

Upazila roundup

SIRAJGANJ

River erosion renders 300 families homeless

May 31: At least 300 families of 32 villages in five upazilas of the district have been rendered homeless over the last 24 hours due to continuous erosion by the river Jamuna, reports UNB.

Water Development Board sources said water level rose by 13 centimetres till 6 am today. The worst affected upazilas are Sadar, Kazipur, Chauhalli, Belkuchi and Sahajadpur.

Sub-divisional Engineer of Water Development Board said that at least 40 families of Dura, Moregram and Paikpara under Sadar upazila took shelter in Rally Kutty area of Raipur and on water development embankment.

About 75 per cent shoals of the river in Ranigram and Groyen area of Sadar upazila were meanwhile devoured by the rampaging Jamuna, he added.

Erosion has already threatened the existence of the district jail. If immediate measures are not taken to check the erosion the jail will be engulfed by the river soon, officials said.

Posts lying vacant

Three posts of the district Family Planning officers here have been lying vacant for a long time.

Sources said, the posts of one Deputy Director and two Assistant Directors were lying vacant for more than two years hampering the normal functioning of the family planning activities.

The field level programmes of the family planning office is beset with manifold problems in the absence of proper coordination and supervision. As a result many projects remained shelved for months together.

Local people have urged the authorities to take immediate steps in this regard to gear up family planning activities in the district.

MADARIPUR

Role of US Task Force lauded

May 31: Bangladeshi Gobeshana Kendra (Bangladesh Research Center) today expressed gratitude to the countries who had extended their helping hands in mitigating the sufferings of the country's cyclone victims, reports UNB.

In a statement to the press, the central committee of the Kendra also lauded the role of the US Task Force for their participation in reaching relief to the affected people in the cyclone-battered areas.

Condemning unwanted criticism by vested quarters against the presence of the US joint Task Force, they said those who were after it did not perform any responsibility to the distressed people.

They urged all to stay away from such criticism and appreciate the gesture of friendly countries who came to help the cyclone victims in response to the call of the government.

PABNA

11 anti-social elements arrested

May 31: In a bid to improve the law and order situation police arrested 11 anti-social elements from different upazilas here last week, reports UNB.

According to police, at least 67 crimes including three murders, five stabbing, two hijacking and two snatching incidents, 13 thefts and five rapes were committed during the period.

Forty-two cases were filed with different police stations in this connection. In a recent law and order committee meeting police sought cooperation from the people to help arrest the criminals and maintain a congenial atmosphere in the district.

BOGRA

Attack on daily Korotoa protested

May 31: Journalists here in a meeting Tuesday protested attack on Daily Korotoa by Jammal activists, reports UNB. Jointly organised by local Press Club and Bangladesh Sangbadik Samity, the meeting decided to boycott news of Jammal-e-Islami and its front organisations.

Chaired by Zahedur Rahman, editor of Daily Chingbazar, the meeting condemned the attack and asked the authorities to prevent such activities in future.

BRAHMANBARIA

Music school needs care

May 31: The lone music school of the town is plagued with various problems hampering the academic atmosphere, reports UNB.

Sources said the 'Sur Samrat Ustad Alauddin Sangitanangan,' established in 1950 at the residence of late musician Ustad Ayet Ali Khan was closed down in 1967 due to fund shortage.

With the help of local music lovers, the school was reopened in 1979 but was again shut down three months later. It was opened again in 1981 with the financial help from the Ministry of Sports and Culture.

At present there are 200 students in the school and eight teachers also don't get regular salary.

Besides, musical instruments have become too old for use and the school building itself is in dilapidated condition. People here have urged the authorities to do needful in this regard.

Irri-Boro

Irri-Boro production target will not be achieved this year as the standing crops in many areas were damaged by the nor'westers during the last fortnight.

Sources said nor'westers and incessant rainfall had caused extensive damage to the standing Irri-Boro crops at the flowering stage. The loss was estimated at about Taka 2 crore.

Meanwhile, prices of vegetables and other essentials have shot up in the district following heavy downpour in many parts of the district.

Taking advantage of the situation some unscrupulous traders are creating artificial scarcity of essentials to earn maximum profit.

Local people have urged the authorities to take action against the dishonest traders.

SHIBGANJ

Civic amenities absent

May 31: The upazila town here is beset with manifold problems due to lack of civic amenities, reports UNB.

The upazila roads have developed many cracks and potholes at many points causing inconvenience to the pedestrians and vehicular movement. Waters remain stagnant even after slight rainfall making the roads muddy and slippery.

The road side ditches, filled with filths and garbages are not cleaned regularly causing bulk breeding of mosquitoes. Bad drainage system has also aggravated the situation.

Moreover, mosquito menace has assumed an alarming proportion in the upazila town making the life of the dwellers particularly the students miserable. Upazila authorities after repeated appeal failed to take any initiative to eradicate the mosquito menace, local people alleged.

In the absence of public toilets floating town people are compelled to respond to the call of nature in roadsides polluting the environment.

Frequent power failure, a regular feature in the town, has been causing much inconvenience to the business community and students. The town virtually plunges in to darkness after sun set giving rise to anti-social activities.

The market in the town also is a bad shape. The shopkeeper have been facing numerous problems for want of space and adequate number of sheds.

There is no recreational facilities in the town hampering proper growth of the children. Adulterated foodstuff are being sold with impunity in hotels and restaurants here before the nose of the law enforcing agencies resulting in the outbreak of the gastrointestinal and skin diseases.

C' NAWABGANJ

Road construction in progress

May 31: Construction of eight kilometres Bholahat-Agarhat road here at a cost of Taka 2.20 crore in Bholahat and Shibganj upazilas is progressing fast, reports UNB.

The project financed by the World Bank (WB) has already completed 50 per cent of its work and is expected to be finished by December next, officials sources said.

With the completion of the project, road communication between the two upazilas will be improved to a great extent, the sources added.



With the help of his daughter, a farmer, separating the remnants of paddy still consumable, from a basket damaged during the recent catastrophic cyclone at a village in Chokoria. — Star photo

English teacher shortage in colleges, madrasahs

From Our Correspondent

DINAJPUR, May 31: Over 80 per cent non-government colleges and 95 per cent senior Madrasahs of the country have no requisite number of English teachers. As a result, English teaching is being hampered and the guardians are facing economic hardships.

According to the government rules, each senior Madrasah requires one lecturer in English, an intermediate college requires two lecturers in English and a Degree college requires three or more lecturers in English.

Observation reports say that these posts are not filled due to two main reasons. Non-availability of sufficient Master Degree holders in English with requisite qualification. Since 1985 the former government had stopped the recruitment of third class Master degree holders to bring down the rate of higher education. As a result, many intermediate and degree colleges could not employ more than one or two required teachers in English due to which many institutions are running without English teachers. Moreover, the number of successful second class Masters and second class Honours is not adequate. Financial problem is another factor which made the institutions to appoint part time English teacher with requisite qualification. The institutions located in various districts do not get a single application after advertisement. In some cases applicants do not appear before the interview board even after receiving interview cards.

On the other hand lecturers of other subjects earn a big amount through private coaching in English. Besides, when a new English lecturer joins the college he is put under heavy pressure by the teachers of vested interest to leave the Institution due to which the existing posts remain vacant for years together. It is alleged that some teachers holding third class M. A. degree from Indian Universities were enjoying full monetary and other benefits by managing condonation certificates, where as Bangladesh Third class Master degree holders are deprived of condonation certificates resulting in financial and beneficial loss.

The Principals of the colleges urged upon the government to withdraw the existing rules and allow recruitment of third class holders and extend financial benefits and other facilities including promotion for ensuring successful education all over the country.

Power failure

Frequent power failures has become rampant in Dinajpur and other adjoining areas creating much inconvenience to the people in the district.

The town dwellers complained that they are enduring

an intolerable situation in these summer hot days due to continuous absence of electricity. Situation turns serious when electric supply is put off for days together.

They added that valuable electronic goods like refrigerators, T. V. sets, V. C. R's and Air coolers go out of order rendering irreparable loss to the owners.

The areas plunge into darkness creating utter inconvenience to the inhabitants. In addition theft, burglary, and anti-social activities go on unabated.

Crimes galore in Satkhira

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, May 31: Four dacoities were committed in four villages of Assassuni upazila during the last two months.

Law and order situation has deteriorated sharply in Tala and Kalaroa upazilas in the district.

In April last a gang of dacoits numbering 15 to 20 entered the house of Ruhul

Amin, Principal, Assassuni College at village Hajrakhal at night and beat the inmates mercilessly while decamping with the booties worth Taka 50,000 including a SBBL gun. They shot at Mokammel Gazi (45).

Another dacoity was committed in village Godara of the same upazila. At night a gang of armed dacoits raided the

Diarrhoea claims 35 lives in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, May 31: Diarrhoea has claimed at least 35 lives including women and children and attacked 3000 others in five upazilas of Jhenidah district over the last one month.

The affected upazilas are Jhenidah Sadar, Shalakup, Kalganj, Mohepur and Harinakundu of whom Jhenidah Sadar was worst affected. The worst affected villages are Shurat, Krishnapur, Bakua, Kalamkhali, Haripur, and Modhunathpur.

Official sources confirmed only 27 deaths and 1700 afflicted by the disease during the period. District Civil Surgeon told this correspondent that 28 medical teams have been working in the affected upazilas of the district to combat the spread of the disease. Necessary ORS packets and water purifying tablets have already been supplied and the disease is now under control.

Bishnu idol recovered

From Our Correspondent

CHAPAINWABGANJ, May 31: The BDR personnel of 31 battalion recovered an idol of Bishnu from Hajipur village under Bholahat upazila on May 21. The image was hidden underground in a house to be smuggled out to India.

According to the sources, the idol was first discovered by a group of labourers while excavating a khas pond at Ganguria village of Niamatpur upazila of Naogaon district in February. The idol was with Md. Khaleq, leader of the labourers from where it was again stolen and kept hidden underground.

Some hooligans headed by a notorious smuggler threatened the Editor of the weekly 'Nawabganj Barta' for taking a snap of a bicycle carrying polyester cloth for smuggling to India. When local police denied to take OD against them, the smuggler threatened to kill the editor.

The areas plunge into darkness creating utter inconvenience to the inhabitants. In addition theft, burglary, and anti-social activities go on unabated.

The reporters strongly condemned the untoward incident and demanded punishment of the miscreants.

he added. The scarcity of safe water and unhygienic condition of the villages were the main causes of the outbreak of diarrhoea.

The affected people urged the authorities to take immediate measure to combat further spread of the disease.

Tornado lashes

A severe tornado lashed at least 12 villages of Jhenidah Sadar, Harinakundu and Shalakup upazilas injuring at least eight people and damaging standing crops of vast areas in the district recently. Over one hundred kutcha and tinshed houses including semi-pucca school and mosque buildings were razed to the ground rendering hundreds of people homeless. A cow also died in the village Datgachi under Jhenidah Sadar upazila.

The affected villages are Gokulnagar, Charpara, Fuluri, Jadavpur, Dangachi, Bahadurpur, Shadhukhali, Taminagar, Nagarbattan and Hamdoha of the district.

Two injured persons were admitted to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital for treatment.

Ghorashal-Dhaka road link disrupted

GHORASHAL (Narsingdi), May 31: Communications between Ghorashal and Dhaka were disrupted as transport workers put up road barricade after a clash, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the clash occurred near Ghorashal bus stand at about 10-30 am between members of Truck Bandabastakari Samity and Bus-Truck Drivers Association after a brawl over toll collection from the drivers.

Soon after the incident, the Truck Bandabastakari Samity activists put up barricade near the bus stand, snapping road communication between Ghorashal and Polash.

Road traffic between the industrial township and the capital as well as other parts of the country came to a halt at 12-15 pm after bus and truck drivers stopped plying transports.

Police intervened, but communications could not be restored, officials said.

Notes from Patuakhali

From Our Correspondent

PATUAHALI, May 31: Four persons were killed by lightning in Patuakhali recently. The victims are a three-year-old infant, Abdur Rashid (30), Sonawan (25) and Marlam (55). The deceased hail from Marichbunia Union Parishad under Patuakhali Sadar upazila and belong to the same family. However, the 8-day-old child of Abdur Rashid was left unharmed. Abdur Rashid's father Abdur Kader was also wounded in the incident.

Hearing the tragic news, Deputy Commissioner of Patuakhali Sheikh Md. Salahuddin, Sadar U. N. O and O. C. Patuakhali Sadar thana rushed to the spot. They arranged the burial and sent the wounded to hospital.

UP Chairman held

Omar Faruk Chowdhury Union Parishad Chairman of Ratandi-Taltali Union under Galachipa Upazila of Patuakhali district has been arrested by Abul Kashem, First class Magistrate, Galachipa while the accused was selling wheat in black market.

It is learnt that government has sanctioned 46 metric tons of wheat for the reconstruction and repair of Ratandi-Taltali cluster village. Omar Faruk was the chairman of the project. In the name of reconstruction he lifted this wheat from the godown of Galachipa and while selling the wheat, Magistrate Abul Kashem caught him redhandedly and handed him over to Police. Upazila Magistrate cancelling his appeal for bail sent him to jail custody. Since then tense situation is prevailing in Galachipa.

Body recovered

Mirzaganj Thana Police recovered the body of a man identified as Nurul Islam (40) from a brick field adjacent to Mirzaganj Police Station. Later, it was learnt that the deceased hail from Khudkita village under Barguna district and used to supply fire wood to brickfields. The day before the occurrence of the incident he got 20 thousand Taka as sales proceed and stayed the night with the workers of the brickfield.

On the following mornings police recovered his body from the brickfield. The proprietor of the brickfield filed a case against the workers of the brickfield and since then they are absconding.



Thanarhat High School and students' hostels under Begumganj Upazila of Noakhali district damaged by the recent tornado. — Star photo

Emergency rehabilitation plan in Kutubdia

KUTUBDIA, May 31: The government has taken up a Taka 15.7 crore emergency rehabilitation programme in this cyclone-battered island as the survivors are beginning to settle down to a normal life with continuous supply of relief goods.

Local officials told BSS Special Correspondent Delwar Hossain that under the emergency programme, the government would spend Taka 10.86 crore on fisheries sector, the mainstay of the islanders. The government will spend Taka 2.86 crore on livestock, Taka 1.09 crore on agriculture and Taka 99 lakh on repairing of roads under the same programme, they said.

The correspondent found the people of the island in the Bay of Bengal had almost cleared their homesteads of runs left by the recent devastating cyclone and tidal surge, the worst in Bangladesh's history.

Though the brunt of the cyclone is still haunting the resilient people of the island they have extended their helping hands to the administration in plugging the breaches of embankments along the coastline with must be completed before the full fury of the monsoon starts next month.

Thousands of people are seen engaged in earthwork of repair the nearly 50-mile long embankment which was damaged by the cyclone.

Tradings in local bazars have started in a limited scale with the arrival of new supplies of essentials like rice, wheat, vegetables and fish.

Dewatering of ponds, contaminated by the tidal surge, is going on everywhere in the island under the government's

test relief programme. British Royal Air Force helicopters are continuing to airlift emergency supplies like house-building materials and deep tubewells while the US marines maintain transportation of pure drinking water to the affected islanders.

Besides, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society and other voluntary agencies like Oxfam, BRAC and Gonosathya have been engaged in relief operations in the island.

The Red Crescent Society has taken up a 60-day food distribution programme among 4,800 families here, each family will get rice, dal and edible oil under the programme.

Gonosathya, in addition to their relief work, is distributing text books among the SSC candidates.

Khandakar Shahidul Islam, the Upazila Relief Coordinator, told BSS that the government

would provide boat engines, fishing nets and easy-term loans for the rehabilitation of fishermen of the island.

One thousand four hundred ponds will be brought under fisheries development projects, the official said, adding that 78 power pumps had been pressed into service for dewatering the ponds.

Under the rehabilitation programme of the livestock sector, the government will provide 15,900 families with cattleheads.

Mr. Islam said at present the farmers were being given spades and other agricultural inputs for cultivation.

He said 14,800 acres of land would be brought under Aman cultivation in the island. The Upazila Agriculture officer, Serajul Islam said salinity in the fields had now mostly

gone due to daily rainfall. However, he expects good harvest of salinity-resistant IRR1 and a local variety of paddy now being cultivated in the area.

Under the afforestation programme, 5,000 saplings are being planted in the island, he said.

Local officials said the government was providing each affected family with two bundles of C.I sheets to reconstruct their houses.

Local people interviewed by the BSS correspondent expressed their happiness over the sincere and prompt actions of the new government to bring immediate succour to them.

Zakir Ahmed, Acting Chairman of Baroghup Union, said the government had done enough for the islanders in the aftermath of the cyclone.