

Students vow to protect Mahasthangarh heritage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Students of local schools and colleges yesterday launched a civic engagement to protect the archaeological heritage of Mahasthangarh in the district.

Some 180 student volunteers from 10 schools and colleges will visit the localities to get information about the people engaged in destroying the archaeological heritage and damaging artefacts.

They will communicate the information to the authorities concerned for taking necessary steps.

"The team will primarily work for three months under a pilot project," said Dr Enamul Haque, former director general of Bangladesh National Museum, at a seminar where the vol-

unteer group was introduced.

Sangskritik Shampad Songrokkhoner Nagorik Udyog (SSSNU) initiated the move.

Enamul Haque, also chief convenor of the SSSNU, administered an oath to the volunteers yesterday morning at Mahasthan College auditorium.

Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, former vice-chancellor of Jahangirnagar University (JU), was present as the chief guest. Prof Mozammel Haque, a JU teacher of archaeology, and advocate Mahbubor Rahman, mayor of Bogra municipality, also attended the programme.

In the morning, people from different sectors of society held a rally in Mahasthangarh heritage area.

The district administration and Mahasthan Mazar Unnayan Committee on December 3 last year started constructing multi-storey buildings removing ancient structures at Mahasthangarh archaeological site.

On January 23, following a writ petition filed by a rights organisation, a High Court bench ordered the local administration to stop the construction work.

The same bench on February 10 issued a suo moto rule asking the Bogra superintendent of police to deploy police to ensure security and protection of the site.

The Department of Archaeology has recently made an allegation to the local administration that some influential people are still trying to build structures at the site defying the HC order.



College and school students pledge to protect the archaeological heritage of Mahasthangarh in Shibganj upazila of Bogra district yesterday. Some 180 students of 10 educational institutions of Shibganj and Bogra Sadar upazilas took the oath.

PHOTO: STAR

Rice price fall disappoints Dinajpur Boro growers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Bumper Boro production has failed to bring smile to the farmers in the district due to sharp fall in prices of rice on wholesale and retail markets.

Retailers said BRRI-28 variety of rice is being sold at Tk 35 per kg while the price was Tk 44 just a week ago. Price of miniket has come down to Tk 43 per kg from Tk 55.

Small and medium farmers said they are being compelled to sell their produce at lower price to repay the loan they took with a high interest rate for Boro cultivation.

According to the district officials of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE),

10,54,533 tonnes of paddy (5.88 tonnes per hectare) have been produced this season on 79,450 hectares of land.

Md Azizul Islam, a farmer of Kornai village under Dinapur Sadar upazila, said the price fall in retail markets is heavily impacting the prices in wholesale paddy markets of the district from the vary outset of Boro harvest.

"We are not making any profit. We are just getting our production cost back", Azizul Islam added.

Monjurul Alam, another farmer of Farkabad village under Biral upazila, said bumper Boro production is not bringing smile on farmers because the price of paddy is going down everyday.

According to the farmers, they had spent about Tk 30,000 for Boro cultivation on per acre of land.

"In the local markets, we are selling a sack of paddy containing 80kg at Tk 1,050. After final calculation, it stands that we are making profiting only Tk

1,200 from per acre of land" said Zillur Rahman of Kornai village under Dinapur Sadar upazila.

During visit to local markets, this correspondent noticed that middlemen are controlling the wholesale paddy and rice markets.

Farmers are selling paddy at Tk 13,200 per tonne while millers purchasing the same amount of paddy from middlemen at Tk 16,000.

We are not getting due price of Boro paddy as the government is yet to start procurement drive. They (farmers) urged the government to start procurement of paddy as soon as possible.

Md Abdul Kader, additional district food controller, said they are yet to receive any directive from the government regarding the procurement drive.



PHOTO: STAR

Profusely yielding branches of a litchi tree get bent with nearly ripe fruits at an orchard of Masimpur village in Sadar upazila under Dinajpur, a district famous for tasty varieties of the summer delicacy. Horticulturists are expecting a good yield during this 'on-year' of the popular fruit.

BNP in Sylhet division rife with internal feud

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Internal feud of BNP in all the four districts under Sylhet division has taken a new turn centring the main opposition party's agitation programme in line with the central instructions.

As the central BNP recently announced the new district committees without resolving the long-standing disputes between two factions -- one followers of former lawmaker Naser Rahman, and the other loyal to Sylhet district BNP President M Ilyas Ali, the internal feud surfaced again, party insiders said.

Amid commotion among the party's rank and file in the four districts, a good number of party men resigned to protest the

'wrong selection' of persons in the committees.

Termining the newly announced Habiganj district body as a 'pocket committee' of former state minister Syed Mohammad Faisal, 35 leaders resigned last week. They demanded immediate scrapping of the committee that allegedly includes some dead people.

In an instant reaction, the central committee asked the 35 people to withdraw their resignation to avert facing stern measure including expulsion from the party.

In Sunamganj, the district administration clamped Section 144 in the town after the rival BNP factions had thrown 'conflicting' agitation programmes on Monday.

The rival factions held rallies outside the

municipality area as the police prevented them from entering the town on Monday afternoon. Clashes between the rival factions left 10 people injured in last week.

Sylhet district and city BNP committees, announced about a month ago, also have been suffering much due to serious internal feuds between two factions. Several agitation programmes announced by the central committee could not be observed in the district due to the clashes.

In Moulvibazar, two rival factions held separate programmes on Monday, giving 'conflicting' messages to the party men, said several activists.

Followers of Khaleda Rabbani, Women Affairs

Secretary of central BNP, also a former lawmaker, held a rally at Poura Chatter in Moulvibazar and brought out a procession in the town on Monday.

Khaleda Rabbani, Moulvibazar municipality Mayor Foyzul Karim Moyun and Barlekha municipality Mayor Fokhrul Islam addressed the rally, among others.

Former lawmaker Naser Rahman, also son of former finance minister BNP stalwart late M Saifur Rahman, chaired the rally in Bus Stand area of Moulvibazar town. Central BNP leaders Ruhul Amin and Harun Ur Rashid and others addressed.

Police was deployed in the district town to avert possible clashes between the factions.

Lightning kills 9 in 6 districts

STAR NATIONAL DESK

At least nine people including a man and his daughter were killed by lightning in six districts yesterday and the day before.

A man and his daughter were killed by lightning at Bogrchar village in Bakshiganj upazila of Jamalpur yesterday morning.

The deceased were identified as Hashmat Ali, 60, and Fuleza Khatun, 16, of the village, reports a correspondent.

Police and local people said Hashmat and his daughter died on the spot and Hashmat's daughter-in-law Dulena Begum sustained critical injuries when a thunderbolt hit their thatched house at around 8:00am.

Dulena was admitted to the upazila health complex. In Sathkira, two people were killed and another one was injured by lightning, reports our correspondent.

The deceased were identified as Sudha Rani Sana, 35, wife of Satya Ranjan Sana of Godaipur village in Assasuni upazila and Prabir Kumar Mondal, 35, son of Nani Gopal Mondal of Rajapur village.

Injured Dev Kumar Mondal, 34, son of Kanak Mondal of Rajapur village was admitted to Sathkira Sadar Hospital.

Quoting local people police said, the woman was going to a grocery shop at Godaipur. When she reached near the shop, a thunder bolt struck her leaving her dead on the spot at about 8:30 pm.

In the other incident, Prabir Kumar Mondal and Dev Kumar Mondal were struck by lightning while sleeping in a makeshift house at a cropland at Rajapur village.

Prabir died on the spot while Dev Kumar was seriously injured at about 11:30 pm.

In Sherpur and Joypurhat districts, a housewife, a girl and a farmer were killed while a housewife was injured in separate incidents of lightning yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Mina Begum, 30,

wife of Wahed Ali of Dakkhin Para village of Sribordi upazila, Hashi Begum, 12, daughter of Lal Mia of Gopalkhila village of Sherpur and Nur Mohammad, son of Abu Bakkar of Uttar Maheshpur village of Khetlal upazila of Joypurhat, reports UNB.

The injured was Najera Begum, 35, wife of Rashed Ali of Panchgaon village of Nashita Bari upazila of Sherpur.

In Sherpur, lightning struck Mina Begum, killing her instantly when she was bringing her cattle home during nor'wester at 8:00 am.

Hashi Begum was knocked down by another thunderbolt when she was playing near their home in the morning. She was rushed to Sadar Hospital where the on-duty doctor declared her dead at 10:00am.

In a separate incident, Najera Begum was injured by lightning in the compound of their house when she was returning to her room from kitchen. She was rushed to Sadar Hospital.

In Joypurhat, farmer Nur Mohammad was hit and instantly killed by thunderbolt when he was working at a paddy field at his village in the afternoon.

Lightning in Rajshahi killed another farmer yesterday. Sohrab Ali, 35, of Pachondor union was killed by lightning in Tanore upazila, reports our staff correspondent.

He was struck by lightning when he went out to bring home the stacks of straw from the field, locals said.

Sohrab's wife Sabijan Bibi, 28, also fainted during the lightning.

In Kishoreganj, a fisherman was killed by lightning yesterday afternoon.

The deceased was identified as Abul Kalam, 45, son of late Torab Ali of Sarwarkandi village in Kishoreganj Sadar upazila, reports our correspondent.

Locals said, Abul Kalam was struck by lightning as he went for fishing at Rouha water body in his village.

2 'robbers' killed in mob beating

UNB, Noakhali

Two alleged robbers were killed in mob beating at Thanarhat in Companiganj upazila Friday night.

One of the deceased was identified as Jasimuddin, 38, second-in-command of pirate Tipu's gang. The identity of the other could not be known immediately.

Police and local people said a gang of robbers numbering 7/8 were going to Basurhat area by a hired microbus at around 8pm to commit a robbery.

When they reached Thanarhat area, local people challenged them and halted the microbus and gave them a good beating, leaving both of them dead on the spot.

Police detained driver of the microbus Iliyas and helper Rabbi for interrogation.

The bodies were sent to Noakhali Medical Collage Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police said Jasim was wanted in several robbery and other criminal cases.

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS



PHOTO: STAR

Locals bring out a procession at Shahjadpur in Sirajganj district yesterday demanding setting up of a full-fledged university at the place cherishing the memory of Nobel laureate poet Rabindranath Tagore.

Outlaw held in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Police arrested a top cadre of outlawed Gono Bahini and recovered a firearm from his possession early yesterday. The outlaw was identified as Kayem Ali, 25, son of Choyen Ali of Jhutiadanga village in Mirpur upazila in the district. According to police, a team from Mirpur police station raided Kayem's house at about 2.30am and arrested him. Following Kayem's confession, they recovered a LG by digging earth at a location behind Notunpara High School in the area. Police said, Kayem is accused in six cases, including two for murder, filed with Mirpur police station.

Businessmen protest killing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Hundreds of businessmen yesterday paraded streets demanding proper investigation into the murder of businessman Aminul Haque and speedy trial of the killers. Under the banner of Rajshahi Babosayi Oikya Parishad they also held a rally in front of RDA market with parishad convenor Farid Mamud Hasan in the chair. They said they suspect that beside the two arrestees there might be some others involved with the murder. Aminul was killed after abduction on April 10 and his body was sliced into nine pieces despite payment of Tk 20 lakh ransom by family. Police arrested Sarwar Hossain, a businessman and his aide Abdul Hakim after recovering Aminul's body from their house in Alupatty area.



PHOTO: STAR

A colourful procession was brought out in Munshiganj town prior to the opening of a six-day cultural programme on Friday.

Kid's death sparks protest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Death of an 8-year-old boy under a speedy mini-truck at Kalitola bazaar in Gobindaganj upazila triggered protest in the area. Police said Shipon, son of Mofazzal Hossain of village Naldanga was crossing Bogra-Rangpur highway. Suddenly a speedy mini-truck crushed him under its wheels. Protesting the accident local people put up barricade on highway causing traffic jam on both sides of the road. Later police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control after about two hours.

OMS rice recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police in a raid on Friday morning recovered 270 sacks of OMS rice from the store room of Sundarban Rice Mill at Labonchora in the city. Assistant police commissioner (DB) T.M. Mosharef Hossain, who led the operation, said that the rice mill is owned by retired Naik of BDR Haji Abdus Salam. The seized rice, worth Tk four lakh, was sent to CSD godown at Maheshwarupash under Daulatpur police station at 9-30pm. Owner of the mill absconded sensing police raid.