

## Auto-owners besiege Thakurgaon municipality

Owners and drivers of diesel-run three-wheelers and battery-run auto-rickshaws, with their vehicles, besieged Thakurgaon Municipality yesterday, demanding cancellation of tender bid for collecting toll from the vehicles.

They also put up barricades at all the entry points of the municipality with their vehicles. They staged the sit-in in the municipality compound from 10:30am to noon, following a discussion at the same venue.

Leaders of Thakurgaon Three Wheelers' Association and Battery-run Auto-rickshaw Samity said the municipal authority floated a tender to collect toll from the vehicles illegally. They urged the authority not to do so because it would create an unstable situation. They withdrew the barricade after the municipal authority withheld the tender.

Among others, President Indrajeet Guha Thakurata, and General Secretary Zakaria Pramanik of Thakurgaon Three Wheelers' Association, and President Siddiqur Rahman of Battery-run Auto-rickshaw Samity, addressed the rally.

Rashedul Islam, secretary of Thakurgaon Municipality, told this correspondent that the municipality floated a tender on May 5 to give lease for collection of toll from public toilets, slaughter houses, three wheelers and battery-run auto-rickshaws plying on the roads in the municipality, and also from the stands and parking areas.

The last date of submission of tender bids was May 18.



Construction work of Lohalia Bridge on the Lohalia River on Patuakhali-Dashmina road remains suspended for over a year.

PHOTO: SOHRAB HOSSAIN

# Thousands suffer as work on bridge suspended

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Construction work of Lohalia Bridge on the Lohalia River on Patuakhali-Dashmina via Bauful road has remained suspended for over a year after completion of some 55 percent work, much to the sufferings of thousands of people of the area.

Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) authorities suspended the work as the Payra sea port authority raised objection on its height.

As a result, Tk 29.4 crore has already been spent for building the bridge and acquisition of land.

In 2008, Patuakhali LGED took up a plan to build a bridge on the

Lohalia River on Patuakhali-Dashmina via Bauful road to ease road communication of all eight upazilas in Patuakhali district and also in Bhola and Barguna districts.

The construction work of the 464-metre long girder bridge was started in November 2011 and was scheduled to end on October 20 in 2014 at a cost of Tk 46 crore, sources at Patuakhali LGED said.

Initially Tk 3.75 crore has been spent to acquisition 4.951 acres of land. But after completion of 55 percent work, the LGED authorities stopped construction work of the bridge on October 1 in 2014 as per decision jointly taken by LGED and the Shipping Ministry and

since then all work on the bridge was stalled. LGED already paid Tk 25.29 crore to the construction firm, a source said.

Thousands of people of Bauful, Dashmina and Galachipa upazilas are suffering a lot to cross the river near Patuakhali district town as construction of the bridge became uncertain.

Md Khokon Mia, a teacher of a non-government college, said "I go to my college regularly by crossing the river by trawler which is a very hazardous journey."

Contacted, Abu Saleh Md Hanif, executive engineer of Patuakhali LGED, said they started construction work as height was 9.57 metres.

"We couldn't consider the Payra sea port in Kalapara upazila at the time of taking approval of the bridge. But the Shipping Ministry later raised their objection over its height and they suggested increasing its height to 18.30 meters, which is impossible," he said.

They talked to the Payra port authorities several times to solve the problem but in vain, the engineer said, adding that they are waiting for final decision from the higher authorities.

Despite repeated calls, this correspondent could not reach Md Saidur Rahman, member of Payra sea port authority, for his comment on the issue as he did not answer.



Patients wait before the counter of Pathology department of Shaheed Ziaur Rahmkan Medical College and Hospital in Bogra yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## PHARMACISTS OBSERVE STRIKE Patients suffer in Bogra clinics, hospitals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Medical technologists and pharmacists of the district observed a two-hour work abstention for the last two days in their respective work places at government and non-government organisation (NGO) hospitals and clinics from 10:00am to 12:00pm yesterday, as per the central programme.

They observed the programme to press their 10-point demands including gradation of their grade point, start of BSc course, process change of the technical education and immediate appointment start, said Arshad Hossain, convener of Medical Technologists' National demands implementation Committee, Bogra district unit.

They also formed a human

chain on the Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College and Hospital (SZMCH) premises in the district in the morning to realise their demands.

The work abstention caused immense sufferings to patients seeking services at pathology, outdoor, dental, blood donation and other crucial departments of the hospitals.

An elderly patient, Moslem Uddin, 55, of remote area in Shariakandi upazila said they reached SZMCH in the morning but is yet to have examined his blood.

Contacted, Dr AKM Kamrul Ahsan, assistant director of SZMCH, said the hospital authorities tried to lessen the sufferings of the patients during the work abstention by their medical officers.

## SNIPPETS

### Two drown in Gaibandha

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha  
Two minor boys drowned in a roadside ditch in Gobindaganj upazila of the district yesterday. The deceased are Sakib, 5, son of Abdul Matin, and his cousin Lahim, 6, son of Mintu Mia of Samespara village in the upazila. Local people recovered the bodies of victims from the water of ditch. Deceased's family members said the two kids were playing on a road in front of their house. At one stage, they fell into a ditch beside the road and drowned around 11:00am.

### Jamaat leader arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur  
Police arrested a Jamaat leader from Amairtara bazar in Dhamoilhat upazila of Naogaon district on Wednesday evening. He is an accused in a case for burning a motorcycle in 2015. The arrestee is Enamul Haque, 55, amir of Dhamoilhat upazila unit of Jamaat. Shikdar Md Moshir Rahman, officer-in-charge (OC) of Dhamoilhat Upazila Police Station, said Jamaat-Shibir men in the upazila burnt a motorcycle at Farshi area on February 9, 2015. A case was filed with the police station, accusing 123 people, including Amir.

### Boy 'kills himself'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur  
A teenage boy allegedly committed suicide at Sultanpur village in Phulbari upazila of the district yesterday. The deceased is Moinul Islam, 17, son of late Muktar Hossain of the village. Quoting locals, police said Moinul's mother scolded him for talking for a long time over mobile phone yesterday morning. Following his mother's scolding, the boy went to his room and later hanged himself from the ceiling around noon.



PHOTO: STAR  
Bangladesh Shikkhak Samity, Mymensingh unit, forms a human chain at Shaheed Firoz-Jahangir Square of the district town yesterday, protesting the public humiliation of a Narayanganj headmaster on May 13 by local Jatiya Party lawmaker AKM Salim Osman, and demanding punishment for the perpetrator.

## Carbide-ripened mangoes destroyed

STAR COUNTRY DESK  
Mobile courts in Natore and Meherpur have destroyed around 6400 kilograms of mangoes yesterday and on Wednesday night as they were tactfully ripened with harmful chemicals. BSTI officials said some unscrupulous traders use calcium carbide for ripening green mangoes or other seasonal fruits. Our Natore Correspondent reported that a mobile court destroyed around 400 kilograms of mangoes at Station Bazar in the town yesterday as they were ripened with harmful calcium carbide. Natore Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mohammad Nairuzzaman said some dishonest traders of the market were ripening a large quantity of mangoes by using harmful chemicals. Sensing the presence of the law enforcers, however, the mango traders of the market fled the scene around 6:30am. Later, the court led by the UNO destroyed the mangoes by throwing those under the wheels of running vehicles. Away in Meherpur, a mobile court seized a truck loaded with 6,000 kilogram of carbide mixed mangoes from Amjhupi village in Sada upazila on Wednesday night, reports our Kushtia correspondent.

## Farmers upset as paddy procurement yet to start

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

Farmers of the district are frustrated as buying of boro paddy from them directly is yet to start after an order from the government.

Though the government declared it would buy one kilogram of paddy at Tk 23 from May 5, it is yet to be materialised.

As a result, farmers are selling their paddy to the wholesale buyers in the local market at a low price, said the affected farmers.

As they are not getting proper price for their product, they are losing interest in cultivating paddy, said Nimai Mondal, secretary of the district unit of Bangladesh Krishak-Khetmajur Samitee.

One maund of paddy is now being sold at Tk 420 to Tk 430, which is half of the government rate, he said.

Reza Mohammad Mohsin, district food controller, said they have formed an upazila committee led by UNO to buy paddy from the farmers.

## BNP alleges obstruction in Dinajpur polls campaign

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Opposition party candidates contesting the union parishad elections in three districts have been facing obstructions from their opponents belonging to the ruling Awami League (AL).

The 5th phase of the union parishad elections will be held on May 28 in 56 unions of six upazilas of Dinajpur, Joypurhat and Naogaon. A total of 288 people of different parties are contesting the polls.

In Dinajpur, BNP held a press conference at the party office on Wednesday. Local BNP leader Murad Ahmed spoke at the conference. He said BNP candidates contesting in Sadar upazila have been facing threats from the ruling party men.

The situation is the same in Birganj upazila, he alleged. BNP workers in different unions also are being harassed by the AL men, he added.

The BNP-backed candidates won eight out of the 10 chairman posts in the last UP election.

Biswajit Ghosh Kanchan, secretary of Kotwali AL, termed the allegation as false.

In Birganj upazila, at least four people were injured in a clash during electoral campaigning in Nijpara union on Wednesday afternoon. The injured were admitted to Birganj Upazila Health Complex. Witnesses said supporters of MA

Khaleque, an AL rebel candidate, attacked supporters of Nurias Sayeed Sarker, the AL-nominated candidate, while they were hanging posters at Kalyanibazaar on Wednesday.

Nurias Sayeed Sarker said over phone that his election camp at Kalyanibazaar area was burnt yesterday morning. A hotel owned by one of his supporters was also vandalised, he added.

Election campaign is heating up in Kalai upazila of Joypurhat. There have been allegations by candidates over damaging of posters, but no major clash has been reported.

There were several clashes in Zindarpur union. Abdus Sobhan, former chairman of Zindarpur union, was critically injured when supporters of his opponent Ziaur Rahman attacked him at Itail village in the upazila.

Sobhan, who is contesting the election as an AL rebel, has been admitted to Joypurhat Modern Hospital.

Ziaur Rahman, a Jubo League leader who is contesting the election with the boat symbol, filed a case accusing Sobhan's supporters of torching his boat symbols.

In Naogaon, elections will be held in Atrai, Manda and Raninagar.

Voters said Manda is a strong vote bank of Jamaat. Besides, candidates of ruling AL are not in a comfortable position due to the challenge posed by the rebel AL candidates in almost every union of Manda upazila.

## Man gets death for killing 3

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A Meherpur court yesterday sentenced one person to death and two others life-term for killing three siblings in 2008 in the district.

The convicts are gang leader Minhajul Islam alias Dukhu Mia, his aides Asim Uddin and Tozammel Hossain of Dhola in Gangni upazila of the district.

Of the convicts, Dukhu is serving in an Indian jail after a court sentenced him to life-term in 2012 in a murder case there while Asim is living in Malaysia and Mozammel was in the dock during announcement of the verdict.

According to the prosecution, a gang of around 40 of 'Dukhu Bahini' led by Dukhu stormed into the house of the then Dhola union parishad member Imdadul Haq at about 1.30am on August 31, 2008.

The gang dragged Imdadul and his two brothers -- Zahidul Haq and Ruhul Haq -- out of their house and gunned down the three.

## 9th Death Anniversary



We pray for Marhum A. B. M. Kamal Uddin Khan on his 9th Death Anniversary today, the 20th of May 2016. Marhum A. B. M. Kamal Uddin Khan was a Founder Life Member of the North South University (NSU) Foundation, now changed to North South Foundation, which established and administered NSU, now run by NSU Trust.

He was also the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the NSU Foundation, and a member of the then Parichalona Porshod of NSU. He was a successful industrialist, prominent banker and enthusiastic philanthropist.

May Allah bless his soul and give the members of his family the strength to keep on bearing the loss.



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