

UP chairman-elect arrested, 6 fined for violating code

34 hurt in poll-related clashes

STAR NATIONAL DESK

A newly elected union parishad chairman was arrested and six others were fined for violating election code of conduct in Faridpur and Gaibandha districts yesterday and the day before. Meanwhile, election-related violence in Kurigram, Jamalpur, and Chapainawabganj left at least 34 people, including an UNO, injured on the days. In Faridpur, a chairman-elect was arrested for violating code of conduct in Akterchar Union of Sadarpur upazila yesterday. The arrestee is Farhad Hossain Mridha, 48, chairman-elect of Char Jhaukanda Union Parishad of Char Bhadrashan upazila,

reports UNB.

Executive Magistrate Saiful Islam said police arrested Farhad at noon when he along with his some associates came to Ramnagar Primary School centre in Akterchar Union from his area to influence the voters in favour of chairman candidate Pannu Qazi.

Our Gaibandha correspondent reported that a mobile court sentenced three people to six months imprisonment each for casting false votes at Chalkdariya Primary School polling centre in Jamalpur Union of Sadullapur upazila on Saturday.

Another mobile court led by the UNO of Sadullapur fined six people for violating election rules and realised

Tk 18,500 from them.

In Krigam, At least 20 people, including the UNO of Phulbari upazila, were injured in a clash between police and the supporters of a member candidate at a polling centre in Chhinay Union of Rajarhat upazila on Saturday.

The clash ensued as the supporters of member candidate Nuruzzaman Bulu attacked Kalua Dakhil Madrasa centre during counting of votes.

Police charged truncheons and fired 23 blank shots to disperse the agitated supporters of the member candidate. The UNO received injuries as he along with a mobile team went there during the incident.

According to our Jamalpur correspondent, poll violence

in Dhanua Kamalpur Union of Bakshiganj upazila on Saturday left six people injured.

The injured are Salema Khatun, Kalachand, Bachchu, Babu, Sharafat and Asha Mia.

Witnesses said the supporters of defeated member candidate Ashraf

Ali tried to snatch ballot boxes from Palashtola Registered Primary School centre as the presiding officer turned down Ashraf's request for a recount.

Police charged batons on the supporters of the defeated member candidate, leaving six injured. They also fired 12 blank shots to bring the situation under control.

In Chapainawabganj, four people, including two children, were injured in bomb explosion near Chak Ghorapakhia Government Primary School centre in Chhatrajitpur Union of Shibgonj upazila during voting yesterday morning.

The injured are Mahtab Ali, 40, son of Montaj Ali, Sujon, 10, son of German Ali, Kajol, 15, son of Futkur, and Badal, 35, son of Kalu Biswas.

Police quoted locals as saying that the bomb exploded at around 10:45am. The injured Mahtab and Sujon were admitted to Chapainawabganj Adhunik Sadar Hospital and later referred to Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital as their condition deteriorated. Tow other injured-Kajol and Badal--took treatment at a local clinic.



PHOTO: STAR

Ballot boxes being taken from Kaliaish Govt Primary School centre in Dakkhin Nayergaon Union of Matlab Dakkhin upazila of Chandpur as local administration postponed the voting following a violent incident at the centre yesterday. (Story on page 20)

Agitation by trainee nurses paralyses MNC activities

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Trainee nurses at Mymensingh Nursing College (MNC) continued agitation including class boycott for five days yesterday protesting the attack on them by the fourth class employees of Mymensingh Medical College and Hospital on Monday last. All academic activities including examinations remained suspended since the incident, students said vowing to continue their programme until their demands are met.

Earlier, the students staged a sit-in, formed human chain and held protest rally on the college campus and in front of Mymensingh Press Club to press home their demands.

The demands include removal of the MMCH director, arrest of the fourth class employees involved in the attack and beefing up security for the students.

At least 35 people were injured as trainee nurses and employees of MMCH locked in a series of clashes on

June 13. Among the injured, 30 are students of Mymensingh Nursing College (MNC) and the rest five employees.

Sources said that a six-member probe body headed by Prof Dr Md Motiur Rahman of surgery department, formed after the incident, is scheduled to submit its report today.

The students said that no representative of nurses was included in the probe body and so, they are not hopeful of a fair investigation.

The students also alleged that they are being threatened over cell phone 'by hired goons' to give up their demands.

MMCH nurses under the banner of Bangladesh Diploma Nurses Association (BDNA) also went on token strike on June 15 demanding punishment to culprits who attacked the trainee nurses at the hospital.

They returned to their work on June 17 following assurance from the leaders of Bangladesh Medical Association

(BMA) on Thursday of finding a fruitful solution soon.

"We will go for tougher action including indefinite strike if our demands are not met soon", said Nazma Khatun, secretary of BDNA local unit.

Sources said, the trainee nurses on June 13 morning went to meet the hospital director to know the reasons for cancellation of their sick room facilities.

When the students entered the director's room, a group of fourth class employees of the hospital rushed to the spot and asked the students to give them easy passage.

As the students refused to leave the place, an altercation began and at one stage an employee pushed a female student and pulled her scarf triggering a clash, students said.

The employees later swooped on the students and beat them up with sticks indiscriminately, injuring at least 30 students.



PHOTO: STAR

Dharla River has devoured at least 70 homesteads, cropland and orchards of three villages in Mogholhat Union of Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila in four days since Thursday morning.



PHOTO: STAR

Swelled under the impact of tidal surges during the last couple of days, Dakua River has eroded a metalled road in Galachipa upazila of Patuakhali district.

TIDAL SURGE, INCESSANT RAIN IN BAGERHAT

Over 6,000 shrimp, other fish enclosures washed away

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Over six thousand shrimp and sweet water fish enclosures in Bagerhat were washed away by tidal waves amid incessant rain in the last three days, reports our correspondent.

District Fisheries Officer Bazlur Rashid said, farmers incurred a loss of Tk 4.6 crore as 6,271 ponds and shrimp enclosures in the district washed away due to tidal surge and heavy rain.

Farmers fear an irreparable loss of Aus paddy if the water does not recede from 4,500 hectares of cropland within the next four to five days.

Md Abdul Gafur, deputy director of district agriculture office, said boro crops

on 1,175 hectares in Kachua, 2,500 hectares in Moralganj, 400 hectares in Sharankhola and 425 hectares in Chiltamari upazila have gone under water.

The Water Development Board (WDB) has, meanwhile, asked for Tk 1.25cr on emergency basis for repair of several points of two kilometre area of the two embankments in four upazilas.

Executive engineer of Bagerhat WDB Khalilur Rahman said 18 points of the two embankments covering Sharankhola, Morelganj, Sadar and Rampal upazilas have been marked 'more vulnerable' to damages during the on-going rainy season.

In Noakhali, Hatiya peo-

ple are worried as the upazila flood protection embankment has developed cracks during the tidal surge and rain, reports our correspondent.

Sources at Noakhali Water Development Board said, delay in repair of some points has increased the risk of collapse of the dyke.

Executive engineer Habibur Rahman said usually the authorities concerned repair the embankment before every rainy season. But this year the authorities could not carry out the repair work in some damaged portions of the embankment.

Although the repair work started a few months ago we had to stop the work for fund crisis, he said.

Sources said, a part of the 10-kilometre embankment at Tamaruddi Bazar near the upazila headquarters has developed big cracks and potholes. The embankment also faces soil erosion, they said.

The executive engineer expressed the fear that rise in Meghna water level during the rainy season or full moon will pose a serious threat to the embankment.

Upazila chairman Prof Wali Ullah said the damaged embankment is becoming a big cause of concern for the Hatiya dwellers. He urged the government to take necessary steps immediately to save people and property in the coming days of rainy season.

Old man hacked to death

UNB, Madaripur

Criminals hacked an old man to death at Natun Bazaar Dawlat Kha village in Kalkini upazila early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Mohabbat Ali, 60, of the village.

Police quoting family sources said a gang called Mohabbat out of his house at about 2:30am and stabbed him to death in the nearby area.

Local people found his body beside a crop field early in the morning and informed police.

Later, police recovered the body and sent it to hospital morgue for autopsy.

Severe storm lashes 3 Faridpur villages

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A severe storm lashed two villages in Sadar and Nagarkanda upazilas early yesterday.

Locals said over 150 houses were damaged and a large number of trees uprooted as the two-minute storm hit Keshobnagar village in Sadar upazila and Konagram of Nagarkanda upazila at about 1:45am.

The trees include big

Mahogany, palm and rain trees, locals said.

Besides, standing crops on vast tract of land were damaged. Local people said the storm also caused extensive damage to vegetable gardens.

More than 300 people, made homeless by the storm, are now living under open sky.

Meanwhile, lightning killed one person and injured 25 others at a vote centre in Sadarpur upazila

yesterday afternoon.

The dead was identified as Md Selim Pramanik, 30, of Gohar Dangi village of the same upazila.

Sources said, Selim was struck by lightning at Jatra Bari Government Primary School vote centre in Krishnopur union while waiting for his turn to cast vote.

He died on the spot while the injured were admitted to Faridpur Medical College and Hospital and Sadarpur health complex.

Erosion by Dharla renders 70 families homeless in 4 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Erosion by river Dharla rendered at least 70 families in three villages under Mogholhat union of Sadar upazila homeless in last four days.

About one hundred bighas of cultivable land, six vegetable gardens, a mosque and a temple have already been devoured by the river, said Habibur Rahman Habib, chairman of Mogholhat union parishad.

Moreover, scores of homesteads, hundreds of acres of cultivable land, many orchards and important establishments at the villages face threat of erosion.

The three erosion-hit villages are Badaitari, Nagortari and Majhitari. Victim villagers have taken shelter on high lands including roads and in relative's houses, locals said.

People of Mogholhat union said erosion by the Dharla took a devastating turn in the last four days devouring homesteads and croplands one after

another.

They demanded measures to check erosion at Mogholhat point instead of just giving relief to the victims.

Abu Bakkor, an affected villager, also a freedom fighter at Badaltari said, "My three bighas of cultivable land and the homestead with ten decimals of land went into Dharla on Friday night".

"I along with five family members have taken refuge on the flood protection embankment at Mogholhat village," added Abu Bakkor.

Mazidul Islam, another erosion victim of the same village, said, "I had two guava gardens which was a source of my income worth Tk 75 to 80 thousand a year. Dharla has devoured it on Saturday night."

Shahidul Islam, 45, of Badaitari village said, "I lost my homestead for the third time on Saturday evening. Now all five members of my family have taken shelter at relative's house at a neighbouring village."

Mofiz Uddin, 50, of Majhitari village had a similar tale to tell. "Erosion has rendered at least 24 families of the village in the last four days till Sunday morning," he said.

According to Mogholhat UP member Nazrul Islam Bhuttu, the river erosion has destroyed at least 70 homesteads during the period.

Many villagers close to the river are leaving their homesteads for fear of erosion. A large number have lost standing crops especially maize because of erosion, he added.

Sub-Divisional Engineer of Kurigram Zone Water Development Board Probrir Kumar Ghosh said yesterday that they have already sent a project profile (PP) to the ministry concerned for approving fund for construction of an embankment to check Dharla erosion permanently at Mogholhat point.

"We are yet to get any response", he said.