

### Upazila roundup

#### MADARIPUR 400 tubewells out of order

June 8: About 400 tubewells in the district remained out of order for a long time causing acute paucity of drinking water.

Officials in Public Health and Engineering Department here said 103 tubewells in Sadar, 118 in Shishbar, 80 in Kalkini upazilas remained inoperative.

Government has installed 192 new tubewells in four upazilas of the district recently. But due to salinity in ground water levels it is difficult to get pure water in the region by sinking shallow tubewells.

It may be mentioned here that 27 new deep tubewells were allotted under annual development programme in 1990-91 for smooth supply of drinking water but the number was later curtailed to 15 due to Gulf crisis, sources said.

On an average at present there are one hand driven tubewell for 112 people in the district, officials said.

#### BELKUCHI Road link disrupted

June 8: Road communication remained disrupted for two hours between Belkuchi upazila and district headquarters following an accident that killed a minor girl at Ambaria village here today, police said, reports UNB.

Agitated villagers put up barricades at different points of the road protesting the killing. The crisis was over after chain master of the district bus stand intervened in the matter.

Witnesses said, the victim, Kismat Ara (4), daughter of Ismail Hossain of Rajapur village of the upazila, was dashed by the bus Friday noon when she was plucking blackberries from a roadside tree along with her friends.

Three of her friends who received injuries were rushed to upazila health complex.

The driver of the Strajganj bound bus from Belkuchi, however, managed to escape with the vehicle.

A case was lodged in this connection.

#### MAULVI BAZAR Maternity centres plagued with problems

June 8: Maternity and child welfare centres in the district have been plagued with manifold problems affecting care to the patients, reports UNB.

Mismanagement, shortage of staff and beds and lack of medicines are hampering the normal functioning of the centres.

Paucity of drinking water has been prevailing in most of the centres causing untold sufferings to the patients.

Moreover, most centres lack boundary walls resulting in occasional visits of the cattleheads and other animals to the suffering patients.

#### KISHOREGANJ 2 drown in boat capsized

From Our Correspondent  
June 8: Two persons drowned when a boat capsized in a haor in Nikli upazila of the district recently.

The victims were identified as Shahu (35) and Sadar Ali (30), both of village Mahmudpur in Katiadi upazila.

It is learnt from an official source that the victims were returning home after harvesting paddy from Mitamain upazila. The boat capsized in the haor due to the gusty wind.

#### PATUAKHALI Agri-rehabilitation plan in 6 upazilas

June 8: A comprehensive Agricultural Rehabilitation Programme has been taken up in six upazilas of the district during the current season, reports UNB.

Under the programme, about 5,000 acres of land will be brought under intensive aman cultivation to make up the crop loss caused by the last devastating cyclone and tidal surge.

According to informed sources, necessary seeds will be distributed among the affected farmers free of cost to make the programme a success.

On successful implementation of the programme, about 4000 metric tons of aman of rice is expected to be produced, official sources said.

It is further learnt that government has sanctioned Tk 29 lakh for the affected marginal farmers of the district.

#### BARISAL 1,35,000 acres to be brought under aus farming

June 8: About 1,35,000 acres of land will be brought under high yielding variety (HYV) of aus cultivation in 10 upazilas of the district, reports UNB.

The upazilas are Sadar, Bakerganj, Babuganj, Goirni, Agailkhara, Hizi, Banaripara, Mehendiganj, Muladi and Wazirpur.

According to Agriculture Extension Department (AED), production target has been fixed at 97,000 metric tons of rice.

AED will set up eight demonstration plots soon in this region to acquaint the farmers with the modern methods of cultivation.

Meanwhile, a scheme has been undertaken to bring at least 50,000 acres of land under transplanted aman cultivation in the district during the current season.

According to official sources, the production target has been fixed at 27,780 metric tons of rice.

Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation will supply necessary seeds, fertilizers and other necessary inputs for the successful implementation of the scheme, official sources said.

Besides, 1500 acres of land will be brought under jute cultivation in 10 upazilas of the district in the current season.

According to AED about 40,000 bales of jute are expected to be produced in the district this year.

AED has also set up 12 demonstration plots to acquaint the farmers with the scientific methods of jute cultivation.

It is learnt that BADC will sell seeds, fertilizers insecticides and other necessary inputs to the jute growers of the region at a fair price.

#### JAMALPUR Workshop on family planning

June 8: A two-day workshop on family planning activities for the religious leaders of the rural areas was held recently at agriculture research centre here, reports BSS.

Organised by Bangladesh Family Planning Association the workshop was inaugurated by district and sessions judge, Jamalpur Khondakar Mohammad Abu Bakar. Mr. Rezaul Karim Hira, President of the local unit of the Association presided over the workshop.

Secretary General of the Bangladesh Family Planning Association Kazi Anisur Rahman was present at the workshop as the chief guest.

#### COMILLA 2 students electrocuted

June 8: Two school boys were electrocuted in village Ratnabati in Sadar upazila, police here said, reports UNB.

The victims Abul Hashem (11) and Nurul Islam (10), two cousins, died instantaneously when they came in contact with a live electric wire last week.

The victims were the students of Ratnabati High School. A case has been filed in this connection.

#### PABNA Low-lying areas submerged

June 8: Low lying areas of the district went under water due to heavy downpour over the last three days, reports UNB.

Standing crops on at least 530 acres of land were damaged by the continuous rains. Water Development Board here recorded 87.5 mm of rain during the period.

The worst affected upazilas are: Singa, Hamshapur, Mahmudpur, Bera, Sathia and Sujangar.



The road between Amura and Kanshiyal unions under Golapganj upazila in Sylhet has been submerged by the recent flood waters. Only this culvert remains a little above water. — Star photo

### Chandpur town protection embankment needs immediate repair

From Shahjad Monzu

CHANDPUR, June 8: Immediate repair of Chandpur town protection embankment is needed for protection of Chandpur river port and the town as a whole.

A report of the district administration submitted to the higher authorities after April 29 cyclone emphasised that unless the town protection embankment was repaired and other protective measures were taken on priority basis, Chandpur railway station, Jamuna oil depot and many business houses would be eroded and municipality would be at stake.

The Meghna has washed away 19,000 square feet of Chandpur during the devastating cyclone affecting Rail Station which is called 'Bara Station', terminal of Bangladesh

Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) and traditional business centre 'Puran Bazar'.

According to the reports, the extent of damage will be Taka six crores. In Puran Bazar area 29 business houses including one oil mill and one salt mill and two old temples have been washed away. In the Nutun Bazar area one pump house of Rail station and a portion of BIWTA have been devoured by the river.

Erosion is continuing and new areas of Chandpur Nutun Bazar and Puran Bazar are swallowed up with every passing day. But authorities will not come forward with any big project to protect Chandpur before completing the Meghna study, being conducted to find out an easiest way to save Bhairob,

Ekhlaspur, Chandpur and Haimchar from erosion, officials sources said.

However, the study scheduled to be completed in one year will take one more year, reliable sources said.

People of Chandpur believe that the town itself might be washed away at any time during monsoon if action is delayed. For protection, the authorities sanctioned Taka 13.50 crores during the last two years. Besides, from 1972 to 1988 government handed over a total of Taka 8.50 crores to the Water Development Board at Chandpur.

WDB at Chandpur told the Daily Star that stone, sand, C.C. block and geo-textile bags were used to make the barricade for saving the town.

According to the recommendations by a national committee formed with the Chairman of WDB and teachers of Engineering University in 1988 with a view to finding out possible remedies in facing the river Meghna, WDB engineers till March 1990 threw 2,70,000 C.C. blocks and 82,500 geo-textiles bags filled with sand into the river, authorities stated. The fund given to them was not sufficient, a high WDB official said.

Meanwhile, most people of Chandpur do not think that WDB at Chandpur has properly done the task entrusted with them for protection of Chandpur.

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#### Nazrul complex in Comilla demanded

COMILLA, June 8: Speakers at a seminar here stressed the need for proper evaluation of the works of the national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, reports UNB.

The seminar, organised by the Ushashi Parishad, was held at the Comilla Town Hall on Tuesday.

Addressing the seminar as chief guest Prof. M. Abdul Aziz, Chairman of Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Comilla said Kazi Nazrul Islam was our pride and source of inspiration. He recalled that Nazrul spent a significant part of his life at Comilla which is full of his memories.

The speakers demanded immediate steps to build a Nazrul Complex here at Daulatpur where necessary land were donated by his first wife Nargis' family.

Presided over by Ramiz Khan, the seminar was also addressed by Kazi Farid Ahmed, ADC of Comilla, Principal Delwar Jahid, Editor weekly 'Samaj Kantha', and Dr Iqbal Anwar. The key-note paper was presented by Jahirul Huq.

The seminar was followed by a musical soiree.

#### 7 injured in Jhenidah clash

JHENIDAH, June 8: At least seven people were injured, one of them seriously, in a clash between the rival groups Sunday over a dispute on a plot of land, police here said, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the clash ensued at village Ghorasai in sadar upazila. Both the groups attacked each other with lathi, bricks, shanki and other deadly weapons to take possession of the disputed land.

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### River erosion leaves 1000 families homeless

MANIKGANJ, June 8: About 1000 families of 31 villages in four upazilas of Manikganj and Dhaka districts have been rendered homeless by the continuous erosion of the river Padma and Jamuna over the last week.

The worst affected upazilas are Daulatdia, Shibbalaya, and Harirampur in Manikganj district and Dohar in Dhaka district.

Water Development Board (WDB) sources said, water levels in Jamuna at Aricha, Padma at Daulatdia point are on rise in every passing day creating panic among the

neighbouring villages.

Daulatdia Upazila Parishad Chairman Abdul Kader told UNB that about 340 homeless families of Baunduliya, Lautara, Kail, Churadage, Kalanpur, Varta, Kacharipara, Islampur, Uttarpara and Hundopara villages in the upazila took shelter on Water Development Board embankment and in different places in Manikganj and Pabna districts.

In Shibbalaya upazila over 56 families in Kazirtar, Mandrakula, Bavinagar, Pachuria, Nayakindi and Jorlyarbag villages rendered homeless, local people and officials said.

Water Development Board sources and local people of nine villages in Harirampur upazila told this visiting correspondent that over 305 families of Tara, Daubil, Alinagar, Dulisura, Bamunkanda, Ramkunopur, Azimnagar, Kanchanpur and Harukundia rendered homeless over the period.

About 340 acres of crop-lands were also eroded during the period. The shelterless people took shelter on Kamlapur embankment.

Local MP Harun-or-Rashid Khan visited the affected areas and distributed relief materials.



Sammita Tran Committee of Matlab upazila offered free medicines and treatment among the distressed people of Mossarraf Ali's Bazar and neighbouring villages under Banshkhali upazila of Chittagong. — Star photo

### Irrigation facilities inadequate in Chuadanga

From Our Correspondent

CHUADANGA, June 8: In the absence of adequate irrigation facilities, the peasants of Chuadanga district have been left still at the mercy of nature and rivers for their farm production resulting in constant poverty and economic hardship.

Frequent disorder of machines, shortage of spare parts, irregular supply of power, fuel crisis and above all malpractice and a large scale corruption by a section of officials working in the sector have created a stumbling block on the way of irrigation.

It is gathered that there are 2,17,446 acres of cultivable

land in the district of which over 5,000 acres were brought under irrigation facilities during the last two years. But this year only 6,700 acres of land in the district are being brought under irrigation.

According to a source close to agri-office, about 1,75,000 acres of land can be provided with irrigation facilities if proper initiatives are taken up. But only 13000 acres of total land are provided with irrigation facilities now throughout the district. A total of 453 deep-tubewells has so far been installed in the district of which 60 remain disordered. From about 3650 shallow

tubewells installed in the district remain disordered throughout the year.

Moreover, many engines of these shallow tubewells are being used for crushing wheat and rice by some dishonest men.

Presently there are about 350 low lift pumps in the district of which about 100 are out of order now.

Large-scale corruption and malpractices adopted by the officials and influential villagers have created severe bottlenecks in organising proper irrigation facilities in the district resulting in low production and economic

hardship to the peasants and other low income group.

It is widely felt that if the irrigation facilities are expanded in a systematic way and its operational hindrances are removed the peasants of Chuadanga district could effectively tackle the drought which once and again ravages their crops throwing them into economic hardship.

The surveyor of Chuadanga Pourashava Asfar Ali was severely assaulted by some people while discharging the duty at the residence of one Rowshan Ara recently.

It is learnt that Asfar Ali along with three other staff of

### 17 shops looted in Magura

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA, June 8: At least 17 shops of Nakole bazar of Sreepur upazila under Magura district were looted following a clash between two rival groups. The clash ensued over

the incident of expulsion of two students on May 27 from examination who sat for the terminal examination of Nakole High School, 12 kilometre off the district headquarters.

#### Lightning kills 18

MAULVI BAZAR, June 8: At least 18 people were killed by lightning in the greater Sylhet district during last one month, police sources said, reports UNB.

Of them, seven persons died in Maulvi Bazar, 5 in Sylhet, 4 in Sunamganj and 2 in Habiganj district.

Most of the incidents occurred while the victims were working in their crop fields.

Separate cases of unnatural death were recorded with the police.

The expelled students along with their sympathisers demanded removal of the headmaster. One group supporting the expelled students and the other group backing the Headmaster clashed on the hat day of Nakole Bazar for three hours. Both sides used deadly weapons and looted valuables from different shops worth Taka five lakh.

Sreepur police, however, brought the situation under control and imposed Section 144 for restraining unlawful assembly. Police has so far arrested five persons Badsha Mia, Shujit, Jiban, and Walur in this connection and recovered some looted articles.

### Bullock shortage hampers farming

MAULVI BAZAR, June 8: Acute shortage of bullocks has been prevailing throughout the district since long causing much inconveniences to the farmers, reports UNB.

About 60 per cent land remain uncultivated in the district every year as most of the marginal farmers have no bullocks to till their land. Most of them plough their lands on share basis.

Farmers often hire bullocks to till their lands. Sometimes they till their lands with spades and drawing harrows themselves.

Many of the farmers use milch cow to cultivate their land resulting in gradual reduction of milk production.

A survey conducted by the local elite recently reveals that every year various diseases take heavy toll of cattleheads. The greedy cobblers are also responsible for killing a large number of bullocks by food poisoning for having skins.

Besides, slaughtering has increased to a great extent due to fish scarcity in the markets. Farmers are compelled to sell their bullocks at throw away prices due to acute scarcity of fodder.

No effective measures have yet taken by the veterinary department of the district to check the outbreak of 'khura', 'golafula', 'enthrax' and other deadly diseases.

The district veterinary hospital is also ailing. The hospital is plagued with manifold problems like shortage of staff, accommodation and modern equipment. Scarcity of emergency medicines has been prevailing in the hospital for a long time.

#### 36,476 acres put under sugarcane farming

BARISAL, June 8: About 36,476 acres of land have been brought under sugarcane cultivation in 11 southern districts during the current season, reports UNB.

According to official sources, 2,060 acres were brought under sugarcane farming in Barisal, 1650 acres in Pirojpur, 310 acres in Jhalakati, 620 acres in Bhola, 550 acres in Patuakhali, 607 acres in Bogura, 4591 acres in Madaripur, 14,388 acres in Faridpur, 7,465 acres in Rajbari, 2,597 acres in Madaripur and 1,638 acres in Shariatpur districts.

More than 5,47,146 metric tons of sugarcane are expected to be produced after the completion of the programme.

In addition, 80 demonstration plots have been set up in the districts to acquaint the growers with scientific method of sugarcane cultivation.

Moreover, about 86 demonstration plots have been established to train the farmers about inter-cropping of potato and ground nut.

Local MP Harun-or-Rashid Khan visited the affected areas and distributed relief materials.

#### Notes from Jamalpur

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, June 8: At least 27 educational institutions were damaged during the recent cyclonic storm.

Upazila-wise damaged institutions are seven in Jamalpur Sadar, four in Bakhshiganj, six in Melandah, five in Madarganj and six in Madarganj upazila according to the reliable sources.

At present the students of these educational institutions are taking their lesson under the open sky, it is learnt.

Some workers of the Jatityabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) allegedly assaulted Serajul Islam, the staff reporter of local, weekly Palli-Kantha at the Melandah upazila BNP office recently.

According to the witnesses, the workers manhandled Seraj while he was coming to the Pallikantha office from Melandah Bazar. A protest meeting held at the Jamalpur Press Club condemned the incident and demanded punishment of the attackers.

AL meeting

A worker's meeting of Bangladesh Awami League of Melandah upazila unit was held at the local Shilpakala Academy Auditorium recently. The meeting was presided over by Advocate Ismat Pasha, President of Melandah upazila unit, while Mr. Gulam Azam MP attended as the chief guest.

The meeting was addressed by Delwar Hossain, Md Ali Jeeenath, Khalilur Rahman, Rostum Ali contractor and others.

Smuggling on rise

Smuggling has increased causing concern in the district. The law enforcing agencies and the border guards have launched their drives to curb smuggling following the Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's call for bringing down crimes with iron hand and profuse newspapers report on smuggling which is eating into the vitals of the national economy.

The professional smugglers have become more organised diluting the effectiveness of police role to some extent during the last few years.

Smuggled Indian goods like sarees, spices, bicycle parts, cosmetics and medicines are being sold in local market with impunity.

These smuggled goods are generally exchanged for the VCP's, VCR's dry fish, powder milk and polyester cloth from Bangladesh. As a result local industries are on the verge of closure.