

5 children drown

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Thakurgaon*

Five children drowned in ponds at Bahadurpara and Kalitala villages in Thakurgaon Sadar upazila yesterday afternoon.

Villagers of Bahadurpara said around 1:00pm some eight to 10 children went to a pond to have a bath while it was raining. Four kids drowned when they took a dip in the pond.

Hearing the others' hue and cry, locals rushed to the spot and recovered their bodies.

They are Fahim, 8, Rifat, 10, sons of Enamul Haque, Latifur Rahman, 10, son of Nazrul Islam and Nupur, 8, daughter of Chutu of Bahadurpara village.

Mostafizur Rahman, chairman of Jagannathpur Union Parishad, confirmed the incident.

A pall of gloom has descended on the village.

In another incident, a minor boy, Shakil, 7, son of Jamir Uddin, drowned in a pond at Kalitala village.

Ershad

FROM PAGE 5
any pressure on the media and will implement the policy after holding talks with everyone.

"Let the media broadcast the truth and learn to accept the truth," he said addressing the government.

Ershad said days of the two main parties as well as their chiefs have come to an end. And it will be his party which will be elected next, he said, urging the people to vote for his party in the next polls to bring a change in the country.

In his speech, he again asked BNP leaders to join his party, claiming that JP is the only party that believes in nationalism.

136 embark

FROM PAGE 5
unwilling to go.

A flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines left Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport with the pilgrims at 8:30pm.

The religious affairs ministry and Hajj Agencies Association Bangladesh (Haab) made the arrangements with money collected from responsible Hajj agencies and Hajj Pilgrims' Welfare Fund, said Abul Malek, assistant Hajj officer.

"I was dejected as I could not perform Hajj last year. Now I am very happy as I am finally going to the holy place," Maulana Abdul Gafur, 62, a retired school teacher from Netrakona told The Daily Star.

BCL men

FROM PAGE 3
attacked him around 9:30pm. He was kicked and slapped, he said.

The victim said he might have been attacked because of his role against the killing of Saad by BCL men early this year.

The left-leaning student bodies, including his Chhatra Front, were very vocal against the murder in media and through street protests. Saad was beaten up on March 31, and he died the next day.

Meanwhile, the left-leaning student bodies under the banner "Progotishil Chhatra Jot" yesterday brought out a procession on the campus demanding punitive measures against those who attacked Milton.

The proctor said necessary steps would be taken after a proper investigation.

Jolie, Brad Pitt

FROM PAGE 20
petals, while Shiloh and Knox served as ring bearers.

The couple obtained a marriage licence from a judge in California before flying to France last week. The same judge conducted the ceremony.

Jolie and Pitt have been together for almost a decade after falling in love while filming Mr and Mrs Smith. When the question of marriage was raised in interviews, Pitt maintained that the couple would tie the knot only when same sex marriage was legalised across the US.

In 2012, he said: "We made this declaration some time ago that we weren't going to do it till everyone can. But I don't think we'll be able to hold out."

He admitted that the couple's children were keen for them to marry. "It means so much to my kids, and they ask a lot. And it means something to me, too, to make that kind of commitment."

This is a second marriage for Pitt -- he was divorced from Jennifer Aniston in 2005 -- and a third for Jolie. She was previously married to the actors Jonny Lee Miller and Billy Bob Thornton.

The couple began leasing Chateau Miraval in 2008 and bought it three years later. The sprawling property has its own vineyards and a tiny chapel in the grounds with standing room for around 20 people.

Back to where he belongs

FROM PAGE 1
father said he could identify the baby as there are similarities between the twins.

Expressing gratitude to the media for the stories on the baby theft, the father said he wants his sons to be journalists. As someone quipped it was the Rab who rescued the baby, the father said, "If you insist, one will be a Rab official and the other a journalist."

Rab Media Wing Director Mufti Mahmud Khan told The Daily Star that they handed over the infant to parents without delay. The authorities concerned will run a DNA test if needed.

At the press briefing, he said Rab members raided the house of Parvin in Board Bazar around 3:00am. Based on her statement, the team rescued the infant from Rahima's house in the same area.

Parvin, who served at different clinics as midwife and owns a pharmacy in Board Bazar, sold the baby to Childless Rahima for Tk 40,000

on the morning of August 21.

"Parvin has previous records of stealing babies from clinics. After stealing a baby, she would tell the parents that their babies were born dead. Later, she would sell the infant to other people," the Rab official said, based on information provided by the woman during interrogation.

Parvin went to the DMCH on August 20. Posing as an attendant of an imaginary patient, she offered services to the new mother struggling to nurse the twins.

The next day, she disappeared with one of the infants around 7:30am.

Runa later identified the woman from the CCTV footage, said the Rab official.

Sub-Inspector Ferdous Alam, investigating officer of the case filed by the hospital authorities in this connection, said they were working to find out whether hospital employees or anybody else were involved in the incident.

Family points finger

FROM PAGE 1
television channels.

Faisal filed a murder and robbery case with Sher-e-Bangla Nagar police station yesterday against eight to nine unnamed persons.

Police have yet to ascertain the motive or arrest anyone in this connection.

Faisal said his father used to preach his belief in majars (shrines) and "milad mahfils". "Those who oppose this thought threatened him with dire consequences. They often said: 'You are confusing people through these activities. Stop it or we'll kill you.'"

Soon after the May 5 rally, Faruqi had received a call from an unknown person who told him that he should go to the Supreme Court mosque wearing a shroud, Faisal said, adding that his father then went to the mosque with police escort. A few months ago, his father asked them to be alert all the time as he was getting threats.

Faruqi, aged about 60, was the international affairs secretary of Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat, an Islamist group, and a presidium member of Bangladesh Islami Front. He also owned a hajj agency, Faruqi Tours and Travels Private Ltd.

The recent confrontation between Hefajat and Ahle Sunnat goes back to March-April last year, when thousands of Hefajat men took to the streets in Dhaka, Chittagong and elsewhere.

Hefajat, a Chittagong-based radical Islamist group rose as a force against the Shahbagh Movement that began in February last year, demanding the capital punishment to war criminals.

For its part, Ahle Sunnat in a rally at Laldighi Maidan in the port city demanded the capital punishment to Hefajat leaders for "demeaning Islam and the Prophet (pbuh) in their publications".

Around 8:30pm on Wednesday,

some eight to 10 unidentified assailants entered Faruqi's house to talk about hajj-related matters.

At one point, they pointed a firearm at his forehead and held a machete against his throat, demanding Tk 50 lakh. He offered them Tk 1 lakh which he had in his home, but the killers forced him into the dining room, where his body was later found with his throat slit, said Maruf, Faruqi's nephew.

According to Faisal, it was a planned murder although the assailants took away gold ornaments and cash worth over Tk 6 lakh.

Meanwhile, leaders and activists of Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Sena, student wing of Bangladesh Islami Front, demonstrated in front of the Jatiya Press Club around 2:30pm and held a press conference at the press club from where the leaders announced a countrywide demonstration programme.

They threatened to call a nationwide dawn-to-dusk hartal on Sunday if the killers of are not arrested by tomorrow.

Leaders and activists of the Front also demonstrated in Comilla, Narayanganj and Chandpur. They blocked several highways in Chittagong and called various programmes protesting the murder.

They will hold protest rallies across the country on Saturday and bring out processions at divisional cities on Sunday, Mosaheb Uddin Bakhtiar, a member secretary of the Front, told the press conference.

Biplob Kumar Sarkar, deputy commissioner (Tejgaon division) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said the family members yesterday informed them about the threats that Faruqi had been receiving.

"We are looking into the matter seriously. We are also investigating if there was any link of robbery or any personal or financial feud related to hajj," he told The Daily Star.

Student stabs

FROM PAGE 20
broke into the room and slashed at his head and arms with a machete, said the registrar.

Prof Neaz, also a vice-president of Sust Teachers' Association, was taken to MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital.

His condition was improving but he was still not out of danger, said doctors there.

Students caught Oyes and gave him a beating before handing him over to police.

Oyes was also undergoing treatment at the same hospital in police custody, said Officer-in-Charge Gausul Hossain of Jalalabad Police Station.

The university registrar filed a case against Oyes with the police station.

Although the motive behind the attack was unclear, police said Oyes claimed that the professor used mentally torture him.

As the news of the attack spread, students of the department of social works locked the department gate and boycotted exams and classes.

They held a demonstration in front of the administrative building for couple of hours from around noon. At one point, they vandalised a car.

Sust Teachers' Association called for a work abstention on Sunday. They also demanded stern action against Oyes within 10 days.

Meanwhile, in a separate incident, allegedly Bangladesh Chhatra League activists assaulted Anwar Hossain, a lecturer of the department of Geography and Environmental Science, and also beat up at least five students, witnesses said.

Anwar tried to prevent the Chhatra League men from beating up a student, they added.

Anjan Roy, vice-president of the Sust unit of Chhatra League, denied involvement of any Chhatra League men in the assault.

Additional police had been deployed on the campus.

Rejoinder

FROM PAGE 1
closed by Caab."

"The two issues which are yet to be closed do not have any immediate safety concern as the aircraft in question will not fly unless permitted by Caab," it added.

About the collapse of the nose gear of one of its ATR-72 aircraft at Cox's Bazar Airport on July 20, the rejoinder said the incident is still under investigation by a four-member team of Caab and the ATR was sending their experts to investigate it as well.

The airline said it didn't expect to see in the newspaper any "remarks" on an issue that was still under investigation.

On the August 2012 incident in which part of the windshield of its ATR-72 aircraft blew away in mid-air, the United Airways claimed the co-pilot had suffered minor, not serious injuries.

OUR REPLY

We stated that our report was based on Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh's investigation, which the United Airways (BD) Ltd accepts. No part of our report was contradicted by the rejoinder. So, we stand by our story.

5 held; arms,

FROM PAGE 20
'AK series assault rifle'.

Zarzokima did not rule out the possibility of the arms consignment being smuggled from Myanmar to Bangladesh via India's Mizoram state.

He declined to reveal the names of arrested persons for the sake of investigation but confirmed two of them were Bangladeshis from Chittagong Hill Tracts.

He said investigations have been launched to find out from where they got the arms and how they sneaked into the state.

Mizoram police, BSF and federal Indian intelligence agencies are interrogating the arrested persons.

Parts of Dhaka

FROM PAGE 2
areas.

"The power cut happened as the Ullon grid substation at Rampura and Dhanmondi grid substation went out of order due to some glitches in circuit breakers," Kamrun Nahar, public relations officer of Dhaka Power Distribution Company Limited, told The Daily Star last night.

Magistrate

FROM PAGE 2
stay their homes in the district town, said Suronjit Talukder, inspector of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), also the Sunamganj camp in charge.

The CID will now do the rest of the investigation as the case has been transferred to it for further investigation, he added.

Mujibur and Rezaul were kept in police custody till yesterday for the sake of investigation although they were taken to Sunamganj from the capital on August 19, said Sunamganj police.

They were freed on August 18 near Tongi in Gazipur after three and a half months of their abduction.

Potholed lanes

FROM PAGE 20
The lane in front of the airport customs office that lead up to the Airport road has developed numerous potholes recently. Private cars and other vehicles that carry import and export goods to and from the airport often get stuck there, said Lal Hossain, a pick-up van driver of the area.

Authorities concerned repaired the lane a month ago, but it started getting damaged just after 15 days of the repair work, he added.

Mohammad Alim, a taxi driver, said there are some pot holes just at the entrance of the terminal and the condition of the entrance at terminal 1 is even worse.

He said the authorities did some repair works on the potholes around one week back but it got damaged again right after the work.

Another taxi driver Nazrul Islam said they had laid some brick chunks on the potholes near terminal 2 a few days back as a temporary measure to improve the road condition.

Babul Miyan, who was waiting for

his family members to come to the airport from Manikganj, said the sorry state of the road inside airport area gives bad a impression to the visiting foreigners.

The authorities should give proper attention to the matter, he added.

Vehicles regularly get stuck on potholes near the Abul Hossain restaurant, said Altaf Chowdhury, an Ansar personnel of the area.

Recalling one such incident on Wednesday, he said, a wheel of a truck got stuck at one of the potholes at 8:00am and it took around two hours to get it out.

He said many foreigners use the road to go to HSIA CATC Zam-a-mosque and get a bad impressiion about our country.

An official of Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) said they carry out emergency maintenance work of the roads on a regular basis.

When told about craters on the road he said they would repair those by Friday, adding that a maintenance fund for emergency works is available.

Easy method to get safe

FROM PAGE 20
have invented a method of killing harmful bacteria in floodwater using nothing but sunlight.

"Now, people can drink floodwater even if the disaster washes away their earthen stoves," said a smiling Rabbani, while demonstrating the method at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity.

The professor claimed he had been working on the method since the late 80s to remove bacteria from floodwater that are responsible for common diseases like Diarrhoea and Cholera in the country.

Flood-hit people can use the method to purify water on the rafts and boats, he said.

In the process, the DU team used ordinary materials like dry straw, bamboo tray, black paint and transparent polypropylene (PP) bags.

At first, they painted the inner side of a bamboo basket black and then kept three tightly-knotted PP bags of floodwater inside it.

After that, they wrapped the upper side of the basket with two transparent plastic sheets with a clearance of two-cm in between and kept it under sunlight.

Most of the heat entering the basket through the plastic sheets are absorbed inside the basket and creates the greenhouse effect, claimed Rabbani.

Thus heat is produced and temperature inside the basket can be up to 70 degrees Celsius in less than two hours, killing the germs and the water can be drunk then, he said.

The professor yesterday also showed a steel-device that is made

using the method named "Solar water Pasteuriser".

Temperature above 60 degrees Celsius is enough to kill the germs that cause diseases like bacteria-related Diarrhoea and Cholera in 30 minutes, said the DU professor.

"On the other hand, the Sun's UV rays destroy the bacteria too and thus makes the method more efficient," he added.

However, water kept in the PP bags need to be filtered using several layers of clothes to get rid of the dirt first.

The professor claimed that the team had carried out the test at DU's Centre for Advanced Research in Sciences (CARS) several times before and it showed "positive results every time", but said the method is unable to kill virus-related germs.

Contacted, Latiful Bari, principal scientist at CARS, said the temperature produced in the method can kill the bacteria that are harmful to humans.

"Since the method is used on the surface water during monsoon, it is free of toxic metals like arsenic present in the groundwater in many districts," opined the scientist.

However, heavily polluted water sources like the Buriganga river or water contaminated with insecticides cannot be purified using such a simple method, he cautioned.

Unlike other plastic materials, PP bags are non-carcinogenic. As a result the water heated in these bags remains harmless, he assured.

If any object is carcinogenic, it means it contributes to causing cancer in human bodies.

5 DU teachers'

FROM PAGE 20
The syndicate at a meeting on June 22 endorsed the decision, subject to submission of freedom fighter certificates by the six. Four syndicate members gave notes of dissent in the meeting.

Two months have elapsed since then, but none of the beneficiaries have yet submitted the certificates.

The university registrar on June 25 issued letters to all but Prof Nasrin confirming extension of their services. The letters, however, did not mention any timeframe for submission of the documents.

Of the teachers, Prof Nasrin will go on LPR (leave preparatory for retirement) on June 30 next year, while the LPR of Prof Iqbal and Prof Azizur were due on June 30 this year.

Prof Giasuddin Mollah went on LPR on June 30 last year as the chairman of political science department. He applied for the extension in June this year.

Accordingly, the syndicate considered his one year LPR period as normal service age and decided that his LPR will be effective from June 30 next year.

As the chairmanship of Prof Azizur Rahman ended on June 30 this year, the university authorities appointed another teacher to head the physics department. But following the syndicate's decision to extend the service of Prof Azizur, the authorities reinstated him as chairman.

RULES FLOUTED

According to a decision made by the syndicate on July 6, 2011, neither any teacher nor any staff should be entitled to benefits applicable for freedom fighters in public jobs unless or until they submit proper documents.

The retirement age of university teachers has been extended from 65 years to 67 years, while that for the staff from 60 to 62 years, read the minutes of the syndicate meeting. The extension of age limits will only be applicable to those who would submit documents approved by the ministry concerned, it added.

The syndicate's move also violates a government gazette issued in November 2012. The notice

extended the retirement age of freedom fighter officials and staff in public and autonomous bodies by one year.

In a circular issued on August 4, the liberation war affairs ministry said to be eligible to get a one-year extension in service as a freedom fighter, an employee must declare himself as a freedom fighter while joining the job.

In addition, the name of the employee should be enrolled in the "Mukti Barta" or a gazette, and he must have a valid freedom fighter certificate, added the notice.

Contacted, VC Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique said the syndicate extended the services of the staff as they submitted letters from the liberation war affairs ministry stating that the verification of the freedom fighters' authenticity is stopped now and will commence soon.

The ministry in a recent letter to the DU said the extension of freedom fighters' services should be for one year and the university from now on will follow the instructions, he added.

Pro-VC (administration) Shahid Akter Hossain said, "We'll wait till the LPR of the six staff ends. If they fail to submit their freedom fighter certificates by the timeframe, all their benefits will be withdrawn."

The syndicate will then make a final decision on taking action against them for failure to submit the certificates, he mentioned.

Pro-VC Nasrin Ahmad said she had worked as an English newscaster at the Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra. She has applied to Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangshad this year for publishing her name in a gazette.

Contacted, Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque said they received applications from five DU teachers and a staff for including their names in a gazette.

The ministry requires recommendations from the Jatiya Muktiyoddha Council in this regard. The council is not functional now as it has no committee and therefore, the certificates cannot be issued to them at this moment, he pointed out.