

SNAPS

Youth 'commits' suicide

UNB, Benapole

Jumping under a running train a youth allegedly committed suicide at village Pantapara in Sarsha thana on Sunday.

Family sources said Saddam Hossain, 25, committed suicide following a brawl with his wife. The body was sent to hospital morgue for autopsy.

Girl electrocuted

UNB, Brahmanbaria

A little girl was electrocuted at village Gopalpur in Nobinagar upazila on Sunday.

Locals said Syma Jahan Sima, 4, died on the spot when she came in contact with a live electric wire at her aunt's house.

Body recovered

UNB, Gazipur

The body of a housewife was recovered from her house in Cherag Ali market area of Tongi on Monday.

The deceased was identified as Sayeda Begum, 20, wife of Rafiq of village Bashadevpur in Mymensingh. The reason behind the death could not be known.

Great prospects ignored in Chittagong Hill Tracts

Farmers losing interest in fruit cultivation

MONIRUL ALAM from Rangamati

Farmers in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) are losing interest in seasonal fruit cultivation as they are deprived of fair prices due to lack of facilities for timely marketing, storage and preservation of the products.

Substantial quantities of fruits perish every year because of the disadvantages although there are great prospects for increasing the production manifold, which could change the economic condition of the hill people, farmers and other sources said.

The main fruits produced commercially include jackfruit, mango, watermelon, pineapple and banana. Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources said.

In Rangamati, 2000 hectares of land are being used to cultivate pineapple, the main agricultural crop of tribesmen. Most of the pineapple growing lands are in

Naniarchar and Longdu upazilas and the yield is about 20 tonnes per hectare.

Each year, about 3,30,000 tonnes of jackfruit are produced in 8900 hectares of land, 13867 tonnes of mango in 3366 hectares, 325286 tonnes of banana in 15772 hectare, 1235 tonnes of guava in 440 hectare, 27209 tonnes of lemon in 3198 hectares and 19004 tonnes of papaya in 1466 hectares, according to the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE).

The production can be increased manifold by bringing more land under cultivation. At least 40 per cent of the total 910582 acres of arable land in CHT can be brought under seasonal fruit cultivation, DAE sources said.

Besides creating self-employment, this can earn foreign exchange through setting up of fruit-based small and cottage industries, they said.

Watermelon production

increased in the last several years as the lands are suitable for this crop, DAE sources said.

Jiten Kumar Chakma, a farmer near Rangamati town, told this correspondent that he earned Tk 45,000 this season by producing watermelon on his lakeside land. He spent Tk 12,000.

"Neighbours and relatives are now interested to cultivate watermelon but they are hesitant because of the problem in timely marketing and lack of capital", he said.

DAE sources said these problems can be easily solved if the authorities give a little attention.

Increasing fruit cultivation can also substantially increase the revenue of the three hill district councils. The Rangamati Hill District Council realised Tk 32 lakh revenue from seasonal fruits in the current financial year, sources said.



A truck carries garbage at day time (left) towards the waste dumping station at Shimulia in Magura town (right).

PHOTO: STAR

Magura municipality dumps waste in residential area

HOSSAIN SERAJ, Magura

Magura municipality dumps waste in a densely populated residential areas in an unplanned manner, according to town dwellers.

The municipality dumps about 15 to 20 trucks of waste every day in Shimulia area beside the busy Magura-Jessore highway. The phenomenon poses a serious threat to public health.

As a result the western side of this highway has become filthy and stinky.

Waste dumping continues throughout the day making life unbearable for residents and passers-by. Saifullah, a resident in Shimulia area told The Daily Star.

Shimulia area is a densely popu-

lated area. Many people suffer due to this phenomenon. They are also planning to shift from this place.

Giasuddin Mian of the area told this correspondent that he had taken a decision to shift his house elsewhere because of the bad smell of dumped garbage.

Shafinddin Mian, another resident of the area termed the act as an irresponsible act. It shows that they are fully indifferent to wellbeing of town dwellers and they have no respect for tax payers, he told this correspondent. My family members insist to shift my house to another place, he added.

Despite repeated attempts, this correspondent could not reach the chairman of Magura municipality, Abdul Gafur for his comments.

A ward commissioner preferring anonymity disclosed that the municipality did a great fault by dumping waste in Shimulia area. He opined for shifting the dumping ground elsewhere.

An official of Magura municipality informed this correspondent that Magura municipality had two acres of land for waste dumping in Shimulia area.

Pedrolow fake pumps found In a surprise police raid in Chittagong city a huge quantity of counterfeit pedrolow pumps and cartons were found at Ali Brother, Marquez Marketing, Teesta machinery, Mohammadia Machinery and Rahim machinery in Jubilee Road area.

Rabindra Joyanti concludes at Shahjadpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, SIRAJGANJ

A three-day programme to celebrate the 142nd birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore (Rabindra Joyanti) concluded at Shahjadpur on Sunday last.

Sirajganj Shilpakala Academy and Shahjadpur Sammilito Sanskritik Jote organised various programmes including dance drama, musical soiree and recitation on the occasion.

The district administration also organised a three-day programme at Tagore's Kuthi Bari at Shahjadpur. State Minister for Power Iqbal Hassan Mahmood inaugurated the programme on May 8 with Deputy Commissioner Ebadat Ali in the chair.

A Rabindra Mela (fair), attended by writers and litterateurs from different parts of the country, added colour to the programme.

Drug addict killed by son

OUR CORRESPONDENT, BRAHMANBARIA

A drug addict was stabbed to death by his son at Rasulpur village under Sarail upazila on April 27.

Police and witnesses said unemployed Sayed Mia, 40, used press his family members for money to buy drug. On April 27 in the evening, he chased his 15 year-old son Shamim with a knife for money. He caught his son and started beating him.

At one stage of the scuffle, Shamim took the knife from his father and stabbed him. Critically injured Sayed died soon after he was taken to the Sadar Hospital.

A case has been filed with Sarail thana in connection with the incident.

Dumuria thana OC transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, KHULNA

The Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Dumuria thana was transferred to Kushiya on Sunday.

The OC, Hashem Khan, was stand-released for his failure to nab any of the killers of BNP activists Khokon Biswas and Yunus Gazi.

Sub-inspector (SI) Ohidul Islam recorded a case as complainant, accusing none for the murders which took place on Friday evening.

Police, however, nabbed 30 people as suspects. Twenty of them were sent to jail on Sunday.

Manpower shortage affects postal service in Rangamati

OUR CORRESPONDENT, RANGAMATI

Postal service in Rangamati is being greatly affected due to manpower shortage.

Six employees of the office of Rangamati Deputy Post Master General and Rangamati Head Post Office were suspended in last one year for their alleged negligence to duty, sources said.

They are mail carriers Md Shahidullah, Osman Goni and Paika Mag; postmen Md Habibur Rahman Bhuyan and Belayet Hossain and SG Operator Md Salahuddin.

All of them except Salahuddin were also charged with misappropriation of the money of employees' savings accounts. Salahuddin was suspended due to political pressure, sources said.

The employees are suffering from a suspension phobia following rumours that more actions are in the offing, the sources.

Exports thru' Akhaura check post increase

SK MD SHAHIDUL ISLAM, BRAHMANBARIA

Exports from Bangladesh through the Akhaura check post increased substantially last month over those of the previous month.

The export volume was worth Tk 1,60,80,000 during April against Tk 86,95,900 in March.

The check post earned Tk 29,500 as travel tax last month against Tk 83,500 in March.

Bangladeshi cement, Pran drinks, Bombay sweets, pebbles and stone chips were the main export items while coal was the only import item.

The exported cement brands included Aramit Cement, Confidence Cement, Anchor Cement, Maghna Cement, Crown Cement, Basundara Cement and Olympic Cement.

When contacted Senior Customs Inspector M A Hossain said the travel tax varies with the number of travelers, most of whom are Indians visiting their relatives in Bangladesh.

He said export-import through the Akhaura check post can be increased if it is developed.

Water crisis in Rajshahi

UNB, RAJSHAH

Acute scarcity of drinking water has been prevailing in the district, as most of the tube-wells have been rendered inoperative due to sudden fall in ground water level during the current dry season.

Most of ponds have been dried up due to drought. Many deep tube-wells have gone out of order due to erratic power supply and frequent load shedding.

The crisis turned acute in Godagrai, Tanor, Nachole, Gomostapur, Charghat upazilas.

Locals said they have to face water crisis every year during dry season and now their lone source of drinking water is deep tube-well of Barind Multipurpose Development Project.

But they said that this year many deep tube-wells of the Barind Development authority have become inoperative at Godagari and Tanor upazilas due to power crisis. So many people are being compelled to drink contaminated water.

Army deployment in Dumuria demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, KHULNA

Jamaat-e-Islami leader Mia Golam Parwar MP, has demanded army deployment in his Khulna-5 (Dumuria-Phultala) constituency to nab outlaws.

He was addressing a meeting on law and order situation in Dumuria on Saturday.

He said rise in murder incidents in Dumuria has brought life to a standstill. He asked police not to go for mass arrest without having any definite information about outlaws.

Arms, ammunition recovered from inter-city train

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, KHULNA

A large number of arms and ammunition were recovered from an inter-city train in Khulna on Saturday night.

Railway police recovered a shutter gun, six bullets, dagger, a mask and a torch light from 728 Down Rupsha inter-city train.

The Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Government Railway Police (GRP),

Khulna told The Daily Star that the arms and ammunition were found in a polythene bag kept on the bunker of a compartment. The train arrived here from Syedpur at 10 pm on Saturday.

A gang of miscreants who boarded the train were carrying those. But they got down from the train somewhere on way to Khulna sensing police presence. A general diary (GD) was filed with GRP.