

SATURDAY'S SALTHA INCIDENT

# Rival AL activist sues MP-aspirant Halim, 39 others 'for attack'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

An activist of Awami League Saltha upazila unit yesterday sued rival group backed MP-aspirant Major (ret) ATM Halim and 39 others in connection with Saturday's incident in Madrasa Gotti area in the upazila. Walid Fakir lodged the case with Saltha Police Station, claiming that he was injured during the attack by Halim and his men.

Twenty of the accused in the case were identified while the rest remained unnamed. Halim, his brother Lulu, Anis, Gulzar, Hiru Molla, Hemayet Kha and Elahi, are among the identified accused.

In the case statement, the plaintiff said he along with seven other AL men sustained injuries as Halim and his supporters swooped on them following an altercation there in the morning.

"As Halim opened fire, we made a counter-attack in self defence," the complainant stated in the case statement.

Major (ret) ATM Halim is now undergoing treatment at Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in Dhaka. His motorcade came under attack by the rival party men in Madrasa Gotti area on Saturday.

"He received stab injuries during the attack by the supporters of Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury," said Baily Halim, wife of Major Halim.

Witnesses said at least 20 people, includ-

ing three local journalists, were injured as the alleged supporters of Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, deputy leader of the parliament and the ruling Awami League presidium member, attacked Halim and his men.

The attackers blocked Halim's motorcade by felling roadside trees, vandalised at least 10-12 cars and set two minibuses afire.

Halim, his bodyguard Jahangir Hossain, nephew Nazrul Islam Pintu, Faridpur correspondent of the daily Ittefaq Tarikul Islam Himel, district correspondents of ATN News and the Samakal Quamruzzaman Shohel and Hasanuzzaman, are among the injured.

An MP aspirant from Faridpur-2 constituency (Saltha-NagarKanda), Halim was on his way home at Bhollovdi under Nagarkanda upazila around 11:00am for attending a programme on his father's death anniversary.

Mohammad Limon, younger brother of Halim, told The Daily Star that Delwar Hossain and Rezaur Rahman Choyon, president and organising secretary of Saltha upazila unit of Awami League, and local Jubo League leader Anwar Hossain led the attack.

"They all are men of Sajeda Chowdhury," said Limon.

Delwar Hossain, however, denied their involvement in the incident. Local people might have attacked Halim and his men, he added.

## CONSTRUCTION OF SCHOOLHOUSE

# Use of low quality materials sparks protest by locals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Locals including a large number of students in Ramchandrapur union under Gaibandha Sadar upazila brought out a procession yesterday protesting use of 'very inferior quality' materials for construction of a schoolhouse in the area.

A large beam and guide wall of the ground floor of the under construction four-storey house of Tindaha Government Primary School in Ramchandrapur

union under Gaibandha Sadar upazila collapsed just after removal of the shutters on Friday afternoon.

Protesting use of low quality materials by the contractor to earn maximum profit, local people started demonstration, demanding immediate stoppage of the work by the callous contractor.

Calling to start it afresh, they also warned of greater agitation if the demand is not met.

Mojibar Rahman, local ward member of

Ramchandrapur union parishad, said he received complaints from locals about the matter.

LGED Gaibandha allocated Tk 56 lakh 58 thousand 910 for the construction of a four-storey house of Tindaha Government Primary School under Third Primary Education Development Programme.

Atowar Rahman, president of the school managing committee, blamed the engineer concerned for not supervising the work properly.

## ABDUCTION OF 4 IN RANGAMATI

# Roads, waterways blockade enforced in 2 hill districts

STAR COUNTRY DESK

The daylong roads and waterways blockade enforced by Parbatya Bangalee Chhatra Parishad (PBCP) in Rangamati and Khagrachhar districts passed off peacefully yesterday.

The student body of Bangalee settlers in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) called the blockade programme to mount pressure on the authorities concerned to take necessary steps to rescue four staff of Bi Technology.

Five employees of Bi Technology, who were inspecting equipment in a mobile phone tower for state-

run carrier TeleTalk, were abducted by unidentified criminals at Baribindughat of Baghaichhari upazila of Rangamati on July 8.

They are Akhter Hossain, Hemayet Uddin, Imrul, Montu and Suja Miah. Montu was later released by the abductors.

Our Rangamati correspondent reported that vehicles were off the roads in the district and vessels from district headquarters to upazilas did not ply during the blockade.

CNG run three-wheelers and motorcycles were seen plying the roads. Public and private offices, markets and roadside shops remained open and no untoward inci-

dent occurred in the district during the blockade programme.

PBCP activists took out a procession in the district town in the morning and paraded the main streets.

In Khagrachhari, the daylong blockade programme ended peacefully in the district yesterday. No untoward incident was reported from anywhere in the district, reports our correspondent.

Vehicles went off the roads and launch and engine boats didn't ply the river routes. Shops, business establishments, public and private offices remained open during the programme.

## Jubo Dal leader murdered

UNB, Meherpur

A local Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal leader was stabbed to death at Jorepukuria village in Gangni upazila on Saturday night.

The deceased was identified as Lavlu Hossain, 40, president of Jorepukuria village unit of Jubo Dal.

Police said a gang swooped on Lavlu while he was sitting at a tea stall in the area after tarabih prayers at around 11:00pm.

The criminals hacked Lavlu with sharp weapons and fled the scene immediately, leaving him dead on the spot.

### MAGURA KILLING

In Magura, police recovered the body of a young man from a pond at Balidia village in Mohammadpur upazila on Saturday.

The deceased was identified as Masud Sarder, 35, son of Lal Mia Sardar of the village.

Family members said Masud went missing on Tuesday night and had not returned home since then.

Officer in-charge of Mohammadpur police station Mohammad Sagir Mia said local people found a sack floating in the pond and informed them.

Later, police recovered the body of Masud after opening the sack and sent it to hospital morgue for autopsy.

### THAKURGAON

In Thakurgaon, body of another youth was recovered from a residential hotel at Bangabandhu Road in front of Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital on Saturday night, reports our correspondent.

The deceased was identified as Sumon, 22, son of Mojibul Haque of Dakkhin Dhonnia under Kadamtoli police station in Dhaka.

Officer in-charge of Thakurgaon PS Md. Feroz Khan told this correspondent that the youth checked in on Friday night.

As he did not open the door for long, the hotel authorities informed police. Police broke open the door in presence of a magistrate and found the hanging body of the youth.

## Gun-toting

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Awami League leader Mohammad Nasim and former mayor of Rajshahi Khairuzaman Liton, however, said no one from BCL with a background of gun-toting, snatching and murder allegations would become a leader of its RU unit.

Nasim and Liton were addressing the council meeting before it picked Tuhin as the general secretary of BCL, the student wing of Awami League.

On October 2, Tuhin, then a third-year student of finance and banking department, was caught on camera by photo-journalists while he was shooting from his gun during the clash between BCL and Shibir men.

The Daily Star published a photo in its October 3 issue showing how Tuhin was holding an iron rod and also aiming a pistol at his rivals.

It also ran two reports on Tuhin titled "Gun-toting BCL man sues others" on October 4 and "Gun-toting BCL men roam free at RU" on October 5 last year.

Tuhin was also accused of killing Abdullah Al Hasan Sohel, joint convener of BCL's Sher-e-Bangla Hall unit, during a factional clash at RU campus on July 15, 2012.

Boalia police filed a charge-sheet against Tuhin and two other youths in connection with their alleged involvement in a robbery on April 19, 2012.

According to the charge-sheet, Tuhin committed a robbery at a house at Padma residential area in the city.

BCL central committee president Badiuzzaman Shohag told The Daily Star that the allegations against Tuhin were totally false and fabricated.

"We have selected him [Tuhin] to organise the party movement against anti-liberation forces at RU," he added.

Contacted, former mayor Liton refused to make any comment on the selection of Tuhin.



PHOTO: STAR

A wholesale trader piles up pineapples collected from local farmers at Jalchhatra market in Modhupur upazila of Tangail. The juicy summer fruit saw a bumper yield in the upazila this year.

# Juicy Modhupur pineapples set to flood markets

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

Farmers in Modhupur upazila under the district have got a bumper yield of pineapple due to favourable weather during the cultivation season.

Modhupur Garh is famous for producing Giant Q variety of the popular sweet-sour fruit and wholesalers from across the country are thronging there to buy it.

Pineapple has been cultivated on 6,035 hectares of land at different villages in the upazila, agriculture officials said, adding that the production target is one lakh 25 thousand tonnes of pineapples in the upazila as the farmers expect around 18 to 20 tonnes of yield per hectare.

Idilpur, Sholakuri, Dokhala, Beribaid, Kaliakuri, Hagurikuri, Pirgachha, Alokdia, Aushnara, Digor Baid, Aronkhola, Laifula, Holudia, Ranibaid, Moter Bazar, Telki, Jalchhatra, Garo Bazar, Rasulpur, Mohishmara and Chunia are some of

the famous pineapple producing villages in Madhupur.

However, the fruit is ripening slowly in the fields due to lack of sufficient rain this season, said Habib Mondol, a farmer of Idilpur village.

Pineapple cultivation needs a good amount of investment and many farmers, who borrow from moneylenders or wholesalers for the purpose, ultimately get loser after repaying the money with high interest, local farmers said.

Often hard pressed farmers have to sell their fruit from the field to the wholesalers for low prices.

Kitab Ali, a pineapple trader, said he sends truck-loads of pineapple to different places of the country in the very beginning of this season and gives Tk 1,000 to different organisations as toll for per truck of pineapple.

The demand of Modhupur pineapple has risen during the ongoing

Ramadan and so, prices are higher than other years, said pineapple trader Sanwar Hossain in Modhupur.

Visiting Jalchhatra, biggest wholesale market of pineapple in Modhupur, on last Friday, this correspondent saw a pineapple was selling for Tk 8 to Tk 15, depending on sizes.

Meanwhile, the original taste of famous Modhupur pineapple is now hardly found as chemicals are used in large scale to make the fruit larger and ripen it earlier.

Such chemically treated fruits are dangerous for human health and can cause different diseases including cancer, and kidney and liver diseases, said Dr Abdus Samad, a kidney and medicine specialist.

Dr Hazrat Ali, upazila agriculture officer in Modhupur, said the agriculture officials try to motivate the pineapple growers not to use chemicals on the fruit but the advice is hardly followed.

# Stop move to split Grameen Bank, urge workers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Grameen Bank (GB) workers and employees in the district have urged the government to refrain from taking any move to split the bank into several bodies, in view of the interest of its poor beneficiaries.

At a press conference held at Pabna Press Club auditorium yesterday, Pabna Zone chapter of Grameen Bank Workers Association utterly rejected the Grameen Bank Commission proposal that recommended dividing the Nobel Prize winning microlender into 19 bodies.

They termed the matter a 'whimsical move with a view to destroying the bank'.

"Grameen Bank is an institution of a Nobel laureate. It is the lone bank in the world that achieved the rare honour of Nobel Prize," GB employee Aunur Das, said, reading out a written statement signed by Md Farid Uddin, president of GB Workers Association in Pabna, and its secretary Jahangir Alam.

"Working for over three decades across the country, Grameen Bank has contributed to bringing remarkable changes in the society. The organisation knows well



PHOTO: STAR

A member of the Pabna Chapter of Grameen Bank Workers Association addresses a press conference at the local press club yesterday.

how to solve the problems. The poor people are its real owner. So the government cannot snatch their rights.

"Grameen Bank workers and employees are happy with their present condition. There is no need to nationalise our job. Non-government teachers are demanding nationalisation of their service. Please protect their interest. But don't try to destroy Grameen Bank," goes the written statement.

Hailing Prof Muhammad Yunus, founder of the bank, the BG workers and employees said people will remember him for establishing the bank that brings pride for the nation.

They vowed to make sacrifices to save the bank.

More than of 2.24 lakh members have a total deposit

of Tk 392.29 crore in 61 branches of Grameen Bank in Pabna zone, speakers at the press conference said, adding that the depositors belonging to the poor community would suffer a lot if the government divides the bank into several entities.

GB Workers Association Pabna Zone President Md Farid Uddin chaired the programme.

Our Manikganj Correspondent adds: Grameen Bank workers and employees formed a human chain in front of its zonal office at Bewtha in Manikganj town yesterday demanding withdrawal of the government probe report on Grameen Bank and staying away from the move to divide it into 19 bodies.

## Bus strike in Khulna division called off

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

Transport Workers' Federation yesterday evening called off indefinite bus strike in 10 districts of Khulna division.

The districts are Jessore, Khulna, Satkhira, Bagerhat, Narail, Jhenidah, Chuadanga, Meherpur, Kushtia and Magura.

The strike was withdrawn following a 'fruitful' meeting between the leaders of Transport Workers' Union and Bus-Truck Owners' Association at Chanchara motor workers union office in Jessore town.

Transport Workers Federation Khulna regional committee, the mother organisation of 34 transport workers' unions, called the strike on Saturday night, demanding pay hike of drivers, supervisors and helpers, said Pabitra Kapuria, central vice president of the association.

Azizul Alam Mintu, president of Bangladesh Paribahan Sangstha Sramik Samity, a unit of the federation, said earlier we went on an indefinite transport strike on June 17, demanding pay hike Tk 180 for drivers, Tk 75 for helpers and Tk 50 for supervisors.

# Commission is 30pc

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and other sectors of LGED.

Political influence, interference of ministries, and lack of proper monitoring, evaluation, audit, and transparency are the main reasons for the irregularities and corruption in LGED, says the report prepared by TIB officials Shahzada M Akram and Nahid Sharmin.

However, TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said, "Our aim is not to tarnish the image of any institution, rather to help the institution ensure good-governance and transparency."

According to the report, financial corruption in LGED includes irregularities in audit procedure and project evaluation, non-submission of taxes to public exchequer, paying extra money to contractors, and misappropriation of public funds.

A total of 1,772 audit objections involving Tk 1,369.40 crore remained unresolved till fiscal 2011-2012 since the establishment

of LGED in 1992, says the study.

On institutional corruption, it says the chief engineer abuses power to control promotion, posting, transfer and other activities.

Besides, LGED officials use official cars for private purposes, and even take money by showing fake bills for vehicle repairs.

During the formulation of a project proposal, prices of different equipment are estimated several times higher than the market prices. In many cases, project sizes are increased following interference from lawmakers and ministers.

These irregularities and corruption result in substandard quality of project implementation, wastage of public money, fall in LGED officials' productivity and institutionalisation of corruption.

The study also recommended e-procurement and e-tendering system, setting up of separate units for proper management of human resources, formulation of

policy for manpower recruitment, ensuring transparency and accountability, and participation of local government institutions in local development activities.

Acknowledging incidences of corruption and irregularities at their department, two LGED officials Abul Kalam Azad and M Azizul Haque, who were present at the function, said they had been working to curb corruption and ensure good governance in LGED.

Local government expert Dr Tofail Ahmed stressed the need for an active role by lawmakers, ministers and politicians in curbing corruption and irregularities.

"If 10 ministers and 10 secretaries in Bangladesh can free themselves from corruption, instances of corruption will go down by 70 percent in the country," he said.

TIB Trustee Board Member M Hafizuddin Khan chaired the function. Representatives of different citizens' organisations spoke there.

## Request for Proposal Hiring Consultancy Firm



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United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Bangladesh seeks Proposals from interested Companies for Hiring Consultancy Firm for:

**i) Preparing Adaptation Management Plans on Coastal Afforestation, Livelihood Diversifications and Early Warning Actions for four project sites, Ref: RFP-BD-2013-048 and the deadline for submission of Proposals is Monday, August 12, 2013, 4:30 p.m. local time**

**ii) Public Opinion Survey on personal Security and Police Performance 2013, Ref: RFP-BD-2013-049 and the deadline for submission of Proposals is Tuesday, August 13, 2013, 4:30 p.m. local time.**

All interested companies may download the Bidding documents (RFP) from [http://www.undp.org.bd/proc\\_more.php](http://www.undp.org.bd/proc_more.php) through a formal registration process that will register bidders into the participants list, so any correspondence, questions regarding the bidding documents and respective answers can be sent to all bidders.

**Submission of Proposal:** The envelope should state the tender subject mentioned above and the Proposals must be submitted as per the instructions specified in the RFP document by the deadline mentioned above to the **Registry Unit, UNDP Bangladesh, IDB Bhaban (12th Floor), Begum Rokeya Sharani, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.**