

Upazila roundup

KUSHIA

Low-lying areas flooded

Sept 29: All the low-lying areas of the district have gone under water due to incessant rain during the last two days, causing flash flood while the rivers recently in spate have been receding, reports UNB.

The district headquarters has been badly affected with Khodadad Khan road, hospital road and premises. Arju Das Agarwalla street and Ramgopal Majumdar lane submerged by rain water.

sixty-eight millimetre of rainfall was recorded during the last two days.

The return of the displaced people to their houses from temporary camps has been halted.

Those who did return earlier found their houses ravaged and faced scarcity of pure drinking water, food and medicine.

According to the Civil Surgeon, 50 medical teams have been working in the flood affected areas of six upazilas of the district. Intestinal diseases which had broken out in the affected areas have been brought under control, he said.

Water purification tablets were also distributed among the flood-stricken people.

WDB sources said the rivers Ganga and Goral have continued to record gradual fall in their water level.

C'NAWABGANJ

Frogs being caught indiscriminately

Sept 29: Frogs, the natural predators are being caught indiscriminately at different areas of all the five upazilas of the district despite government ban, reports UNB.

A group of unscrupulous people are catching frogs during night in Shibganj, Bholahat, Gomostapur, Nachol and Sadar upazilas of the district.

It is learnt that a frog is being sold at Taka two in the local market. The frogs are allegedly being exported through the Mongla Port.

According to an expert, a frog can eat two to three kgs of insects per day and such unscrupulous catching may lead to ecological imbalance.

NETRAKONA

Jute prices go down abnormally

Sept 29: Jute prices have gone down abnormally in the local markets here creating widespread disappointment and financial hardship for the growers.

Jute producers' representatives told UNB that minimum production cost of per maund of jute was Tk 400 this year but prices ranged between Tk 175 and Tk 250 according to quality.

About 75 per cent jute growers in the 10 upazilas of the district took loan from different commercial banks for producing jute but now it has become difficult for them to repay the bank loans.

Jute traders said that the jute market was down because of reluctance of jute exporters and millers at different centres in the country including Mymensingh, Daulatpur, Khulna to purchase jute as they have been denied bank credit this year.

Jute growers appealed to the government to resume purchase of jute immediately and reopen both jute purchasing centres including Adamjee Jute Mills Corporation, BJMC, BJC, on an emergency basis.

Official sources said that a total of 40,500 acres of land have been brought under jute cultivation this year in all the 10 upazilas of the district.

KURIGRAM

Tariqul visits flood affected areas

Sept 29: Social Welfare and Women's Affairs Minister Tariqul Islam visited flood affected areas and supervised relief activities at Chilmari and other relief camps in Kurigram district yesterday, reports BSS.

Addressing the flood affected people, the Minister said, each and every affected family would get adequate building materials and financial aid to rebuild their houses after complete recession of flood waters.

He asked the relief workers on the spot to work hard with care in aid of distressed people, so that nobody is beyond the reach of relief materials supplied by the government.

Mr Islam also presided over a review meeting on overall flood situation and relief activities at Kurigram Circuit House.

SIRAJGANJ

Blue film cassettes recovered

Sept 29: Police arrested a man and seized his VCP and TV set along with three blue film cassettes here on Friday night, reports UNB.

Acting on a secret information, police raided the Jagrata Printers' compound, seized the sets and arrested the owner Babu.

Obscene and blue films are being shown unabatedly in different upazilas of the district including the district headquarters causing moral degradation of the young generation, local people complained.

There are at least 50 video clubs in the town. Most of the club owners are allegedly showing obscene and blue films on commercial basis.

GAIBANDHA

Flood situation reviewed

Sept 29: Social Welfare and Women's Affairs Minister Tariqul Islam presided over a review meeting on the flood situation and relief activities at zila parishad auditorium yesterday, reports UNB.

Officials of the district administration, local political leaders, public representatives and concerned officials attended the meeting.

Tariqul was apprised that 14 unions of Gobindaganj upazila in the district are still under flood water and standing crops on about one lakh acres have been damaged.

The situation of diarrhoeal disease is improving, he was told in the meeting.

Later the Minister visited flood affected Sadullapur and Gobindaganj upazilas and supervised relief activities.

He distributed some sarees and other relief goods at different relief camps of the worst affected Gobindaganj upazila.

Mrs Rebeka Mahmud MP accompanied Tariqul during his visit, said a PID handout.

PANCHAGARH

Prospect of rubber plantation bright

Sept 29: The prospect of high yielding variety rubber plantation in the district is bright, forest officials said, reports UNB.

The soil scientists said the climate, chemical components of soil, temperature, yearly rate of rainfall in the district are very favourable for the cultivation.

The government can earn at least Tk 2 crore annually in a rubber farming project was taken up in this locality, they said.

In 1960, the forest department on experimental basis took up a project for rubber plantation in Tetulia and Debaganj upazilas of the district and the yield was highly satisfactory.

Local elite have urged the authorities to take a scheme in the district for rubber plantation at least on experimental basis.

JHENIDAH

Valuables looted

Sept 29: Valuables worth about Tk one lakh were looted in a daring bus dacoity near Baidanga in Sadar upazila on Jhenidah-Chuadanga road Friday, reports UNB.

According to police, the dacoits numbering 10 to 12 attacked the Jhenidah bound bus 'Sonar Tori' (Chittagong J-2115) coming from Chuadanga, beat the passengers injuring at least seven of them including a sub-inspector of police and a woman and decamped with valuables.

Of the injured, sub-inspector Abdur Rashid of Mherpur police station was rushed to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital while rest were released after first aid.

A case was registered with the local police.

MAGURA

Young man commits suicide

Sept 29: A young man of village Kadrapara in Sreepur upazila of the district allegedly committed suicide by taking poison, reports UNB.

According to family sources, the victim Mohammad Alam (22), son of Nurul Alam allegedly killed himself recently following a family feud.

Alam was a student of Dhaka University.

A case of unnatural death was filed with Sreepur police station in this connection.



MYMENSINGH: Station Road submerged by heavy downpour due to absence of proper drainage system. — Star photo

Erosion threatens Bahadurabad ferry ghat

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, Sept 29: Severe erosion in the rivers Jamuna and Brahmaputra which continues unabated has already devoured vast tracts of land near Bahadurabad Railway ferry ghat and at other places of the district. Ferry services were disrupted several times at Bahadurabad during the last two months due to erosion.

The rivers have already grabbed an area of about half a mile near ferry ghat in two months.

Measures so far taken by the concerned authorities to arrest the erosion are too inadequate. The railway ferry ghat which was shifted previously will again need shifting if the erosion aggravates further. About 60 shops at the ghat were grabbed by the erosion during the last one month along with standing crops, sugarcane over vast tracts of land in southern and northern parts of the ghat.

The Brahmaputra flood control embankment near Dewanganj Bazar constructed six months back at a cost of Taka 50 lakh has also been affected by the erosion. Meanwhile, incessant rains during the last one month have caused spate in Jamuna and the Brahmaputra and all other rivers. The situations has aggravated further as ferry ghat is surrounded by innumerable shoals. Regular dredging is required for keeping the water body navigable.

This, in turn, has resulted in untold miseries for the people every year. Shifting of Jagannathganj ferry ghat to a more convenient place is now badly needed.

The overall floods situation in the northern districts con-

tinued to improve as flood water maintained a steady fall in the Jamuna and Brahmaputra rivers. Official sources said about 20 lakh people have been affected in 10 northern districts.

Some 12,000 dwelling houses were completely damaged while 8500 partially. About 1082 educational institutions have been damaged by the onrush of flood waters. Standing crops on four lakh acres of land have also been destroyed.

The affected districts are Jamalpur, Sherpur, Mymensingh, Netrakona, Kishoreganj, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Tangail, Bogra, Lalmonirhat and Gaibandha. Taka five lakh in cash and other relief materials including rice, alfalfa, sugar, pulse, lungi, sarees etc have been distributed among the flood victims of the district.

The river devoured about 400 feet of land at Khatpaty on March 11 and 300 feet at the same place from September 9 to 12 last. Two mills, one mosque, many fruit bearing trees and over 400 business houses are being threatened by the erosion.

About 100 persons have so far died 50,000 others attacked with the disease. According to Water Development Board, the Brahmaputra recorded further fall by 5 cms at Chilmari and 12 cms at Dewanganj.

Kishoreganj

Kishoreganj correspondent writes: Erosion by the Meghna has taken a serious turn at Khatpaty of Bhatrab river port town causing great concern among the businessmen of the area.

The river devoured about 400 feet of land at Khatpaty

Plan to export snakes worth Tk 1cr annually

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Sept 29: A scheme to export 40 kinds of poisonous snakes annually worth Taka 100 crore has been taken up by the Sundarban Forest Division.

According to the Forest Division sources, more than 40 kinds of snakes available in the Sundarban. The export will include snakes like cobra, Shankhachur, Python, Sea Dhora, Chandra Bora, Kentay, Gokhra, Bora, Darash etc which will be exported to China, Japan, Thailand, Hong Kong, Korea and Burma.

It is to be mentioned here that eyes, head, tongues, skins and flesh and poisons of the snakes are used in the foreign countries and are very costly in the world markets.

Suicide

Kabita Rani (14), daughter of late Nakul Sarkar of village Gabindapur under Sadar Upazila committed suicide by consuming poison recently. Poverty was the cause of her suicide, it is learnt.

Satkhira thana police arrested one inter-district dacoit and recovered two country-made guns including six cartridges from his possession recently.

Acting on a secret information, police personnel led by Officer-in-Charge, Satkhira police station Mr. Samsul Alam arrested Hazrat Mustafa (35) of village Mrigidanga under Sadar Upazila from his hiding place Kanarbausa village of the same upazila, and recovered two country-made guns and six cartridges from his dwelling house.

A case was lodged with Satkhira police in this connection.

Gold recovered

Meanwhile, BDR jawans of 35 battalion, Satkhira recovered 20 tolas of gold worth Taka one lakh twenty thousand from one Pradip Das recently.

It is reported that BDR personnel caught Pradip Das re-handed from bordering village Harudah under Sadar Upazila when he was crossing the border and recovered the gold from his possession. A case was lodged with Satkhira police station.

Aman output falls

Production of transplanted Aman in all the seven upazilas of the district has registered a sharp fall mainly due to short supply and price hike of fertilizer.

Official sources said that fall in production of transplanted Aman in the district may be 30 per cent this year. Prices of fertilizer have recorded a sharp rise by Taka 100 to Taka 200 per bag. The government price for each bag is Taka 201.

The total requirement of urea fertilizer for the district was estimated at about 2.50 tons this year. The BADC is yet to supply fertilizer to the growers. The stock of fertilizer at BADC godowns is almost nil. About 30 per cent of the total cultivable land in the district remain fallow. The target of Aman cultivation was fixed at 3.5 acres of land.

Diarrhoea claims 9 more lives in Khagrachhari

KHAGRACHHARI, Sept 29: Diarrhoea claimed nine more lives in Mohalechhari and Luxmichhari upazilas of the district during the last week raising the death toll to 30 in greater Chittagong Hill Tracts, reports UNB.

According to informed sources, five died in Mohalechhari and four in Luxmichhari. The two upazilas are the worst affected.

Hospital sources said more than 300 people have been affected by the disease at village Gorachhari and Dhumnighat in Mohalechhari upazila while several hundreds were attacked in Luxmichhari upazila.

A large number of patients have been coming from affected areas everyday to Sadar hospital and upazila health complexes for treatment.

Meanwhile, no report of fresh attack was received from Rangamati and Bandarban hill districts till Wednesday.

According to Rangamati district administration sources, all possible measures have been taken in the affected areas to combat the spread of the disease. Red Crescent Society sources said one hundred maund of rice and emergency medicine have also been sent for the distressed people.

Scarcity of pure water was attributed to the outbreak of the disease.

Plan to improve 91 kms road in Sherpur

From Our Correspondent

SHERPUR, Sept 29: The Government has taken up a programme to improve 91 kilometers of roads in Sherpur district.

The main objective of the project is to facilitate transportation and develop the infrastructure for other development activities. The project is being implemented under the joint auspices of Asian Development Bank which is responsible for 80 per cent of

UP member slaughtered

CHUADANGA, Sept 29: Mohiuddin (40), a member of Banka Union Parishad of Jibannagar Upazila under Chuadanga district was slaughtered at the night of September 15 by some unknown miscreants.

It is learnt that the miscreants called out Mohiuddin from his house at village Bahuda for an urgent piece of business at 8 pm. He came out along with his son and after crossing some distance the member found another 12/13 armed miscreants. The member then ran and took shelter in one Torab Ali's house. The miscreants chased him and forcibly brought him out of Torab Ali's house and slaughtered him near Raipur Bazar.

Later hearing the hue and cry of the deceased's son the villagers rushed to the spot and took the body to his residence.

On information, Jibannagar thana police went to the spot immediately. The body was sent to the Jhenidah morgue for post mortem. A case has been started with Chuadanga police station. Nobody has been arrested so far and investigation is in progress.

'Chasi' rally

Three chasi (farmers) rallies were held in Sirajganj High School, Khejura Primary School and Hjalgar High School premises on September 8, 9 and 10 respectively which were arranged by the Chuadanga Sadar Upazila Agriculture Extension Department. Numerous jute cultivators took part in the rallies. The cultivators were given training on rotting jute through ribbon system.

If may be mentioned here that for want of water in the beels and khals of the area rotting of jute has become a problem.

Prices of essentials up in Kushtia

KUSHIA, Sept 29: Prices of all essential commodities have shot up in the district causing great hardship to the general consumers specially to the low income groups, reports UNB.

Prices of rice, pulses, edible oil, eggs, onion, garlic, chillies and vegetables of all kinds have registered a sharp rise over the last one month.

The prices of different varieties of rice registered an average rise by Tk 60 to 70 per maund within the period. Fine variety of rice is being sold at Tk 14 per kg while coarse variety at Tk 12 per kg.

One kg of musur dal is being sold at Tk 30, mustard oil Tk 60, soybean oil at Tk 40 and egg Tk 12 per set of four. Prices of spices particularly onion and garlic have gone up abnormally.

Short supply in the market has pushed up prices of baby food and powdered milk by Tk 10 to 15 per tin of two kg.

Textile Facilities Centre limping

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Sept 29: The Textile Facilities Centre Project of Bangladesh Handloom Board at Shahzadpur is quite unable to serve the very purpose of the weavers due to some limitations.

It is learnt that the project was established in 1962 at a cost of Taka two crore to extend technical assistance to the weavers of Pabna district. There are 16 power looms and 12 semi-automatic handlooms. Besides seizing, calendaring and merchandising machines were also installed in the project and a total of 50 workers were engaged. Production target of the powerlooms was fixed at 11,200 yards, but synthetic fibre of 15000 to 16000 yards were used to be produced. Each semi-automatic handloom used of produce two sarees a day which was also above production target.

In 1978 following a government order Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industry Corporation (BSCIC) handed over the project to Bangladesh Handloom Board. It is gathered that the project is now engulfed with a host of problems. Production has decreased following fall of demand in the market. A reasonable quantity of produce have been remaining unsold. Seizing and calendaring section have been closed and even research section fails to serve the purpose and the weavers find no interest to take local service due to inferior quality of works.

The authorities concerned have been urged to take early steps for proper functioning of the project.

Adulterated foodstuffs on sale in Kushtia

From A Correspondent

KUSHIA, Sept 29: Adulteration of foodstuffs has become rampant in six upazilas of the district causing health hazards to the people.

Gastro-intestinal, skin and diarrhoeal diseases have broken out in these areas due to unhygienic sale of adulterated food items in the markets.

Government steps are seldom taken to curb the activities of these dishonest traders and they are doing their business unhindered to the much detriment to the health of the people.

The consumers in general and people of fixed and low income group in particular have been undergoing serious inconveniences due to sharp rise in prices of rice and other essential commodities in different markets of the district during the last few days.

The rice which was being sold at Taka 11 per kg are now being sold at Taka 12 per kg. In the same manner prices of other grades of rice have shot up by Taka one to two per kg.

Rice traders when contacted said that price of rice would come down only if there is sufficient supply in the market. People feel that open market operation should immediately be started by food department to bring the prices of rice within a reasonable limit.

Similarly prices of other commodities like edible oil, baby food, milk powder, sugar, pulses, onion, garlic, fish, mutton have also recorded a further rise bringing misery to the people during the last few days.

Fodder scarcity

Acute shortage of fodder has been prevailing throughout the district specially in the remote areas.

It is learnt that the acute shortage of fodder is the result of large scale damage of straw by excessive and incessant rain during the last three months. Moreover, traditional grazing fields have been turned into agricultural lands in all the six upazilas of the district without any consideration of the cattle feeding.

According to farmers, fresh grass for milching cows is not available in the rural areas because of the change in pattern of the crop and cultivation throughout the year. Prices of oil cake, bran and other varieties of fodder have also been increased. As a result, thousands of cattleheads throughout the district have already been reduced to skeleton. A large number of cattle has fallen prey to various diseases due to constant starvation.

3 commit suicide in Gaibandha

GAIBANDHA, Sept 29: Moslima Khatun (25), first wife of Sirajul Islam of village Dakhin Dalgram in Kaliganj upazila of Lalmonirhat district allegedly committed suicide, reports UNB.

According to family sources, she killed herself by jumping into the river Jamuna while crossing the river by the railway ferry between Bahadurabad Ghat and Teestamukh Ghat recently.

Sirajul Islam was coming from Khagrachhari district accompanied by his two wives and two children to his village.



COX'S BAZAR: Social Assistance and Rehabilitation for the Physically Vulnerable (SARPV), a non-governmental organisation (NGO) distributed wheel chairs among the physically disabled persons in cyclone-hit areas of the district. —Star photo