

RAPE OF SCHOOLGIRL Six-hour blockade observed in Khagrachhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

A six-hour blockade was enforced in Khagrachhari yesterday, in protest against the rape of a class-8 student.

Due to the blockade from 6:00am to 12:00pm, vehicular movement remained suspended on the Dhaka-Khagrachhari, Chattogram-Khagrachhari, Khagrachhari-Rangamati, and Khagrachhari-Sajek routes.

In support of the blockade, protesters set fire to tyres and placed tree trunks on roads at various points across the district.

The blockade was announced yesterday at a protest rally under the banner of "Jumma Chhatra Janata," demanding the immediate arrest and trial of those involved in the rape and measures to ensure women's safety.

Khagrachhari Sadar Police Station OC Abdul Baten Mridha said only a few tyres were burned on the roads, but no other untoward incidents occurred. He added that police remain on high alert.

On the night of September 23, the girl was raped in Khagrachhari Sadar while returning home after private tuition.

Her father filed a case the next morning with Khagrachhari Sadar Police Station against three unidentified men.

Man killed by mob over theft charges

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A man was allegedly killed by a mob in Abhaynagar upazila of Jashore early yesterday on suspicion of "stealing fish".

The deceased is Nasib Talukder, 50, a resident of Gopinathpur village.

"Nasib's body bore multiple stab injuries. A case was filed today with the police station against 20-30 unidentified people," said KM Robiul Islam, officer-in-charge of Abhaynagar Police Station.

Three persons were detained for interrogation, he added.

Quoting witnesses, OC Robiul said Nasib entered a fish enclosure in Nolamara area around 3:45am when locals spotted him. They chased him down and attacked him with sharp weapons, leaving him dead on the spot.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Jashore General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Climate disruptions

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dependency, and poor access to services limit women's and girls' ability to seek SRHR care, particularly during climate disruptions, it said.

Adolescent girls, widows, separated and unmarried women, women with disabilities, and migrants face compounded risks, including exclusion from relief, harassment, and loss of privacy and reproductive autonomy, it also said.

Based on the research outputs, the three climate-resilient SRHR intervention packages have been prepared, said Prof Iqbal Kabir, director of CCHPU.

The community-based package focuses on building

community readiness, promoting local and community-led solutions, and empowering individuals through awareness, capacity building, and grassroots mobilisation.

The facility-based package focuses on strengthening health facility systems to ensure SRHR service delivery during climate disruptions.

The shelter-based package will work to upgrade shelter infrastructure and improve inter-agency coordination for timely and effective SRHR responses.

Prof Abu Jalor, director general of DGHS; Mohammad Abdus Salama Khan, additional secretary of the Medical Education and Family Welfare Division; Sayed Rubayet, country director of Ipas Bangladesh; and Gita Das, president of Naripokkho, also spoke at the programme, among others.

Separate SC

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declared that "judicial independence has been translated into lived reality," citing "near one hundred percent implementation" of pledges made in September 2024.

He highlighted the enactment of the Supreme Judicial Appointment Council Ordinance, 2025, which created a body to recommend merit-based candidates for the apex court.

The programme, jointly organised by the Supreme Court and UNDP at a hotel, was presided over by Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury of the Appellate Division.

British High Commissioner Sarah Cooke, Swedish Ambassador Nicolas Weeks, Norwegian Ambassador Håkon Arald Gulbrandsen, EU Ambassador Michael Miller, and UNDP Resident Representative Stefan Liller also spoke, among others.

Campaigning begins for Cucusu election

CU CORRESPONDENT

Formal campaigning for the Chittagong University Central Students' Union (Cucusu) and hall union elections officially started yesterday.

Candidates hit the ground in the afternoon after the final candidates' list and draft ballot numbers were published.

The Election Commission for the polls said ballot numbers in the final list were assigned in order according to the Bengali alphabet.

To reach voters, candidates are employing various strategies, including visiting campus huts, shuttle trains, and popular student hangouts to interact directly with students and present their manifestos.

The Cucusu Election Commission earlier announced that voting will take place on October 15. All exams scheduled for October 15 and 16 will be suspended, although classes will continue as usual.

The commission also said that all necessary preparations have been made to maintain discipline during the campaign.

With the Durga Puja holidays starting tomorrow, some candidates expect campaign activity to slow down. However, others emphasised maximising online campaigning during this period to ensure manifestos reach all students.

According to the university website, a total of 908 candidates will contest the polls. Of them, 415 are vying for 26 Cucusu positions, while 493 are contesting 14 hall union posts. The draft voter list includes 27,521 students.

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A youth organisation arranges the Climate Strike 2025 programme with the slogan "Protect the Coast, Protect the Nation" in Shyamnagar, Satkhira yesterday. The event, organised on the newly emerged char of the Kholpetua River near Nowabekni Bazar, echoes the sentiment of protecting the area alongside the country.

MOTHER, CHILD CENTRE IN JHENNAIDAH

Staff shortage hampers healthcare

AZIBOR RAHMAN, Jhenaidah

The 10-bed Mother and Child Welfare Centre in Kaliganj upazila of Jhenaidah, built at a cost of Tk 44.2 crore, is struggling to deliver essential health services for pregnant women and children due to an acute shortage of doctors, nurses and staff.

Inaugurated on February 22, 2022, the hospital was equipped with modern facilities to provide advanced medical care to pregnant mothers and children, ensure safe childbirth and treat paediatric diseases.

But it lost its efficacy within a few months because of manpower shortage and is now practically on the verge of a service shutdown.

Although there are 12 approved staff posts, only one medical technologist and one family welfare

inspector currently work there full-time. Four others are posted under joint orders.

There are no regular doctors, pharmacists or the manpower needed to keep the operation theatre running.



"I came to see a doctor, but there is no one. So, I have to leave," said Rehena Khatun, who came to the hospital for treatment.

Another patient, Selina Begum, shared a similar experience.

Left unused for a prolonged period, the operation theatre is now

in disrepair, expensive instruments and equipment are being damaged, and beds lie empty. Even the water lines are out of order.

"Every month, some 200 to 250 patients come for treatment. Due to shortage of manpower and medicine, we cannot serve them adequately," said Anjali Rani, family welfare inspector at the hospital.

Dr Kamal Hossain, medical officer and in-charge of the hospital, said, "We are suffering from an acute manpower crisis and shortage of medicines for a long time. We are trying to keep some services running on a limited scale."

Contacted, Dr Md Kamruzzaman, civil surgeon of Jhenaidah, said he had forwarded a letter to the concerned authority for appointing necessary manpower and providing other essentials to the hospital as soon as possible.

Bridge lies idle as approach road caves in

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A portion of the approach road of a bridge has broken down in Mymensingh's Nandail upazila due to recent heavy rainfall, creating risk for local people.

Constructed by the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), the 96-metre-long Daspara Bridge on the Sukhajhuri river was completed two years ago at a cost of Tk 7.42 crore.

But a portion of its approach road has collapsed. As the 1.5km mud road remains unfit for use, even reaching the bridge on foot has become impossible.

Amir Uddin, a farmer of Daspara village, said the mud road through Darilla village connects the concrete roads on both ends -- Nandail-Tarail and Amlitola-Kaliaganj roads.



The condition of the mud road is dire, with knee-deep water accumulating in large potholes this season, while portions of the 200-metre approach roads on both ends have already caved in.

Md Kamal Uddin of Darilla village said they used bamboo bridges in the dry season and boats in the monsoon to cross the river.

"Even though a concrete bridge was built, the mud road has not been made concrete yet. So, this expensive bridge is of no use to us," he said.

Easy-bike driver Raju Mia alleged low quality materials were used in the construction work.

Denying the use of substandard materials in constructing the bridge, Abdul Malek Biswas, upazila engineer of LGED in Nandail, said they have already contacted the construction firm and asked them to repair the broken site immediately.

He also said a proposal has been sent to the authorities concerned to pave the mud road to make the bridge more functional for the people.

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