

## SNAPS

**Fugitive nabbed**

**UNB, Comilla**  
Police arrested a fugitive convict from Padua bazaar in Sadar Upazila on Friday.

The arrested was Delwar Hossain alias Rogkata Dilu, 32, son of Nowab Ali of village Sriballatpur.

**Rapist gets life term RI**

**UNB, Barisal**

A speedy trial court here has convicted a man and sentenced him to life term rigorous imprisonment (RI) in a rape case.

The lifer was identified as Siddique, 16, of Chandpara Mehendiganj in Sadar upazila. Siddique raped a nine-year-old girl on July 30, 2002 when she came to his rice mill for husking paddy.

After examining the records and witnesses, the judge handed down the verdict Saturday.

**Man gets 10-year RI in arms case**

**UNB, Manikganj**

A man was sentenced to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) here in an arms case.

The convict was M Soheli Ali, son of Hayat Ali of village Tili in Saturia upazila. Police arrested Soheli along with a pistol from a circus show in the upazila headquarters on February 19 last year. The District and Sessions Judge pronounced the verdict on Saturday.

**New UP chairmen, members take oath in a Bogra UZ**

**UNB, Bogra**

The oath taking ceremony of the newly elected chairmen and members of different Union Parishads (UPs) in Gabtoli upazila (UZ) was held on Wednesday.

Water Resources Minister Engineer LK Siddiqui attended the ceremony as the chief guest.

Helaluzzaman Talukder MP, Deputy Commissioner Rafiqul Mohammad and Bogra municipality commissioner Murshed Milton attended the programme.

**RU female students in fear of 'blackmailing'****Munnujan Hall students submit memo to provost**

**ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi**

'Blackmailing' fear gripped the students of all the four female residential halls of Rajshahi University (RU).

Students of Munnujan Hall on Sunday submitted a memorandum to the hall provost asking for security as a syndicate was found active in blackmailing the female students. The memorandum said that unidentified 'men' threatened to blackmail them.

Resident students of the hall on Thursday afternoon caught an outsider Samina Sultana Mala on charge of theft. On the day students of the hall chased a group of four women wearing veils while they were suspiciously walking inside the hall. At one stage they caught Mala.

The fear deepened as the victims did not complain considering their social status, said a senior teacher to The Daily

Star on condition of anonymity.

Old students of female halls alleged that 'a gang of blackmailers' remained active in their dormitories for the last few years.

Women members of the gang secretly set up mini video camera inside bathrooms of the halls or some of them, 'in guise of guests', stayed at night in the halls and snapped photos of sleeping half-clad girls to blackmail them.

Newcomers who stayed at the large dormitories were the worst sufferers, students told this correspondent. They further informed that one such video camera was recovered from a bathroom of Rokeya Hall in June, 2001. The matter was not solved as yet due to dearth of evidences against the perpetrators of heinous acts.

In early 1999, the university authorities expelled a female student named

Shimul from Tapasi Rabeya Hall for her alleged mysterious conduct with fellow hall-mates.

Next year Shimul's friend Sabina Yasmin Mita was murdered at Shimul's room at Karmajibi Mohila Hostel in Bilshimla area of the city.

The investigative authority found that Shimul and one of her friends orchestrated the murder as Mita objected to forcing female students of the university to prostitution through blackmail.

In 2001, police arrested two veiled women after foiling their bid to blackmail a female student.

In 2002, the university authorities withdrew Anjuman Ara Ayna, a female supervisor of Munnujan Hall following submission of her recorded porno CD to the then pro vice chancellor by the hall residents.

**Clash over fishing leaves 50 hurt in Rajshahi**

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi**

Fifty persons, 20 of them seriously, were injured in a clash over fishing between two feuding groups in Jalahar area of Godagari upazila on Monday.

Seriously injured five persons named Azad, Morshed, Kashem, Moazzem and Altaf were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH), while 15 others-- Abu Taleb, Momtaz, Abdul Kuddus, Soleman, Ataur, Sourav, Yunus, Zahangir, Tariqul, Rabiul, Sahajahan, Touhirul, Shahidul, Qayum and Niamat-- were shifted to Prentali Health Complex.

The clash erupted at around 11am between Shahjahan-Ismael and Moazzem-Altal groups over catching fish from a leased pond on Thursday by Shahjahan-Ismael group, police and witnesses said to this correspondent.

Police from Godagari thana brought the situation under control at around 2pm.

Additional police forces were deployed in the area to avert further clash in the area, police added.

**Body of outlaw recovered**

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna**

Police on Sunday recovered the body of an outlawed party leader who was also a top listed criminal of Pabna from village Niogy of Tatibandh union in Sujanagar upazila.

The dead was Ahd Ali alias Akalia of village Bamjibonpur in Sujanagar.

Police recovered the body from a field of the village at 10am on the day and sent it to Pabna General Hospital for autopsy.

Police sources said Akalia might have been killed on Saturday night as a sequel to internal feud of the outlawed party.

Akalia's wife Shikha Khatun said to this correspondent that her husband did not return after going out of his home on Saturday evening.

She filed a murder case with Sujanagar police station. Police could not arrest anyone.

**Relief for Bagha nor'wester victims**

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi**

Swa Unnayan Shangstha, a Rajshahi based non-governmental organisation (NGO) in collaboration with Concern Bangladesh on Monday distributed relief goods among 500 most-affected families of nor'wester in Bagha upazila on April 14.

Each of the families were given 15 kilogram (kg) of rice, one kg of pulse, one kg of aluminum dish, one plate, one glass, four packets of biscuit and five-metre long thick polythene for shed.

Bagha upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) ABM Zahrul Islam inaugurated the distribution programme, while Swa Unnayan general secretary Mustafizur Rahman Khan, disaster and environment management unit coordinator of Concern Bangladesh Ashutosh Dey and Association for Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) representative Abul Kalam Azad attended the programme.

Some 1,000 families were affected in the nor'wester that swept over 15 unions of the upazila and left some 50 persons injured and damaging 3,000 houses including 15 school buildings.

No government relief for destitute families reached as yet. They are leading a sub-human life under open sky for last seven days.

**More irrigation facilities in Thakurgaon**

**UNB, Thakurgaon**

Some 1,400 acres of additional land in Thakurgaon are likely to get irrigation facility in the current boro season as 702 deep tube-wells under the Barind Project-2 have been made operative.

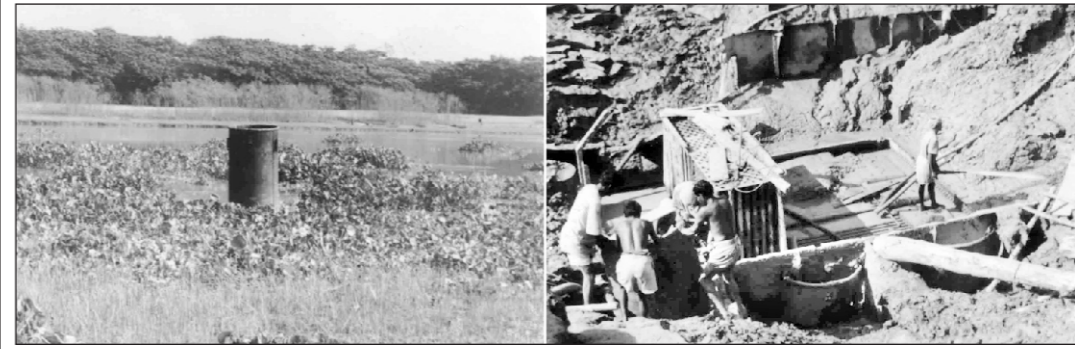
The project authorities have already sold irrigation coupons worth Tk57 lakh to the farmers.

Officials said there were 1217 deep tube-wells in 11 upazilas of Thakurgaon, Panchagarh and Dinajpur under Uttar Bangladesh Deep Tube-well Project.

As the project could not be run properly, the present government handed it over to the Barind Multipurpose Development Authority.

Of the deep tube-wells, 474 have been made operative in Thakurgaon, 146 in Dinajpur and 82 in Panchagarh till April 7.

Additional crops worth about Tk 110 crore are expected to be produced in the project area if things go well.

**Scraps of sunken steamer being looted**

**The chimney of PS Irani, a steamer, sunk by the occupation Pakistan Army during the Liberation War in 1971 in the Junahar River in Barisal, left, while unscrupulous people take away scraps of the steamer after cutting earth, right.**

**AKTER FARUK, Barisal**

A group of iron traders are dismantling and taking away scraps from a steamer that sank in the Junahar River near the city during the Liberation War in 1971.

They claim to have purchased the ship on auction from Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC), but failed to show any paper in favour of their claim to this correspondent.

BIWTC denied the claim. Neither the BIWTC nor the district administration

has taken any step to stop the pilferage, going on for about two months.

There are reports that ship scraps worth at least Tk 10 lakh have already been taken away by these people.

The PS Irani sank on April 25, 1971. After independence, several attempts to salvage the ship failed due to deposit of mud and silt.

Azam Hossain, managing director (MD) of BIWTC, told newsmen there is no provision to sell a sunken ship.

He also said that Bangladeshi laws

prohibit looting of scraps and other materials of an 'abandoned' or wrecked ship by 'treasure hunters.'

This ship (PS Irani) still belongs to BIWTC, he added.

Habibur Rahman, manager of BIWTC, Barisal, said he heard about the matter.

The 'treasure hunters' are backed by a newly-elected commissioner of Barisal City Corporation. The matter came to light when a gang of toll collectors demanded toll from the pilferers.

**Frail health a major threat to 14 slum dwellers in Dinajpur**

**STAR NATIONAL DESK**

Frail health is a major threat to economic and overall livelihood security of slum dwellers in Dinajpur.

Because they cannot work and afford to bear the treatment cost.

This was revealed at a seminar organised by CARE Bangladesh, an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) at a city hotel on Sunday.

This seminar stemmed from partnership of Supporting Household Activities for Hygiene, Assets and Revenue (SHAHR), an urban project of CARE Bangladesh, and US based International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). Under the partnership, IFPRI conducted an in-depth research in slums of the northern district town.

Nearly three per cent (pc) family members of slums in Dinajpur take 'maar', starch of boiled rice. About 4.1 per cent slum dwellers consume 'khud' (particles of rice). About 7.4 per cent of them consume 'atta/ruti' (wheat) rarely. They take wheat sometimes in a week. Nearly 90.9 per cent mothers fed colostrum to their newborn babies.

Half of girl children of slums aged between 6 and 59 months are malnourished, while 43.8 per cent male children are undernourished. About 51.6 per cent boys and 59.6 per cent girls are underweight. Both male and female children aged 24-59 months are malnourished. Over 34.4 per cent of women aged 14 years and older are underweight. One third of women suffer from malnutrition.

Tube-well is the main source of drinking and cooking water in these

slums. Less than one per cent of households boil water before using it for drinking purpose.

Only one third of the households use hygienic or sanitary latrine. Almost 50 per cent of households use unhygienic latrines, unsealed or open. Nearly 17.3 per cent of households defecate in open field. More hazardous environment prevails when flooding carries waste into houses and nearby places.

Diarrhea and other water-borne diseases are prevalent among slum children. About four per cent boys and 6.7 per cent girls below five years fall victims of diarrhoea. Prevalence of diarrhoea is higher among girls irrespective of age group. Nearly 4.1 per cent male members and 4.6 per cent female members usually suffer from skin diseases.



**People become tired quickly due to scorching heat of the ongoing summer. So, everyone including animals try to make life a bit comfortable through various means. (Top left) Rural youngsters take rest under a banyan tree, while two buffaloes try to get rid of scorching heat making a dip in a pond (right). (Bottom left) A rickshaw puller quenches his thirst drinking sweet water of a green coconut and another fellow mate of his profession (right) drinks 'Sharbat' made by mixing molasses with water.**

PHOTO: HOSSAIN SERAJ