

Sylhet Education Board breaks its pass record

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

With 91.78 per cent pass rate in this year's Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations, Sylhet education board emerged as the most successful among all the ten education boards in the country. Last year, the pass rate was 81.23 per cent.

As many as 58,376 students appeared in the examinations under the board. Of them, 53,579 came out successful. The number of GPA-5 achievers stands at 2611.

In Science Group, 9,794 candidates out of 10,133 passed the exams. Of them, 2110 got GPA-5.

In Humanities Group, a total of 43,181 students sat for the exams. Of them, 39,020 came out successful while 242 got GPA-5.

In Business Studies Group, 4,765 examinees out of 5,062 passed the exams. Of the total successful candidates, 259 achieved GPA-5.

Top 20 Institutions
Top 20 educational institutions under Sylhet educa-

tion board are Sylhet Cadet College, Blue Bird School and College, Sylhet Government Pilot High School, Jalalabad Cantonment Public School and College, Sylhet Agragami Girls' High School, Habiganj Government Boys High School, Scholars' Home in Sylhet, The Buds Residential Model School and College in Srimongal, Habiganj B K G C Government Girls' High School, Shahjalal Jameya High school and College, Moulvibazar Government Girls' High School, Sunamganj Sarkari SC High School, Govindapur Government High School in Habiganj, Shayestganj Islami Academy and School in Habiganj, Sylhet BGB Public School and College, Shahjibazar PDB School in Habiganj, BTRI High School in Moulvibazar, Haji Md Ustar High School in Moulvibazar, Sunamganj Sarkari Jubilee High school and The Flowers KG and High School in Moulvibazar.

CASE AGAINST MAYOR

Series of agitation starts in Habiganj today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Habiganj municipality mayor and staff yesterday demanded immediate withdrawal of the 'false' case filed against them by the ruling party men on Sunday.

They made the demand at a press conference held at the auditorium of the municipality in the afternoon. They also announced an agitation programme beginning today to mount pressure on the district administration to withdraw the case.

The programme includes, human chain in front of the deputy commissioner's office today, a half-day work abstention on May 9, protest rally on the pourasava premises on May 10, a half-day hartal on May 13, daylong work abstention on May 14 and an indefinite strike from May 15.

They also submitted memoros to the deputy commissioner and the superintendent of police.

Mayor GK Gous, also the general secretary of BNP district unit, alleged that a group of ruling party men came to the municipality office in a procession during opposition-called hartal on

April 22 in the name of handing over a memo to him protesting the proposed municipal tax.

Suddenly, the AL men went on the rampage and vandalised the pourasava office and some vehicles in front of the office, he alleged.

The mayor said Pourasava Secretary Zaved Iqbal filed a case with Habiganj police station the same day against town unit AL President Sharif Ullah, General Secretary Mukul Acharya, former district BCL president Motassirul Islam, general secretary Sultan Mahmud and 40 to 50 others ruling party men, but police did not record the case.

Being influenced by the ruling party men, police recoded a 'false' case against me and staff of the municipality after 12 days of the incident, the mayor further alleged.

Mayor and others told the press conference that one Abdul Awal of Josher Abda area in the municipality filed the case as complainant.

In the case statement, he alleged that mayor and staff members physically assaulted them when they went to the municipality office for handing over a memo on April 22.

Sidr-hit Kuakata eco-park yet to see any renovation

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

The eco-park in Kuakata sea beach is losing its attraction to tourists day by day as the park, badly damaged by super cyclone Sidr on November 15 in 2007, has hardly seen any renovation.

The park now looks bare as most of the planted trees including those in the adjacent tamarisk garden got uprooted by the cyclone while damaged walkways, wooden bridge on the lake, electrification system see gradual decay due to lack of repair.

Tourists feel insecure, as there is no boundary wall around the park.

Two years ago, local forest department sent a Tk 20 lakh project proposal to the higher authorities for renovation of the eco park but it is yet to be approved.

Coastal Forest Department in Patuakhali set up the eco-park on 13,984 hectares of land in Gongamoti, Khajura, Latachalee and Fatrar Char areas in Kuakata sea beach at a cost of Tk 2.76 crore in 2005-2006 fiscal year.

Two watch towers, five picnic sheds, lake development, bridge, culverts, internal walkways, office building and ticket counter were built here under the eco-park project land development, about 2.50 km to the east of the Zero Point of Kuakata.

Besides, 42,000 plants of different varieties including mangrove and non-mangrove categories were planted for beautification of the park areas and safe nesting of birds. Outside the park a tamarisk garden was also created to protect the park

from tidal surge of the Bay.

The park added to the attraction of Kuakata beach, one of the most important tourist spots of the country.

But during a recent visit to the eco-park, this correspondent saw that the once impressive park gives a pitiable look.

"When I visited the spot two years ago, I found the eco-park very pleasant," said Abdul Halim, 35, a tourist who came from Khulna with a picnic team.

"But now I am frustrated to see the awful condition of the park. The wooden bridge

that linked both sides of the lake in the park is now unfit for use. Five paddle boats in the lake have become inoperative due to lack of repair.

Internal walkways, culverts and toilets are also in bad condition," he added.

Moulana Abu Sayed of Jessore town, who came with a picnic team in the park, said, "Tourists here feel insecure, as there is no boundary wall around the park and outsiders often disturb tourists here. Bushes have grown everywhere in the park, especially around

the benches, much to the nuisance of visitors. Walkways have been damaged by the tidal surge."

This correspondent also saw the tamarisk garden that created in the south part in the park in order to protect the park from the tidal surge from the Bay also damaging day by day.

Many tamarisk trees uprooted on the beach that make threaten to the park.

Two years ago, the office building was repaired but other establishments remained without any

repair due to lack of funds, sources said.

The eco park requires early renovation to attract tourists, said Abdul Bareq Mollah, administrator for Kuakata municipality.

When contacted, Gobinda Roy, divisional forest office in Patuakhali, said, "Two years ago, we sent a Tk 20 lakh project proposal to the higher authorities to renovate the park. We hope that it will be approved soon and we will be able to start the work before the next dry season."



PHOTO: STAR

Trees uprooted at Kuakata eco-park in Patuakhali during Cyclone Sidr in 2007 still lies on the spot, inset the wooden bridge in the park turned dilapidated and risky for the visitors. Two years ago, local forest department sent a Tk 20 lakh proposal for renovation of the park but the proposal is still gathering dust.

Housewife commits 'suicide' in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A housewife allegedly committed suicide by taking poison at village Purbo Narayanpur in Kaliganj early yesterday.

The victim was identified as Nazma Khatun, 26, wife of Masud Rana of the village.

Quoting local people police said, Nazma Khatun took her life by taking liquid pesticide in their house at about 5:00am.

She was taken to a local clinic at Kaliganj in critical condition where she died at about 9 am on the same day.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Satkhira morgue for post mortem.

Nazma committed suicide following a family feud, police said.

BUMPER WHEAT PRODUCTION IN THAKURGAON

Growers deprived of fair price

UNB, Thakurgaon

The wheat growers of the district are being deprived of fair price of their produces allegedly due to a syndicate of businessmen and slow pace of procurement drive of the government.

The district this year saw a bumper production of wheat. Favourable weather, easy availability of fertiliser, proper irrigation facilities and proper nursing of the crop by the farmers helped achieve bumper production.

Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources said wheat was cultivated on 57,100 hectares of land in the district in the current season.

The department had set a target to produce 1,52,477 metric tons in the current season at the rate of 2.6 metric tons per hectare. However, it exceeded the target and the average production went up to 3.40 metric tons per hectare with a total output of 1,94,140 metric tons.

Different varieties of wheat were cultivated in the district. Of them, Prodig variety was cultivated on 46 percent land, Bijoy on 23 percent, Swarna on 15 percent, Shatabdi on 10 percent and others on 6 percent land.

Deputy Director of DAE Belayet Hossain said that the district falls in the best wheat growing zone in the country because of its soil condition, and better irrigation facilities. In the current season, the district achieved a bumper production of wheat, he added.

During a visit to Farabarihat, Chowdhuryhat and Khochabarihat a few days ago, this correspondent found that wheat was selling at Tk 725 to 740 per maund (40 kg a maund) which was far below the procurement price.

The government had declared the procurement price of wheat at Tk 24 per kilogram i.e. Tk 960 per maund which is far above the market price.

District Controller of Food Raihanul Kabir said that the department this year decided to procure 16,121 metric tons of wheat in the district.

He further said that the procurement drive that started on April 1 would continue up to June 30.

Raihanul Kabir further said that in order to give incentive to the farmers and to build up buffer stock, the government is procuring wheat through upazila procurement monitoring committees. The committees gave targets

and directions to the union committees to issue supply slips to the farmers.

General secretary of Thakurgaon District Krishak Samity Ismail Ali, however, said that the farmers are not getting fair price of wheat as the market price is far less than the production cost. The government would procure only 8 percent of the total production in the district which would not create any impact on the market, he added.

He alleged that the genuine farmers cannot supply wheat to the procurement centres as they cannot collect of supply slips from the local union monitoring committees.

He further alleged that the union committees, in collaboration with the ruling party leaders, are selling the supply slips to the wheat traders depriving the farmers.

A farmer at village Dakkhin Batina under Sadar upazila said despite repeated requests to the authorities concerned he could not manage a supply slip though he had harvested about 100 maunds of wheat.

Like him, a large number farmers of the district are not getting supply slips and hence the farmers are being deprived of fair price of wheat, he said.

Follow-up

Two get life for rape in Faridpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A court yesterday sentenced two youths to life term imprisonment in a rape case.

The convicts are Kalan Kha, 22, of Charchadpur and Tushar Sheikh, 23, of Lohartek villages in Sadarpur upazila.

According to the prosecution, on the morning of July 9, 2009, Kalam allegedly lured a girl to a jute field and raped her. His accomplice Tushar recorded the incident on his mobile phone.

Later, Tushar also raped the victim and this time Kalam recorded it on the same mobile phone.

The duo then gave the footage to their friends, printed it on CDs and sold those in the local market.

They also uploaded the footage on the internet.

Following the incident, the victim filed a case with Sadarpur police station accusing four people.

After examining the records and witnesses, Shahidullah Bakaul, special judge of Women and Child Repression Prevention Court, handed down the verdict in presence of the convicts.

Landless people besiege DC office

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Members of about 50/60 landless families, living at Hazipur village under Pirganj upazila, besieged the deputy commissioner office yesterday, demanding allocation of khas land.

They also submitted a memorandum to deputy commissioner Muhammad Shahiduzzaman in favour of their demand.

The programmes followed a discussion where district unit president of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) Merazul Hossain, Workers' Party leader advocate Imran Hossain Chowdhury, president of Thakurgaon Press Club Akhter Hossain Raza and landless people's leader Kalachand Royspoke.

The speakers said the landless people have been living on 5.88 acres of land on the bank of Tongipukur for 20 years.

They also said more families were becoming landless every day due to the land grabbers and local influential people.

During the last one year, several attacks were launched on the landless people in a bid to evict them from their land showing fake documents, they added.

Earlier on April 26, the landless people also besieged upzila nirbahi office for the same demand.

Betel nut export to India thru' Benapole doubles

MOHSIN MILON, Benapole, Jessore

Betel nut export to India through Benapole port has doubled in the current fiscal year due to its growing demand in the Indian markets.

Forty six thousand six hundred and forty-eight tonnes (MT) of betel nut worth Tk 246 crore have been exported to India in the first 8 months, said Md Akbar Hossain, joint commissioner of Benapole customs house.

In the last fiscal year, 24347 tonnes of betel nut worth Tk 122.3 crore were exported to India through the land port, the joint commissioner added.

The betel nut exporters, however, complain of facing harassment by Indian customs authorities' through tightening quality control process.

Touhidul Islam, a betel nut exporter, said demand for Bangladeshi betel nut in Indian markets is on the rise. The present price of

per tonne betel nut is \$720, he added.

He also complained of delay in unloading trucks in the name of quality control.

Abul Kalam Azad, director of Benapole Land Port, said 15 to 20 truckloads of betel nut are exported to India every day.

"It takes 10 to 12 days for getting a betel nut loaded truck released due to delay on Indian side at though we are allowing the trucks on daily basis", he said.



PHOTO: STAR

Betel rut loaded Bangladeshi trucks waiting at Benapole check-post for clearance. Export of the item to India has doubled this year.

SNIPPETS

Former headmaster killed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A school teacher was murdered at Basail upazila yesterday morning over land dispute. The deceased is Yasin Ali, 70, of Sunna village and former headmaster of Abbasia High School in the upazila. Victim's brother Nurul Islam said, centering a previous quarrel over some trees on a disputed land, four neighbors attacked Yasin with sticks, leaving him dead on the spot.

Boy electrocuted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole, Jessore

A four-year-old boy was electrocuted at Khatuadanga village in Monirampur upazila yesterday morning. The deceased was identified as Ifat Hossain, son of Abul Kalam of the village. Local people said, Ifat was playing with his friends near his neighbor's house. There he came in contact with a live electrical wire and died on the spot.

Schoolgirl drowns

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

A schoolgirl drowned in a river in Katiadi yesterday morning. The victim was identified as Purnima Akter, 9, student of Class III at Doshpakhi Government Primary School and daughter of Nurul Mia of Doshpakhi village. Locals said, Purnima drowned in the Arial Kha River near her house as she went to take a bath there along with friends at 11:00am. She did not know how to swim.