

Rival lawyers in Bogra clash

4 hurt, Bar office ransacked

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

At least four people, including the general secretary of Bogra Bar Association, were injured in a clash between the pro-Awami League and BNP backed lawyers yesterday.

Witness said the trouble began following an altercation between Rezaul Karim Montu, vice-president of AL district unit, and Ataur Rahman, general secretary of the Bar association, over inauguration of a post office on the association's office premises.

Bar association sources said Montu became angry and scolded Ataur as he was not invited to the opening programme of the post office on Monday.

Hearing the news, pro-BNP and AL lawyers attacked each other and ransacked the offices of the president and general secretary of the Bar association.

Ataur alleged that Montu's men swooped on him and his supporters and ransacked the Bar association office.

Montu denied the allegations, saying that pro-BNP layers attacked his supporters and ransacked the offices of the Bar association's president and secretary.

Meanwhile, advocate Naresh Mukherjee, general secretary of district Awami Ainjibi Samity, filed a case with Bogra Sadar police Station, accusing 50 people, including advocate Ataur Rahman, advocate Nazmul Huda and advocate Saiful Islam, of vandalising the Bar association office and snatching Tk 30,000 and a wrist-watch from pro-AL lawyers.

Bogra Bar Association has announced that lawyers will boycott courts today protesting the incident. Awami Ainjibi Samity will also stage a protest rally in the town today.



PHOTO: STAR

A section of brick kiln owners continue burning bricks with firewood and using chimney with less than minimum permissible height defying government rules. The photo was taken from Batchhari in Khagrachhari Sadar upazila.

Brick kilns burn firewood, destroying CHT forest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

A number of brick kilns in the hill district are burning huge quantity of firewood a day destroying the natural forest.

They have also set up 25-foot tin chimneys in place of 120-foot ones, defying government rules.

The situation has become a serious threat to environment and biodiversity while the people in the neighbouring areas face health hazards.

During a visit to Three Star Brick Field set up at Batchhari village under Sadar upazila, this correspondent found that tim-

bers are also being used indiscriminately in the brickfield instead of coal.

Moreover, it has set up 25-foot tin chimneys defying the rule for mandatory 120-foot permanent chimneys. Smoke was billowing out of the chimneys polluting the environment of the area.

Talking to this correspondent, Gopal Das, a worker of the brickfield said, at least 10 thousand maunds of firewood are required to complete one round of brick burning. Most brickfields burn bricks eight times a year, he said adding, all using firewood from natural and reserve forests as there is no other major source to

meet the demand.

According to this estimate, at least 80 thousand maunds of firewood are required at each brickfield a year.

Contacted, owner of the brickfield Suvha Mongal Chakma said, if they use oil, the production cost would shoot up in this remote area.

He, however, he avoided the question regarding use of short tin chimneys.

Villagers living near the brickfields, especially children and elderly people, are often affected with various diseases including bronchitis and asthma due to environmental pollution.

Fertility of farm land

around the brickfield where we cultivate crops and vegetables are also going down, alleged Tripura Chakma, a villager.

Convener of Khagrachhari Poribesh Rakha Andolan, Prodip Chowdhury said, at least 25 to 30 brick kilns are continuing this ill practice as the environmental laws are hardly applied in the district.

Zahurul Alam, divisional forest officer (DFO), Khagrachhari said, they decided to set up a mobile court to conduct drives at brickfields soon during a meeting with Khagrachhari deputy collector (DC).

10 hurt as AL men clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole, Jessore

At least 10 people were injured in a fierce clash between two factions of

Awami League over snatching of a mobile phone set at Chhoto Achra village yesterday.

Officer-in-charge Shamim Musa of Port Police station said the incident occurred yesterday morning when 4-5 youths of Chhoto Achra village were listening songs on mobile phone set. All of a sudden some youths of Bhaberber village

appeared there and snatched the mobile from them.

As a sequel to the incident, two groups of Awami League activists of Bhaberber and Chhoto Achra villages equipped with lethal weapons swooped on each other, leaving at least 10 people from both sides injured.

During the clash, a number of houses and shops were looted and vandalised.

On information, police rushed to the spot and seized two bombs, three machetes and hockey sticks from the clashing groups.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Diploma Health Technologists Association forms a human chain in front of Sirajganj Press Club yesterday demanding punishment to the criminals who killed Dr Abdul Baki Mirza, acting resident medical officer of Sirajganj General Hospital, on Saturday.

SUNDARBANS FIRE INCIDENTS

Probe blames fishermen for senseless activities

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

Investigators have categorically accused a group of fishermen of destructive activities by lighting fires around Nangli camp under Chandpai Range of the Sundarbans on March 1, 8 and 9.

A group of fishermen lit the three recent fires at the place under East Wing of the Sundarbans Forest Division (SFD) to clear the area for fishing during the rainy season, said the probe committee report submitted to DFO (East) Mihir Kumar Dey on March 27.

Meanwhile, the authorities of Sundarbans Forest Division has declared Nangli camp area under Chandpai Range of SFD as 'No fishing zone' until further orders as suggested by the probe committee headed by the Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) Md Khalilur Rahman.

mittees, both headed by ACF Md Khalilur Rahman, were formed on March 2 and 10 to investigate the March 1, 8 and 9 fire incidents that caused extensive damage to different species of trees including sundari, goran, gewa, bayeen and shingra grown on about three acres of land.

The probe committees that submitted reports on findings on the basis of recorded statements of the people of other professions living in villages adjacent to Nangli forest camp suggested prompt action to stop recurrence of such subversive fire incidents, DFO Mihir Kumar told this correspondent.

It could not be expected to identify the fishermen who were involved in the three separate fire incidents as the alleged fishermen are among a large number of people who enter the forest every now

and then for fishing purpose, the DFO said.

"But we will strictly enforce our decision of declaring the Nangli camp area as 'No-fishing zone' and will not spare anyone from facing legal action in case of violation," he asserted.

A total of 16 fire incidents occurred in Sharankhola and Chandpai ranges under East Wing of Sundarbans Forest Division from 2002 to March 9 this year, causing serious damage to forest resources and creating adverse situation for different species of animals in areas of the world's largest mangrove forest, said sources of the forest division.

The reports of probe committee have suggested creating awareness among the people to stop such frequent fires and setting up of a well equipped fire station in the forest with experienced men.

Trial of cases hampered for lack of judges

14 out of 19 posts vacant for long in Thakurgaon

UNB, Thakurgaon

Trial of cases is being hampered seriously in judge court and judicial court as 14 posts of judges have been lying vacant for long in the district.

Court sources said, only five judges are performing the trial activities at the judge and the judicial courts.

Thakurgaon Judge Court administrative officer Rafiqul Islam Beg told this news agency recently that a lone district and sessions judge is doing the job as there is no additional judges.

Court sources said posts of two judges at the joint

district judge's court have been lying vacant for a long time while two posts of assistant judge are vacant out of four posts.

Posts of the Chief Judicial Magistrate and the Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate are also lying vacant for a long time.

A senior judicial magistrate is performing the trial activities while two posts of the judicial magistrate are lying vacant. Four posts of judicial magistrate out of five are also vacant.

As a result, judicial and administrative activities of the district courts are being seriously hampered, increasing the number of pending cases and causing

immense sufferings to the litigants.

Over 4,000 different types of cases have been lying pending with the judge court while about 600 sessions cases including murder, special case, drug have been lying pending with district and sessions judge court, sources said.

Carrying out hearings of the civil and criminal revision and appeal cases in the district and sessions judge's court has now become really difficult, said a number of lawyers.

Thakurgaon Ainjibi Samity president Abdur Razzaq said they informed law minister about the situation but to no effect.



PHOTO: STAR

Fish wholesalers of Mohishluti in Tarash upazila of Sirajganj district block road yesterday protesting charging of 'exorbitant' toll at the warehouse.

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS

Boy drowns in Natore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

A one and a half years old boy drowned in a ditch at Korota village in Sadar upazila yesterday morning. The deceased was identified as Jibon Hossain, son of Faijul Islam of the village. Police quoting local sources said Jibon fell in a roadside ditch near his house and drowned while playing at around 8:00 am. Local people rescued and rushed him to a local hospital where the on-duty doctor declared him dead.

Housewife murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gopalganj

A housewife was murdered at Moulavi Para in Gopalganj town on Monday evening. Victim Parvin Rekha, 40, was wife of retired armyman Akbar Ali Mollah and mother of a son and a daughter. Akbar Ali went to the mosque for Esha prayers after completing ablutions together. When he returned from mosque at about 8:20pm, he found her wife groaning outside the house, said Borhan Uddin, officer-in-charge (OC) of Gopalganj Sadar police station. The on-duty doctor declared Parvin dead after she was rushed to the Gopalganj Sadar General Hospital.

Jamaat leader arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkhira

Police arrested a local Jamaat leader from his house at Jahanabad village in Sadar upazila yesterday. Arrestee Dhulihar union Jamaat-e-Islami ameer Manirul Islam Bilali, 45, is son of Jeher Ali Sardar of Jahanabad village. Police said Bilali is an accused in a sedition case filed with Sadar police station against him and others on July 15 last year. He went into hiding soon after filing of the case.



PHOTO: COURTESY

PAHELA BAISHAKH CELEBRATION IN A DIFFERENT WAY: Environmentalist Sitesh Ranjan Dev along with Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr Atiur Rahman and others released a few animals at Lawachhara Reserve Forest in Moulvibazar district on the first day of Bangla New Year.

Youth jailed for stalking

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Madaripur

A stalker was sentenced to one year rigorous imprisonment (RI) by a mobile court in Sadar upazila on Monday night. Monir Hossain Morol, 25, son of Badsha Morol of Laxmipur village under the same upazila, was earlier arrested for sexually harassing a madrasa student. The mobile court led by executive magistrate Faruque Ahmed handed down the punishment to Monir while his two friends, Russel and Shishir, were also sentenced to 15 days jail each on the previous day.

3-wheeler driver killed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver was stabbed to death by muggers at Trimohini Bazaar near Chatarpya under Senbag upazila in the district on Monday night. The victim was identified as Yakub Hossain, 38, of Morkot village under Nangolkot upazila in Comilla district. Police quoting witnesses said a group of six muggers requested driver Yakub Hossain to go to Chatarpya from Trimohini Bazaar at around 11:00pm. On his refusal, the muggers started stabbing him indiscriminately. When Yakub Hossain cried out for help, locals chased the muggers and caught two of them. After a good beating, they handed them over to Senbag police. Yakub Hossain died on the spot.

Two fugitives held

UNB, Sylhet

Police, in separate drives on Sunday, arrested two fugitives from separate places in the district. The arrestees were identified as Belal, son of Akmol Hossain of Kalakuna village in Golapganj upazila and Shahinuzzaman, of Dharadharpur village in Dakkhin Surma upazila. Sylhet Kotwali police arrested Belal at 10:00 pm from near a mosque at Uposahor of the city. He was wanted in five cases including those of arms and hijacking. Shahinuzzaman was arrested at 11:00 pm at Galimpur in Dakkhin Surma upazila. He was wanted in various cases including those of hijacking, carjacking and robbery.

Schoolteachers mugged

UNB, Habiganj

Muggers snatched away cash and gold ornaments from three schoolteachers at Loskarpur village in Sadar upazila on Monday. Police said a gang of muggers intercepted headmistress Tahmina Yasmin and two assistant teachers Momota and Purubi of Oddopasha Government Primary School on their way to school at around 8:45 am. They took away cash, gold ornaments and mobile phone sets from the teachers at knifepoint and fled the scene.

Fake soft drinks factory

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

BGB members yesterday unearthed a fake soft drinks factory and arrested two people in this connection at Nasir Market at Benapole. The arrestees were identified as Parvez Hossain, 20, son of Jalal uddin and Rajib Hossain, 20, son of Reajul Islam. Benapole BGB 22-Battalion camp commander Afzal Hossain said, acting on a tip-off, a team raided the shop of Nasir Uddin and seized 4080 bottles of adulterated soft drinks, some machineries used to prepare those drinks and arrested two people from the spot.