

Upazila roundup

PATUAKHALI
Draft animal shortage

May 24 : Acute bullock shortage has been prevailing in four southern districts posing a threat to cultivation, officials said, reports UNB.

According to sources, about 60 to 80 per cent of farmers have no bullocks to cultivate their lands.

Consequently about 25 to 30 per cent land in these districts remain uncultivated resulting in poor production.

Most farmers work on share basis as they cannot afford to buy bullocks due to sharp rise in their prices.

Moreover, a large number of cattleheads die every year in various diseases. Some greedy cobblers are allegedly poisoning cows to death for procuring skins.

On the other hand, bullock slaughtering has been going on unabated following rise in the price of fish in the market.

A huge number of draft animals died during the recent cyclone resulting in high demand for the bullocks in the districts of Patuakhali, Barguna, Jhalakathi and Pirojpur.

ing there for the pray. And in time they caught Anwar Hossain with other accomplices involved in the malpractice.

While this correspondent contacted the OC Patuakhali Sadar thana, he informed that the chairman was released by thana for some unknown reason.

However a G.R. case has been recorded in sadar thana against the accused.

KISHOREGANJ
Paddy procurement drive begins

From Our Correspondent
KISHOREGANJ, May 24 : The paddy procurement drive was inaugurated here by Kazi Nasirul Islam, Deputy Commissioner, Kishoreganj recently.

The inaugural function was presided over by Mr. Zillur Rahman, Upazila Chairman, Mitamain and addressed by Hazrat Ali, UNO, Mohsin Mollah, District Controller of Food and Sayeduzzaman, Editor, weekly Kishoreganj Parikrama.

Mention may be made here that the government has fixed up the procurement target at 3,000 metric tons of paddy through 13 purchasing centres in the district during the current season.

MYMENSINGH
Multistoried commercial bldg will be built

May 24 : Mymensingh district Mukhtodha Kalyan Trust has taken up a project to construct a multistoried building for commercial purpose at a cost of Taka 83.24 lakh here, reports BSS.

The foundation stone of the building was laid by Brigadier Amin Ahmed Choudhury, Chairman, Bangladeshi Tea Board at a function held here recently.

4.36 lakh books distributed

Under universal primary education programme about 4.36 lakh text books have been distributed free of cost among the students of 1,254 government and 283 non-government primary schools of 12 upazilas of the district.

The students from baby to fifth classes were the recipients of those books.

MADARIPUR
64 schemes taken up

From Our Correspondent
MADARIPUR, May 24 : Sixty-four schemes have been taken up against an allocation of about 4,425 metric tons of wheat in the district.

The schemes under Food for Works Programme include construction and reconstruction of roads and excavation and re-excavation of derelict ponds and canals.

About 935 tons of wheat will be utilised for 17 schemes in sadar Upazila, while the same number of schemes will be completed in Kalkini upazila using 1084 tons of wheat.

SYLHET
Academic feat

From A Correspondent



May 24 : Md. Muhiuzzul Islam Chowdhury (Tanvir) obtained the 13th position in the primary scholarship examinations of 1990 organised by the Niloy Samaj Kalyan Sangstha of Sylhet. He also got another scholarship organised by the Bihanga Tarun Sangha of Sylhet this year.

Tanveer is the only son of Mr. Emdadul Islam Chowdhury and Mrs. Shahrin Emdad Chowdhury of Jherjherpara of Sylhet.

BHOLA

Tk 20 lakh for road repairing sanctioned

May 24 : The government has sanctioned Taka 20 lakh and 1,000 metric tons of wheat for repair and reconstruction of an embankment which was damaged by recent tidal bore in the district, reports BSS.

A water Development Board source said that the construction work of 18 kilometre embankment has already been started and is expected to be completed within a month.

PABNA
Malpractice in road construction

From Our Correspondent
PABNA, May 24 : Frequent road accident on Pabna-Ishardi road is the resultant of large-scale corruption by the members of Roads and Highways Department and their contractors.

A group of dishonest contractors made the road with very low amount of bitumen. As a result the roads become unfit for vehicular traffic within a short time. The contractors although take the bitumen from R & H office but they do not use it fully and sell the bitumen in the blackmarket with the help of some dishonest employees.

PABNA
Student leader stabbed to death

May 24 : Some unknown miscreants Monday stabbed a local student leader near Hazrat village, police here said, reports UNB.

Mohit Islam Shamsul (28), an activist of Chhatra Motree, was returning home when a group of assailants stabbed him indiscriminately after sundown.

He was rushed to the Pabna General Hospital where his condition was stated to be critical.

Police arrested co-villager Ashraful Alam Tannu (27) in this connection.

A protest procession was also brought out demanding exemplary punishment of the persons responsible for the incident.

KISHOREGANJ
Husband kills wife

From Our Correspondent
KISHOREGANJ, May 24 : A young housewife Majeda Khatun (24) was killed by her husband in village Barchara under Kuliachar upazila recently.

According to the police, Doulat Miah beat her wife in the evening of the day of incident. There was a hot altercation between the accused and his wife Majeda over of trifling family matter. At one stage Doulat Miah hit his wife on the head and neck resulting in her instantaneous death.

The body was sent to Kishoreganj Sadar Hospital for post mortem.

A case was registered with Kuliachar police station in this connection. Police took Doulat Miah into custody.

PATUAKHALI
Chairman held while selling wheat

May 24 : Anwar Hossain, Union Parishad Chairman of Kalshart Union under Bauphal upazila was caught red handed by police while he was selling wheat about 10 metric tons sanctioned for F.W.P. to excavate a canal. On a secret information from a reliable source, police had been lurk-



With the water receding, people distressed by the catastrophic cyclone in Kutubdia have resumed work with a renewed vow. Photo shows farmers returning home with harvested paddy. —Star photo

Tornado-hit people pass agonising days

From Aroop Talukdar

BARISAL, May 24 : The tornado-hit people of Gouranadi and Agailjhara upazilas of the district are still passing their days in agony. Life is still a standstill around the affected areas.

Thousands of distressed people who have lost their nearest people dearest ones, houses, crops and cattleheads are trying to console each other. Many distressed families are still under the open sky.

With two more deaths, the death toll rose to 21 in these two upazilas. More than 700 persons have been injured and 48 persons are still under treatment in hospitals.

According to official sources, about seventy thousand people were affected and 106 educational institutions and more than twenty thousand houses were damaged. Crops of on about 35 thousand

acres of land have been destroyed.

Electricity is still absent in the affected areas as the uprooted electric poles and big trees could not be removed as yet lines are disrupted.

Supply of relief materials is quite meagre than the requirement. One Kalam Sikdar (80), who took shelter in the Gouranadi college told that within 36 hours he did not get anything except some 'chira'. Conditions of other shelterless people are almost same.

Different government and non-government organisations meanwhile have started relief operations in the affected areas.

District administration has distributed 30 metric tons of rice, 3.5 metric tons of 'chira', 75 pieces of sarees and cash Tk. 30,000.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia visited the tornado affected areas on Monday last and handed over a cheque for ten lakh Taka to the district administration and directed to intensify relief operations immediately.

Two relief teams of Barisal Development Society (BDS), a NGO of Barisal have visited the tornado devastated areas of Gouranadi and Agailjhara upazilas of Barisal.

BDS has undertaken a programme to distribute relief worth Taka 16 lakh in the affected areas.

This programme includes construction of houses loan distribution and assistance for agricultural rehabilitation.

Heavy damage to afforestation

Afforestations along the

coastal belt of the vast southern region of the country to the tune of Taka two crore have been damaged during the cyclone and tidal surge of April 29.

Afforestation heavily damaged, according to Forest Department, in east Dhalchar, Charpatla, Char Kukri Mukri, Pacha Koralia, Baduarchar, Charpal, Char Sakuchra and Char Fakira and Char Nijam of Bhola.

At least 65 to 75 per cent afforestations have been damaged in these areas. Besides at least 60 per cent afforestation along the embankments on the bank of Meghna river from Daulat Khan to Charfession have been damaged. Hundreds

of old 'babla' trees on the long embankment have been uprooted during the deadly cyclone. New afforestation in

Char areas have been damaged severely. It is learnt that at least one crore Taka will be needed to renovate these damages.

Besides 30 to 35 per cent old 'Keora' afforestation of about 30 thousand acres have been destroyed and at least Taka 50 lakh will be required for the renovation.

Fifty per cent afforestation of more than 10 lakh Babla trees on about 150 km embankment along Daulat Khan, Tajamuddin, Charfession, Charkachharia and Char Fakira have been severely damaged which will incur a loss of 1.30 crore Taka for the Forest Department.

According to informed sources, these damage and destruction should be renovated as early as possible to protect the rest portion of embankment and afforestation from further damage.

Power failure hits industrial output

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, May 24 : Frequent power failure and load shedding have been creating numerous problems to the dwellers.

The inhabitants complained that almost all the areas plunge into darkness after sunset. Besides, SSC and HSC examinees have been tremendously affected due to power failure.

On the other hand water supply suspension is multiplying the sufferings of the people. Production in industries and irrigation have been adversely affected.

Irrigation hampered at Chatmohor

From Our Correspondent
PABNA, May 24 : Crops on four hundred bighas of land is threatened due to lack of irrigation facilities at Chatmohor upazila under Pabna district.

The deep tubewell of Kathalbaria Krishak Samity has become out of order resulting in irrigation problem.

Farmers of the area said that boro paddy field with turn barren if water is not supplied at this stage. Moreover on failure of the scheme, about 5,500 maunds of paddy worth Taka 13,50,000 will be damaged creating serious problems to 200 farmers of the area.

According to the Scheme Manager, Asar Ali, the tubewell suddenly choked up due to rise of sand and sandstone breaking the strainer which was installed by BADC in 1985 with a credit of Taka 1,30,000 from Sonali Bank.

5000 tubewells choked up

From Our Correspondent
JAMALPUR, May 24 : About 5000 shallow and deep tubewells have choked up due to abnormal fall in underground water level caused by persisting drought for last three months in seven upazilas of Jamalpur district.

About 1,00,000 people of the district are facing acute problem of pure drinking water. Normal measurement of underground water level is 32 feet which is quite suitable to pump out water but now the water level has gone much lower than the normal level.

Govt to provide medicines for cyclone victims

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, May 24 : Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs Professor A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury today visited Chittagong Shishu Hospital and Sitakunda Diarrhoea Hospital to see for himself the cyclone victims under treatment.

He talked to the doctors and enquired about treatment of the patients. He directed the doctors to redress the distress of the cyclone victims.

He told them that the government would provide all kinds of medicine and other equipment for saving the lives of the cyclone victims who are under treatment.

He also visited cyclone affected areas of Salimabad under Sitakunda upazila where 20 thousand families were rendered homeless by the cyclone.

Later the Minister also distributed relief materials at Patenga sent by Munshiganj BNP.

L K Siddiqui, MP, Abdul Hye, MP, and BNP leader Mujibur Rahman, Gazi Shahidul Huq, Nazrul Islam and Muniruzzaman were present.

Child labourers on rise in Chandpur

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, May 24 : The number of child labourers is increasing in Chandpur district day by day. These under aged boys are compelled to take odd jobs for mere survival.

The boys who are under twelve are considered as minor boys. These boys work as helpers in construction sites, hotels, restaurants, bidi factories, bakeries, tea stalls, motor garages, rickshaw garages, bicycle repair workshops and welding workshops. Besides, many child labourers work as shoe shine boys domestic servants, coolies, hawkers and rickshaw pullers.

Social welfare projects damaged in Charfession

BHOLA, May 24 : A number of social welfare projects run by "Human Rights—First the Children," an Australian non-government organisation at Charfession have been damaged by the recent cyclone and tidal surge, reports BSS.

The projects include Charfession Orphanage, South

The actual number of child labourers could not be known as no survey has been conducted over them as yet. According to unofficial sources, the total number would be nearly 25 thousand in the district.

They actually belong to landless rural families. Many of them are orphans. These unfortunate children are exploited to the maximum. For their hard work they get only a nominal wage.

Many of these children are school drop-outs and have left school due to economic hardship.

Social welfare projects damaged in Charfession

BHOLA, May 24 : A number of social welfare projects run by "Human Rights—First the Children," an Australian non-government organisation at Charfession have been damaged by the recent cyclone and tidal surge, reports BSS.

The projects include Charfession Orphanage, South

Hazariganj Primary School, Aslampur Primary School and some cattle and poultry breeding centres. The orphanage had about 3,000 children.

Mr. Len Reid, the chief of the Melbourne-based organisation on receiving the news of recent catastrophe and visited his projects at Charfession last week.

"I have never seen such a devastation in my life," the 74-year-old philanthropist and former Member of Parliament of Australia told newsmen.

Mr Reid said after the liberation of Bangladesh his organisation donated Friesian and Jersey cross-breed cows to cyclone-affected people of the coastal areas. These cows had quickly grown and multiplied over the years. But during the recent tidal bore these cattle population and Australian varieties of ducks and fowls have been washed away ... he added.

Brahmaputra needs dredging

From A Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, May 24 : The river Brahmaputra needs urgent dredging as it completely dries up in the dry season bringing a standstill to the movement of riverine transport, resulting in price hike of essentials in Mymensingh town.

The vegetables are brought to the town through boats from distant places like Baiganbari, Gouripur, Gaffargaon, Dhala and Nandina.

Notes from Kushtia

From A Correspondent

KUSHTIA, May 24 : A charity football competition has been arranged by Kushtia District Sports Association in aid of cyclone affected people. The game will be played between BKSP and Kushtia District Eleven on May 25 at Kushtia stadium, it was learnt.

Complaint against maldistribution of government medicines in most union health welfare centres of the district have been received.

It is gathered that though medicines are allotted to different Union Health Welfare Centres according to its demand, but due to corruption and malpractices by the employees of the centres, the poor patients are being deprived of the medicines which are being sold in blackmarket.

Fake company cheats job seekers

A large number of unemployed youths of the district have been cheated by fake companies which have collected lakhs of Taka from them on the pretext of providing attractive jobs.

A branch office of the fake company styled "Agro Fisheries" was established in Kushtia town and job seekers thronged there in the hope of securing good job. The company allegedly having its Head Office at Dhaka collected lakhs of Taka as security deposit from the intending job seekers. The company was giving hope after hope of giving training for the job seekers and making delay which generated suspicions in the minds of the job seekers and they ultimately one day ghaeroed the so called Manager of Kushtia office.

One fine morning local people and the job seekers found the Kushtia office under lock and key and the house owner told that he had also been cheated as the Manager did not pay a single farthing as rent of the house.

Storage facility

Potato growers in the district are selling their produce at throw away prices in absence of storage facilities.

According to sources, capacity of the existing lone Cold Storage here can not meet the demand.

Market sources said potato is being sold at Taka 90 to 100 per 40 K.G. which is much less than the production cost. Huge quantity of potatoes has been produced this year in Daulatpur upazila apart from other areas and the growers failing to have adequate space in cold storage have been compelled to sell their produce at any price, sources added.

Overloading

Overloading of buses and minibuses plying on various routes from Kushtia has been going on causing accidents frequently.

The drivers of these vehicles hardly follow the existing traffic rules and always speed up their transports at will. They tend to compete with each other in plying transports regardless of the safety of passengers.

Sources said there was no definite bus stand on the routes. The drivers stop their vehicles at unscheduled places to take passengers. As a result no transport can reach its destination in time multiplying sufferings of the travelling people.

It is alleged that the conductors of buses and minibuses realise fares from the passengers above fixed rates.

36,476 acres put under sugarcane cultivation

BARISAL, May 24 : A total of 36,476 acres were brought under sugarcane cultivation in 11 southern districts of Barisal Agriculture Zone (BAZ) this year, reports BSS.

The districts are : Barisal, Jhalakati, Pirojpur, Patuakhali, Barguna, Bhola, Faridpur, Madaripur, Gopalganj, Rajbari and Sariatpur.

According to an official source, a total of 5,47,146 metric tons of sugarcane is expected to be produced in these districts this year.

Some 80 space transplant plots (STP) and 28 varietal plots have been set up in these districts for educating farmers the scientific method of sugarcane cultivation, the source said.

Eightysix demonstration plots have been arranged for potato and ground-nut as intercropping.

Of the total acreage, 2060 acres were cultivated in Barisal district, 1650 acres in Pirojpur, 310 acres in Jhalakati, 550 acres in Patuakhali, 607 acres in Barguna, 620 acres in Bhola, 14,388 acres in Faridpur, 4591 acres in Madaripur, 2,597 acres in Gopalganj, 7,465 acres in Rajbari and 1638 acres in Sariatpur.



A member of an army medical team treating a child at a cyclone affected area. —Photo : ISPR.