BNP.

99 mutineers in Satkhira jailed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Ninety-nine jawans of 41 Battalion of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) were yesterday sentenced to different jail terms ranging from four months to seven years for their involvement in the 2009 mutiny in Satkhira.

The Special Court-1 headed by Rajshahi BGB Sector Commander Lt Col Yahiya Azam Khan also fined each of the convicts Tk 100.

The court, however, acquitted six other accused in the case as allegations brought against them were not proved.

Thirteen of the convicts were jailed for seven years, two for five years, seven for four years, two for three years and six months, five for three

years, four for two years and six months, 12 for two years, four for one year and six months, 18 for one year, 16 for six months, 14 for four months, and one was jailed for four years and six months while another for six years.

The court started delivering the verdict at about 10:00am, which continued for one and a half hours.

The convicts were charged with looting firearms and ammunition from the armoury, bringing out a procession, chanting slogans in favour of the mutineers of BGB headquarters.

As many as 47 prosecution witnesses gave their statements before the court.

Of the accused, 25 confessed to their involvement in the mutiny and begged for mercy while the remaining 80 claimed themselves innocent.

Sonia narrates the horrific tale of torture to court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A Rajshahi court on Tuesday recorded statement of housemaid Sonia who was tortured allegedly by her employer at a house at Rajshahi Cantonment last month.

Sonia, 9, daughter of Nobab Ali of Paschim Vatapara village under Godagari upazila, is still undergoing treatment at One Stop Crisis Center at Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital (RMCH).

Sub-Inspector Imaul Haque of Boalia Police Station, also the investigating officer (IO) of the case, took her to the fourth Metropolitan Magistrate's Court where she narrated the horrific torture inflicted on her by her employer Koli, wife of an army officer.

Sonia stated that she was

frequently tortured over minor faults, forced to overwork and fed once in two days since she had been employed at one Koli's house for Tk 500 per month in late November.

"Koli used to tear apart hair from my head and

Follow-up

recently she forced me to shave off my head to remove the signs of the torn hair," she told the court.

Sonia said Koli hit her with iron rod, spoon, shoes and bread making roller on February 12 as she used a blanket meant for the use of her employer.

She further said that she was kept confined to a bathroom for three days and given food there.

Magistrate Mamunur Rashid recorded the statement.

On the night of February

15, Sonia was handed over to her parents. She was under the treatment of a village doctor and then admitted to Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital.

Police could not arrest the accused, Koli, wife of Maj Ashfaqur Rahman, till filing of this report yesterday.

Sonia's father Nobab Ali, also plaintiff of the case, told reporters that Koli is now staying at her relative's house outside Rajshahi.

Nobab is under pressure to settle the matter out of the court as the accused is still at large, said Dil Sitara Begum, president of Rajshahi chapter of Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association.

Contacted, Rajshahi Metropolitan Police Commissioner M Obaidullah said law enforcers are looking for the accused.

ABDUCTION, BLACKMAIL

3 remanded in Thakurgaon

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Three youths, arrested on Tuesday on charge of abducting a schoolteacher and his friend on February 23, were placed on remand yesterday.

The arrestees are Md Khalid Siraj alias Rocky, 24, son of Md Siraj Uddin of Asrampara, Md Azad, 30, son of Abul Kashem of Munshipara, and Jaban Ali, 45, son of late Abdul Kader of Gowalpara under Thakurgaon municipality.

Police produced them in the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court, seeking a five-day remand. Judicial Magistrate Masud Pervez granted one day remand.

Police said the gang picked up Ibrahim Khalil, 42, a teacher of Thakurgaon Government Boys' High

School, and his friend Yakub Ali, 40, from in front of Munshipara graveyard and took them to a house at DC Bosti in Thakurgaon municipality.

The abductors forced them to pose nude with a girl and snapped it by a cellphone camera. They also took signatures of the victims on non-judicial stamps and freed them at midnight.

The gang phoned the schoolteacher and his friend several times demanding Tk 80,000. Otherwise, they threatened to circulate the nude picture.

On a complaint filed by Ibrahim Khalil with Thakurgaon police station, law enforcers arrested the youths in the municipality area, tracking call lists on cellphones.

SERAFINA MARDI TRAGEDY

Legal experts suggest fresh suicide provocation case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A fresh suicide provocation case can be filed against nine alleged rapists of indigenous girl Serafina Mardi as the case filed by police in Godagari upazila of Rajshahi district did not include their names as accused, legal experts observe.

The to be accused should be included in the case already filed by police against the priest of Surshunipara Catholic Church and 12 other indigenous community leaders for instigating Serafina's suicide through deciding to solemnise her marriage with one of the rapists in an out-of-court settlement, they said.

"Serafina's mother Sushana Soren is preparing to lodge a fresh case for provoking suicide as per advice of the legal experts," said Dil Sitara Begum Chuni, president of Rajshahi divisional unit of Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association that is providing legal support to the victim's family.

Although national media referring to the victim's family members reported that the rapists and their family members had also

roles in provoking her to self-immolation, it was not mentioned in the police case.

Neither the rapists nor their fathers, who were also present at the out-of-court settlement held at Surshunipara Catholic Church, were included in the list of the accused.

Follow-up



Earlier all the nine accused in the case for gang rape of Serafina were acquitted from the court following 'misleading' statement of her father made allegedly under pressure from community leaders.

"Serafina's suicide followed the nine alleged rapists' acquittal from the court and her family members have alleged that the criminals' behaviour provoked

her to commit suicide. Now, relieving them from the accusation of provoking suicide would be tantamount to saving them," Hamidul Haque, a senior lawyer of Rajshahi court, said after analysing all of Serafina's case documents.

Nina Goswami, senior deputy director (Legal Aid) of Ain O Shalish Kendra, also gave similar opinion.

Serafina's sister Sabina Mardi, who along with her father Cornelius Mardi has been shifted to Rajshahi city for security, said, "Since their acquittal, the rapists used to roam around our house and often teased Serafina. The rapists and their family members often told her that she should die."

Failing to cope with the humiliation, Serafina set herself on fire after pouring kerosene at her Amtulipara village home on February 17 and she succumbed to her injuries on February 20.

After she died, sub-inspector Ataur Rahman of Godagari police station filed the suicide provocation case against 13 people and ten of the accused including Father Bernard Tudu, the Catholic priest, were arrested.

29 ROs appointed for Khulna UP election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna District Election Office has appointed 29 returning officers (RO) to conduct elections to 68 union Parishads in the district.

District Election Officer Bibhor Kumar Biswas said necessary steps will be taken for peaceful polling in 656 centres of 68 unions.

Thirty unions in four upazilas will go to polls on March 29 while 38 unions under five upazilas on April 2.

Chairmen of nine upazila parishads put forward seven proposals to the meeting of the District Development Coordination Committee on February 25 to ensure free, fair and peaceful UP elections.

These are immediate arrest of all fugitive outlaws, recovery of hidden arms and ammunition, construction of all embankments damaged by cyclones Sidr and Aila, appointment of neutral officers to conduct free and fair elections, cancellation of nomination papers of the candidates having links with underground parties and drive by security

forces to arrest the listed criminals who are still at large.

We strongly demanded combing operation to arrest outlaws and recover hidden arms in addition to strict surveillance by intelligence agencies to ensure security of the candidates, said Phultala upazila Chairman Sardar Alauddin Mithu who survived an attempt on his life by outlaws in Khulna city last year.

Koira Upazila Parishad Chairman GM Mohsin Reza, Rupsha upazila Parishad Chairman Sheikh Ali Akbar, Terokheda Upazila Parishad Chairman Sharfuddin Biswas Bachchu, Paikgacha Upazila Parishad Chairman Md Rashiduzzaman Morol, Digholia Upazila Parishad Chairman Mallick Mohiuddin, Dumuria Upazila Parishad Chairman Gazi Abdul Hadi, Batiaghata Upazila Parishad Chairman Md Ashraf Alam Khan, Dakope Upazila Parishad Chairman Sheikh Abdul Hossain and Phultala Upazila Parishad Chairman Sardar Alauddin Mithu were present in the meeting.



PHOTO: STAR

Farmers join a human chain organised by NGO Satsanga Palli Kalyan Sangstha in front of Pabna Town Hall on Tuesday demanding steps for ensuring fair price of sugarcane to encourage farming of the cash crop. They also demanded transfer of sugarcane dealing to the Ministry of Agriculture from the Ministry of Industries.

VACANCY NOTICE



United Nations Development Programme in Bangladesh announces a vacancy for the position of Programme Assistant (SB-2) with "Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP) - II" project.

The duration of the Service Contract is one year initially, subject to renewal on an annual basis upon satisfactory performance and availability of funds.

For details of the Job Description and instructions to apply for the above position, please visit our website: <http://www.undp.org.bd/jobs>. Applications should be received no later than on Thursday, 17 March 2011.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. Female candidates are encouraged to apply.

Bird flu affected poultry culled

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Hundreds of poultry were culled and eggs damaged in Joypurhat and Chapainawabganj districts following detection of bird flu on Tuesday and the day before.

At least 9,065 poultry were culled and 10,235 eggs damaged on Tuesday due to avian influenza (H1N5) in Khetlal upazila of Joypurhat district, reports our Dinajpur

correspondent. Anil Kumar Paul, district livestock officer of Joypurhat confirmed fresh outbreak of bird flu in the district as scores of fowls died at Mollah Poultry at Bhasila Chowmuhani village in the last few days.

After the Joypurhat Regional Livestock Research Institute confirmed detection of the virus, the owner of the poul-

try culled the birds. Owner Md. Mokhlesur Rahman Mollah said that the deadly disease caused him a loss of Tk 40 lakh.

In Chapainawabganj, 148 chickens and 14 pigeons were culled on Monday night after detection of avian influenza virus at a poultry farm at Chamagram village under Sadar upazila, reports our correspondent.

Ismail Hossain, Sadar

upazila livestock officer said, 148 chickens, 14 pigeons and 44 eggs were buried in presence of police and executive magistrate Shahadat Hossain Kabir. He said, after the death of 59 chickens, his office collected the samples on February 27 and sent it to Joypurhat research centre for test.

After the test, it was confirmed that those were affected by bird flu.