

Upazila roundup

THAKURGAON

Property worth Tk one crore gutted

From Our Correspondent
April 29: Property worth Taka one crore was damaged in a devastating fire that broke out at Uttar Birohali village under Pirganj Upazila recently. It is learnt that the fire originated from a kitchen and engulfed the neighbouring dwelling houses. Eighty-six houses, paddy rice, wheat and poultry birds and other valuables were burnt to ashes. The fire brigade could not take the fire under control due to non-availability of water sources.

RAJSHAHI

Fire stations needed

From Our Correspondent
April 29: Absence of fire stations in nine upazilas of the district has been causing immense loss to the property and lives every year. At present, there are two fire stations only in Rajshahi city and university. When the fire brigade personnel from city and university reach the places of occurrence after long drive nothing remain to be extinguished by the firemen. Last year fire incidents caused heavy damage to property in Godagari, Putwa and Charghat Upazilas of the district due to absence of fire stations. Local people urged the government to set up fire stations in upazilas to save the life and property from hazards of fire.

BARGUNA

41 projects taken up

April 29: Forty-one projects have been taken up at a cost of Taka 40 lakh for implementation in three upazilas of Barguna district under annual development programme in the current fiscal year, reports BSS. According to an official source, the projects include construction and reconstruction of roads and culverts and development of education institutions.

Of the projects four are being implemented in Barguna sadar upazila, three each in Patharghata and Betagi upazilas. Besides, 31 projects will be implemented in Barguna Pourashava area.

Work on these projects is progressing fast and will be completed by June next, the source added.

KUSHITIA

Fertility of farmland declines

April 29: Fertility of agricultural land is declining rapidly due to rampant use of chemical fertilizers specially urea in the district, reports UNB.

According to sources, use of cowdung is essential for soil fertility which is rarely used by the farmers due to ignorance. But the bulk of cowdung has also come down in the district as the number of cattleheads decreased due to diseases and natural calamities.

On the other hand, use of cowdung as fuel has increased in rural areas following scarcity and price hikes of firewood. This has contributed greatly to the indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers. The experts said the branches and leaves of banana, chilli and IRRI-Boro paddy turn yellowish and puckered due to application of 8 to 10 times higher doses of fertilizers by farmers to augment production. The Livestock Department has failed to motivate the cultivators to use cowdung as manure in their croplands.

Welding workshop

A large number of welding workshops constructed on roadsides of the town have been causing health hazards to the residents.

People of the town are reported to have been suffering from various eye diseases due to sparks from the welding workshops.

The Paura authority was earlier requested to cancel the trade licences of those welding workshops but no action has yet been taken in this regard.

RAJSHAHI

Bail prayer rejected

April 29: The City Magistrate Court yesterday rejected bail prayer of a big businessman arrested on Saturday, for the fifth time, on charges of smuggling, reports UNB.

A BDR squad, led by 20th battalion Commander Major Bari himself, nabbed DK Boshk from the district court premises yesterday.

He was allegedly flogged in public after the arrest. Major Bari has earned reputation as "terror" for smugglers.

Boshak, who runs an electronics business in the city, a few kilometres from country's northern border with India, was also thrown behind the bars four times earlier on charges of involvement in the cross-border trade.

Everytime, he came out of prison with High Court verdict in his favour on writ petitions.

MADARIPUR

6 godowns unfit for storage

April 29: Six godowns of food department in sadar upazila of the district have become unfit for storage due to lack of maintenance, reports UNB.

Officials said the godowns at Charmunguria, built in 1956, are in a pitiable state and developed cracks and innumerable pot holes on floors.

Walls of the godowns are on the verge of collapse and the windows have either been damaged or stolen.

Calamities floods in 1988 has extensively damaged the boundary walls of the godowns. Besides, the approach road to the godowns need immediate repair to facilitate loading and unloading of foodgrains.

FENI

3 jailed for hijacking

April 29: Three people were awarded 10 years rigorous imprisonment and fined Taka 10,000 each, in default, to suffer one year RI more on charges of hijacking. Court sources said here today.

The prosecution story, in brief, is that the accused Morshed Alam Jhantu, Didarul Alam and Bakul of Rampur village under Sadar upazila looted valuables from some people on Feni-Sonagazi road on April 15, 1988.

Police after investigation charge-sheeted against the accused.

After examining evidences and records Assistant Sessions Judge Abdur Razzak Miah delivered the judgement on April 25.

Bakul was tried in absentia.

Lightning kills 2

Lightning killed two people on the spot and injured two other children at Taralia village under Porshuram upazila of the district, police said.

Family sources said, the incident occurred on April 23 when Jafar Ahmad an employee of local Sonali Bank branch office and his uncle Saifur Rahman along with their children were enjoying pastime in front of their house.

Jafar (27) and Saifur Rahman (60) died instantly. The seriously injured Sumi (3), and Shabbir (1), children of the deceased Jafar were rushed to the sadar hospital.

MAULVI BAZAR

5 killed

April 29: At least five people were killed in separate incidents in different parts of the district during the last fortnight, reports UNB.

According to police and hospital sources, Haris Khan, a businessman of the town was crushed under the wheels of a running minibus near Chargaon on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway recently.

In another incident, lightning struck to death a school student Wasir Ali, son of Wasman Ali of village Sikra under Kulsaura upazila of the district.

Witnesses said he was returning home from school while thunder storm struck killing him on the spot.

Yet in another incident, Sukurjan Bibi of village Uttangiri in sadar upazila was killed by his son Gaber Ali recently. The cause behind the murder could not be ascertained.

Rabeya Begum (7), daughter of Ruzman Ali of village Bahadurpur was killed when norwester lashed sadar upazila recently.



An arm chair feeling: This tiny girl enjoying food sitting on a bending tree branch over a canal at Noakhali while her mother washing linen in water and cautioning the girl to come down. —Star photo by Shafuddin Bitu

Problems grip Bajitpur

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, Apr 29: The inhabitants of Bajitpur poura area have been facing a host of problems which include deplorable condition of roads, inadequate street lights, absence of proper drainage system, shortage of accommodation, lack of proper sanitary arrangement, mosquito menace, frequent power failure and absence of recreational facilities and housing.

The town is being expanded with the increase of population but the poura authority fails to provide with minimum civic facilities to the town dwellers.

Most roads in the pourashava area are narrow and uneven. Cracks and pot-holes have developed at many points. Even after slight rainfall these roads become muddy and slippery, rainwater remains stagnant on the roads causing difficulties to both pedestrians and vehicular traffic. Moreover the road side ditches remain filled with filth and garbages are not cleaned regularly which has

gradually turned into the mosquito breeding centres.

Absence of proper drainage system is another problem for the people of the town. Rainwater accumulates and remain stagnant on the roads causing serious health hazard to the inhabitants.

Most of the street lights in the poura area have no bulbs. As a result, the areas plunge into darkness just after sunset giving rise to anti-social activities.

Acute shortage of houses poses a great problem to the people. New houses are not constructed in proportion with the increasing number of people.

The pitiable condition of the ordinary hotels and restaurants is dangerous for the public health. Adulterated food-stuffs are freely sold in open places of the pourashava area which is not checked by the poura authority.

There is no recreational facilities for children or elderly

people except a cinema hall.

Conservancy service

The conservancy service of the poura area is not satisfactory. There is no public latrines or urinals in the town. Most roads are dirty and full of garbages. There is no arrangement to clean the roads regularly.

Waiting sheds

Absence of waiting sheds at the bus stands cause much inconvenience to the travellers. The bus stands have no latrines and urinals. During rainy season the bus stands turn into water pools after slight rainfall.

Mosquito menace in the town area has assumed an alarming proportion causing untold sufferings to the town dwellers.

The pourashava authority, however, seems to have turned into a deaf ear to the public demand for immediate solution to these problems though they are taking taxes in enhanced rate every year from the tax payers.

Rajshahi City Corporation can meet 50 pc water demand

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Apr 29: Acute scarcity of pure drinking water has been prevailing in Rajshahi city area. Rajshahi City Corporation now supplies only 27 lakh gallons water daily to its dwellers against a demand for 60 lakh gallon per day. The daily deficit of drinking water is 33 lakh gallons.

According to City Corporation sources, the Rajshahi city consists of 36 square miles. Corporation has been supplying drinking water by pipe line to only six square miles. The corporation supplied water through its 18 deep-tubewell, 76 tarapump and 1187 hand driven tubewell.

Due to continuous drought most of the hand driven tubewells have gone out of order causing great sufferings to the city dwellers.

11 Dakhel examinees expelled

FENI, Apr 29: Eleven Dakhel examinees were expelled from local Alia Madrasa centre since the beginning of the examinations April 21 for adopting unfair means, reports UNB.

Notes from Madaripur

From Our Correspondent

Drug addicts are increasing alarmingly in Madaripur town. It is learnt that a large number of youths is being addicted to liquor and sedatives which are being sold by some dishonest drug shop keepers at exorbitant rates without any prescriptions. As a result to procure money for the purchase of drugs the drug addicts are engaged in anti-social activities.

Teacher shortage

At least 37 posts of primary school teachers have been lying vacant for a long time in four upazilas of the district. Due to the shortage of the teachers the universal primary education programme has been facing a set back in these upazilas.

Eyes gouged out

Both the eyes of Moazzem were gouged out by some miscreants recently.

According to the Rajor police some unidentified miscreants gouged out both the eyes of Moazzem and left the victim in front of the Ishobpur Union Parishad office under Rajor upazila.

It is further learnt that the victim committed several dacoities looting, murders and created terror in different areas of the district. He was wanted by Madaripur and Gopalganj police since long.

One killed

One person was killed and another seriously injured in a clash at Kochari village under Kalkini upazila in the district recently.

According to the witnesses, the clash ensued between the two rival groups over the selection of the site for slaughtering a cow on the Eid day. They picked up a quarrel and one Fazal Mollah (45) was struck with a sharp weapon by an opponent who died on the spot. Another person Anwar Hossain Mollah received serious injuries. He was rushed to the Madaripur hospital.

No one has been arrested so far, a case has been registered with the Kalkini police in this connection.

Unemployment

Unemployment problem has increased in the four upazilas of the district where total population is about 15 lakhs. Of them 15 per cent are dependent on agriculture, 20 per cent engaged in different occupations and the rest 30 per cent are fully unemployed.

1100 tubewells lying inoperative in Manikganj

MANIKGANJ, Apr 29: About 1100 hand driven, shallow and deep tubewells in the district have been lying inoperative due to abnormal fall in ground water level, reports UNB.

According to Public Health Engineering (PHE) department here, water level in Daulatpur, Satura, Harirampur, Shibbalaya, Shingair and Sadar upazilas went down to 30 to 40 feet.

Officials fear almost all the tubewells in the district will be rendered inoperative if water level goes down further.

Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation sources here said about 35 per cent tubewells used for irrigation in seven upazilas of the district have already gone out of order.

PHE has started sinking of about 500 hand driven tubewells in different areas of the district to solve the drinking water problem.

Meanwhile, persisting drought in the district has already hampered Irri-Boro production on a vast tract of land here.

Boro crops on 14,135 acres damaged in Habiganj

HABIGANJ, Apr 29: Standing Boro crops on 14,135 acres of land in five upazilas of the district were damaged due to natural calamities like tornado, norwester and on rush of flood waters, reports UNB. According to official sources, 3,660 acres in Habiganj Sadar, 1,855 acres in Baniachang, 3,820 acres in Lakhal, 560 acres in Bhumbal and 4,240 acres in Azmiriganj upazilas were partially or fully damaged.

Besides, a large number of dwelling houses was damaged by the tornado and norwesters that swept those five upazilas from the beginning of the current season.

Official sources said 7,573 houses in Habiganj Sadar, 7,384 houses in Lakhal upazila were razed to the ground.

The affected people have urged the authorities to provide them with relief materials and take necessary scheme for their early rehabilitation.

Eight uplift projects undertaken in pourashava areas are nearing completion.

According to sources, the projects include construction of culverts, roads and re-excavation of some dried up canals.

About Taka 32 lakh have already been spent for the implementation of the works.

The uplift works are expected to be completed by May this year. With the implementation of the projects commercial activities will be improved for the benefit of the local people to a great extent.

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Maulvi Bazar

Incessant rain over the last few days caused flash flood in haor areas of the district.

According to sources, standing crops on vast low-lying areas in Jakiganj, Golapganj, Fenchuganj, Balaganj and Biswanath upazilas of the district have been submerged.

Officials fear at least 15,000 acres of Boro crop have already gone under flood water.

Flash flood have also breached a portion of flood embankment at Amalshi under Jakiganj upazila inundating vast areas in Bhurmara, Ayopara, Manikpur, Suprakhandi, Uzirpur and Dakkhin Bhag villages.

Sylhet

A total of 1.81 lakh hectares of land will be brought under Aus cultivation in greater Sylhet district during the current season.

Officials said high yielding varieties of paddy will be cultivated in 63,800 hectares while rest 1.17 lakh hectares will be brought under local variety.

Production target has been fixed at 2.26 lakh metric tons.

Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation will supply seeds, fertilizers and insecticides among farmers at fair prices to make the programme a success.

Mosquito menace makes life miserable

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Apr 29: The mosquito menace has made the life miserable in Pabna Pourashava and other adjoining areas since last few weeks.

People are not spared even at day time. No one can sit peacefully in public places, offices, mosques and houses due to mosquito bite. Immediately after sunset people take shelter under mosquito curtains.

The worst sufferers are the SSC examinees. They cannot study till late night due to horrible bites of mosquitoes.

Unclean drains, stagnant roadside ditches, derelict ponds are the main breeding centres for the mosquitoes. Besides, the Ichamati has lost its flow. The garbage and dirt of the river have given rise to mosquitoes by producing waterhyacinth. These insects also breed in large numbers in the road side ditches and derelict ponds which are full of waterhyacinth. The kutchha and semi-pucca latrines of the Pourashava area emits bad odour all the time multiplying the number of mosquitoes.

People of the Pabna Pourashava area have urged the authority concerned to take immediate steps to eradicate mosquitoes and mitigate the sufferings of the people.

Founding anniversary

From Our Correspondent

KURIGRAM, Apr 29: The ninth founding anniversary of Samprotick Shilpi Gosthi, a literary, cultural and social welfare organisation of Kurigram was observed recently in a befitting manner.

In this connection an elaborate programme was chalked out which included painting competition, cultural competition, recitation, discussion meeting and cultural function. A large number of children of the locality took part in different events of the competition arranged by the Gosthi. The competition was divided into two groups.

After the competition prizes were distributed among the successful competitors by Mr. Ashit Kumar Nandee (Niloo), President of the Gosthi.

In this connection a discussion meeting was also arranged which was chaired by Ashit Kumar Nandee while Prof. Tapan Kumar Rudra, Mr. Sahabuddin, among others, spoke.

Eid reunion

Eid reunion was held at Kurigram government college recently.

In this connection an attractive discussion meeting was held at the Professors common room with Sk. Abu Bakar Siddique, Principal-in-charge of the college in the chair. Among others, Prof. Tofel Uddin, Prof. Mahbubur Rahman, Prof. Nurul Islam, Alhaj Yunus Ali, Mr. Nizam Uddin, Mr. Golam Rabbani Chowdhury and Mr. Azizul Haque Khan participated in the discussion. It was rounded off with a tea-party.

Power supply erratic in Bhola

From Our Correspondent

BHOLA, Apr 29: Erratic power supply is hampering production in industrial sector.

Fluctuations in power supply are causing numerous sufferings to the residents specially to the students preparing for the examinations. Besides, it also damage different electrical goods and bulbs causing irreparable loss to the subscribers. Prices of the essential goods like flour and oil have marked an upward trend due to loss of production.

Street lights are seldom seen lighted in the Pourashava area. As a result most lanes and bylanes have become the rendezvous of evildoers and anti-social activities.

JP rally at Jaipurhat

JAIPURHAT, Apr 29:

JP activists yesterday brought out a procession and held a protest rally in Jaipurhat town demanding immediate release of the deposed President Ershad and other party leaders.

The rally held at Shaheed Abdul Raheed Sarani also demanded withdrawal of warrants issued against the absconding former ministers of Ershad regime and repeal of Special Powers Act.

Speakers at the rally said the law and order situation of country is fast deteriorating and held the government responsible for it.

It was addressed among others by former Zila Parishad Chairman Khondoker Olluzaman Alam, Former MP Advocate Rabbul Hasan Monem, local leaders KM Idris Ali and Bacchu Majumdar.

Meanwhile, a report from Jhenedah said local Jatiyo Party workers brought out a procession in the town today demanding immediate release of former president Ershad and other interned leaders of the party.



MAULVI BAZAR: Kutchha houses damaged by cyclonic storm at village Bhairab Bazar under Srimangal upazila recently. —Star photo