

SNAPS

Two killed in Chandpur

UNB, Chandpur
A man and a little girl died in separate incidents in two upazilas of Chandpur on Friday.

The dead were identified as Shaheen, 12, and Momtazuddin, 35. Shaheen was killed by lightning at village Alipur in Haziganj upazila. Momtazuddin died mysteriously at village Char Rampur in Sadar upazila. Reason behind the death could not be known.

Youth shot dead by rivals

UNB, Mhenidah
A youth was shot dead by his rivals at village Keshtapur in Harinakundu upazila on Saturday night.

The dead was identified as Abu Sayeed alias Mithu, 26, who knew the holy Quran by heart. Armed rivals shot Mithu following a brawl over damaging paddy by his cow, locals said. He was rushed to the Sadar hospital and later died on way to Dhaka. A case was filed.

Valuables stolen from 17 shops

UNB, Moulavibazar
Valuables worth Tk three lakh were stolen from 17 shops in Chadnight area in Moulavibazar town on Sunday.

A gang of thieves entered the shops by breaking open the lock of the shops and looted the valuables.

A case was filed.

Pirate surrenders

UNB, Noakhali
A notorious forest pirate of shoal area surrendered to a local member of parliament (MP) of Noakhali town on Monday.

Hason Raja, 28, an accused of 11 cases, surrendered as MP M Shajahan and police super gave the robber a chance to surrender within a week and assured them of their early rehabilitation. The court sent Raja to jail hajat rejecting his bail prayer.

Girl raped in Panchagarh

UNB, Panchagarh
A little girl was raped allegedly by her neighbour at College Para in Boda municipality area on Tuesday.

Police said Ayub Ali, 20, raped the three-year-old girl taking her to his room. Hearing her hue and cry, local people rushed to the spot, rescued her and caught the rapist.

Siltation hits navigation in Old Brahmaputra

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Massive siltation in the Old Brahmaputra hampered navigation greatly throughout Mymensingh district.

The phenomenon halted communication in the dry season. Transport cost also increased manifold. Many labourers in different ferry ghats (terminals) became jobless, while boatmen were forced to change their old profession.

The river was a source of livelihood for thousands of families in Mymensingh and Jamalpur. People in the two districts used the river route for transportation of their goods to various destinations. Before the establishment of railroad in this region during the British regime, the river was the

main route for trade and commerce. Following establishment of railway communication, transportation of agricultural products including jute and paddy began through this riverine route. Thousands used to earn a living by fishing from this river. The major demand of fish was also met from this river.

The river silted up completely in Kusta, Arhtador, Bidyaganj Begunbari, Boror Char, Char Sirta, Char Iswaroria and Khagdahar area of Sadar upazila. Flood waters inundated the shoals in May or June during the previous years.

A shoal in Khagdahar union became so large that the farmers cultivate groundnut, potato, vegetables and various kinds of crops in dry season. Many built dwellings

here. In dry season, people cross the river on foot.

Continuous siltation in this river kept an adverse effect on other small rivers.

Dumping of garbage and falling of waste at several points along the bank of the river along Mymensingh town caused gradual death of the river. Sewer lines carrying filth and garbage also polluted the river.

An engineer of Water Development Board (WDB), Mymensingh informed this correspondent that large quantity of silt was being deposited in the river due to geological characteristic of the country. A project to dredge the Old Brahmaputra river was undertaken 25 years ago, but the plan was yet to be implemented, he added.



(Left-right) This is a scene of Kachari ferry ghat in Mymensingh where boatmen anchored their boats as there was no work for them, while a big shoal is visible in the riverbed of the Old Brahmaputra adjacent to Mymensingh Circuit House. Massive siltation turned it into a dying river.

Bad days for handloom craftsmen in Chuadanga

BSS, Chudanga

Handloom industry in Chudanga is on verge of extinction due to lack of patronisation, shortage of funds and price-hike of raw materials.

Smuggled Indian sarees and bed-sheets have caused major harm to the local handloom industry. Many weavers have been forced to desert their ancestral profession.

The handloom industry here had a tradition and a glorious past. Now it has been facing manifold problems as machinery and equipment for the industry have become expensive. Prices of handloom products like lungi, napkin, saree and bed-sheets have gone up beyond the purchasing capacity of common people.

Prices of raw materials, spare

parts, wood and iron rods have abnormally increased. Lack of skilled labourers also affected the industry.

About 50 to 75 per cent housewives in Chuadanga are keen to use Indian saree, bed-sheet and blouse which are available at a comparatively low price, according to an unofficial survey report.

The weavers have urged the government and authorities concerned to take immediate measures to save the handloom industry and protect weavers' families.

There were about 5,000 weaver families in four upazilas of Chuadanga Sadar, Alamdanga, Damurhuda and Jibannagar, according to a statistics. About 50,000 people were directly dependent on weaving.

At present there are only 500

weaver families who are still engaged in their profession, while others switched on to other professions.

Most of weaver families live in villages Ershadpur, Alamdanga Bazarpara, Gobindopur, Perbondobil, Faridpur, Belgachi, Douki, Bademaju, Khashkorora, Baliakandi, Dhuturhat, Chondipur, Islampur, Kumari, Shaikhpura, Parkola, Bangbaria, Ashannagar, Sreerampur and Nagdah, all under Alamdanga upazila of Chuadanga.

A small number of weaver families used to live in Chuadanga Sadar upazila, Damurhuda and Jibannagar upazilas.

On average, in each of the villages there were at least 100 handloom industries, but at present there are only 5 to 10 handloom industries.

Separate incidents claim 3 in Jessore

UNB, Jessore

Three people, including a little girl, were killed in separate incidents in Jessore on Saturday.

Police said a woman and her little daughter were electrocuted at Gopinathpur village in Sharsha upazila on Saturday.

The victims were identified as Jaida Begum, 28, and her daughter Aleya, 8.

Locals said Aleya was first electrocuted when she came in contact with a live electric wire and later Jaida met the same fate when she

tried to rescue her.

In another incident, an old man was killed allegedly by his son at village Nadra in Manirampur upazila the same day. The dead was identified as Anwar Hossain, 60.

Locals said Anwar Hossain was injured critically when his son Tahar hit on his head after a brawl over land dispute.

Anwar was admitted to Jessore General Hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

Tahar went into hiding after the incident. A case was filed with police.

Two killed in road mishaps in Manikganj

UNB, Manikganj

Two people were killed in separate road accidents in Noakhanda and Satura on Sunday.

Bishu Miah, 33, died on the spot when a minibus ran over him at Noakhanda on Dhaka-Articha highway, witnesses said.

In another incident driver Jasim, 26, died on the spot when his minibus fell into a roadside ditch in the afternoon.

30 sacks of smuggled sugar recovered: One arrested

UNB, Noakhali

Police recovered 30 sacks of smuggled sugar and arrested a man from in front of Chaukidar Bari near Maijdee Court Rail Station on Monday.

Acting on a secret information police rushed to the spot and arrested the man.

Police said the smuggled sugar was brought to the area by Noakhali Express train from Dhaka and unloaded in an unscheduled stoppage near Chaukidar Bari.

Locals said the smuggled goods are regularly being carried through this train with the help of a section of railway employees and police.

Drug stolen from Munshiganj Civil Surgeon's office

UNB, Munshiganj

Police arrested a pharmacy owner on Friday on charge of stealing of huge quantum of medicine from the store of the district Civil Surgeon office.

Police raided Binu Pharmacy at Char Kishoreganj and recovered 250 pieces of stolen antibiotic capsules and arrested its owner Abdul Mannan and employee Alauddin.

An official of the Detective Branch (DB) of police said that the arrest would help nab the thieves soon.

Medicine worth Tk 1.50 lakh was stolen mysteriously from the store of the Civil Surgeon Office on April 8.

Drug addicts on rise in Shariatpur

UNB, Shariatpur

The number of drug addicts is increasing in Shariatpur town and adjacent areas in an alarming proportion causing concern among the dwellers.

The addicts use rectified spirit, Phensidyl, and home-made liquor, as these are being sold in different areas of town and rural markets in daylight.

Local people alleged that over 100 homeopathy shops here sell rectified spirit to the addicts managing the law enforcers.

A few days past six people died after taking rectified spirit in Naria upazila.

There is only one authorised dealer in the town for selling rectified spirit, according to Narcotics Control Department.

Residents told UNB that addicted youths often engaged in various crimes like snatching and illegal extortion.

New digital exchange at B'baria

UNB, Brahmanbaria

Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) has opened a 500-line digital telephone exchange at Akhura upazila.

Local member of parliament (MP) Mushfiqur Rahman inaugurated the digital exchange on Monday talking with Post and Telecommunications Minister Barrister Aminul Huq over phone. High ranking officials of BTTB and local elite attended the function.

Non-iodised salt on sale in Netrakona markets

BSS, Netrakona

Non-iodised salt is on sale in different markets of Netrakona posing a great threat to the public health.

A section of dishonest businessmen, violating the government ban, are selling non-iodised salt in different markets here for making windfall profit. They are marketing non-iodised salt using the colourful packets and trademarks of different iodised salt manufacturing companies.

The government enacted a law in 1994 for producing, selling and using iodised salt to meet the deficit of iodine in human body, according to official sources.

Under the law, the government imposed a ban on production, sale and storage of non-iodised salt anywhere. Unscrupulous traders are selling non-iodised salt in various parts of Netrakona due to absence of proper official monitoring system to enforce the law.

Local people informed that people of low-income group, including day labourers, rickshaw-pullers and marginal farmers are purchasing non-iodised salt due to lack of awareness about the bad effect of non-iodised salt on human body.

They also prefer to buy non-iodised salt as the salt is being sold at a very cheap rate. Iodised salt is

being sold between Tk 11 to 12 per kg and non-iodised salt between Tk 5 to 6 per kg, according to market sources.

Rickshaw pullers, day labourers and marginal farmers while talking to BSS Netrakona district correspondent here recently expressed their ignorance about the necessity of iodised salt to meet iodine deficiency which causes goitre and mental and physical retardation.

Many local people expressed their opinion that concerned authority should introduce proper official monitoring system on the salt trading and create mass awareness about the bad effect of non-iodised salt on human health.

Dowry victim dies

UNB, Narsingdi

A woman whose husband allegedly set fire to her body for dowry at village Daspara near the town about a month ago died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital on Sunday.

Alek Mala, 19, received serious burn injuries as her husband Harun Mia and his second wife Asma Begum set fire to her body pouring kerosene for not bringing dowry from her parent's house on March 6.

Hearing her cry neighbours rescued her and sent her to Sadar hospital. Later she was shifted the DMCH as her condition deteriorated.

Police arrested Asma Begum, but Harun remained absconding.