

Upazila roundup

NABINAGAR

Housewife murdered

From Our Correspondent

March 1: Nurunnahar Begum (20), wife of Mukhles Mia of village Nasirabad under Nabinagar Upazila was brutally killed in the evening on February 20 by the members of her husband's rival group.

It is reported that the victim Nurunnahar Begum was lonely in the house and writing a letter. Suddenly a gang of miscreants entered the room and hit her with deadly weapons. As a result she died on the spot. The killers however, made their good escape.

A case has been lodged with the Nabinagar police in this connection. Nobody has been arrested.

MADARIPUR

Bus journey risky

From Our Correspondent

March 1: Journey by buses has become very hazardous and risky due to overloading, reckless driving and bad condition of buses and roads in Madaripur district causing frequent accidents on Madaripur-Bhaurghata, Madaripur-Takerhat, Madaripur-Barisal and Madaripur-Dhaka routes.

It is also alleged that the drivers and conductors carry passengers, commercial baggages, goat and poultry birds on roof top of buses.

The landless and unemployed people are on the rise in four upazilas of the district. Out of the total population of 15 lakh, 50 per cent are dependent on agriculture, 20 per cent are engaged in different occupations and the rest 30 per cent are fully unemployed informed sources said.

SATHKHIRA

One stabbed

From A Correspondent

March 1: One Hasan (22) of Kamalnagar under Sathkhira Sadar was stabbed in the morning on Thursday at Sathkhira town due to past enmity with his associates. It is reported that while Hassan was walking some young chaps blocked his way in front of New Market and stabbed him.

The victim is undergoing treatment at In Sathkhira Hospital. A case was registered with Sathkhira PS and none was arrested so far.

RANGPUR

Arms recovered

March 1: Police here recovered two pipe guns and ammunition in two separate incidents in the district, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip off, Kotwali police Wednesday recovered one abandoned pipe gun, 38 rounds of bullets and two swords from a railway bridge at Balapara Sadar area.

In another drive, Mitthapukur police recovered one pipe gun, five rounds of bullets and one sword from a jungle near Daulpara Girls' School under Mirzapur union.

None was, however, arrested in this connection.

MAULVI BAZAR

Excess fares being realised from bus passengers

March 1: Excess bus fare are allegedly being collected from passengers travelling in different routes throughout the district, reports UNB.

Sources say passengers are to pay Taka 9 to 10 for a distance of 12 miles from Secemongol to Shamsnagar while the travellers from

Shamsnagar to Kamalganj are charged Tk 3 for only three-mile distance. Besides, from the district town to Shamsnagar bazar for a distance of 12 miles, passengers are to pay Taka 10 or 11.

This leads to frequent brawl between passengers and bus conductors.

Passengers allege that some staff of the buses even behave very badly with them to realise excess fare.

C'NAWABGANJ

Ration goods sell at blackmarkets

March 1: Rice and wheat, sanctioned under Pali Rationing System, are being sold in blackmarkets in five upazilas of the district, local people alleged, reports UNB.

Some dealers of Sadar, Shibganj, Bholahat, Nachole and Gomostapur upazilas are allegedly involved in the misappropriation of foodgrains earmarked for sale under the P.R. system.

The government has fixed the price of rice at Taka 7.34 per kg for sale in the ration shops. But one kg of ration rice is selling between Taka 10 and 11 in the open markets.

District officials admitted that they were receiving complaints against the dishonest dealers and said steps were being taken in this connection.

BAGERHAT

Dacoits loot arms, ornaments

From Our Correspondent

March 1: A double barrel gun and 30 rounds of live cartridges and other valuables were looted by armed dacoits in the village Sanyasirchar at night recently.

It is reported that at the night of occurrence the dacoits raided the house of one Nikhil Chandra Haldar of the village and decamped with aforesaid arms and ammunition and other valuables including gold ornament worth Taka 35,000.

In this connection a case was registered with Rampal P.S. Vigorous police investigation is going on.

BARISAL

Training course concludes

March 1: A two-week long training of the members of cooperative societies in four southern districts concluded at the Public Library premises recently, reports BSS.

Organised by the Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB), the course was participated by 28 members from Barisal, Jhalakati, Pirojpur and Bhola.

The training course was inaugurated by the Deputy Director of BRDB.

The training was conducted by the BRDB officials at district and upazila levels.

Certificates were awarded to the trainees on the concluding day of the training.

MAULVI BAZAR

Unauthorised structures on R & H land

A sizable portion of land belonging to Roads and Highways (R & H) department has been illegally occupied by a section of unscrupulous businessmen, reports UNB.

They built pucca and semi pucca shops on the land during the last few years without permission of the authorities.

The unauthorised structures have narrowed the roads obstructing vehicular movement, local people alleged.

According to sources, a section of employees of the R & H department in collusion with the businessmen are allegedly involved in construction of the shops.

Rural hats, bazars in bad shape

From Our Correspondent

NABINAGAR (Brahmanbaria). March 1: At least 20 hats and bazars in Nabinagar upazila have long been in bad shape due to lack of care and proper maintenance.

The main problems that impede normal functioning of the market places include shortage of space, indiscriminate erection of sheds, bad drainage system and paucity of pure drinking water.

All the hats and bazars except a few are unspacious. None of the bazars has been expanded in commensurate with the growth of population. Besides, rampant erection of unauthorised shops at blank spaces and on roads has further narrowed the space.

One killed in Magura mishap

MAGURA, March 1: One person was killed and 10 others were injured, two seriously, when a coach tumbled into a ditch beside the Magura-Jhenidah highway on Saturday evening, reports UNB.



Though late, Irri farming is still going on. Here farmers are planting Irri saplings at a village in Gazipur district..

— Star photo.

Passengers fall prey to drivers' whim

Traffic rules violation leads to frequent road mishaps

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Mar 1: Road journey has become hazardous and risky on Pabna-Nagarbari, Pabna-Ishwardi, Pabna-Rajshahi, Pabna-Bogra and Pabna-Kushtia routes due to frequent violation of traffic rules.

The number of road mishaps on these routes have increased in the recent days. Overloading, unscheduled running and undesired competitions on the roads by the drivers have become a regular feature on these routes.

Due to absence of patrol duty by the department concerned and supervision by bus owners' associations, these vehicles are seen operating at drivers' own whim causing road accidents and sufferings to the passengers, especially to minors and women.

Excessive fares are also realised from the passengers and alteration with them has become a common scene. Moreover, bus passengers of this district are facing great inconvenience due to absence of suitable waiting sheds and toilets both for male and females in the bus station.

No action by the law enforcing agencies has been taken to stop these anarchy, it is alleged.

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buildings and cultivating the lands without prior permission from the relevant authorities.

The area which is locally called "Dead Padma" covers about one kilometer area from the village Ramchandrapur in the east and the village Kuthipara in the north west of Pabna town.

The River Padma which used to flow earlier through

this flood control embankment has changed its course leaving a vast area barren since many years.

The district pourashava authorities did not take any step to utilise the area and has left it without any plan.

It is learnt that people of the town area are selling their property at high price and occupying these khas lands. The

number of illegal occupants is increasing very rapidly day by day creating problems of litigation.

According to the sources, there are now 10,000 such illegal occupants who are collecting bricks and soil from the flood control embankment and constructing their houses resulting in a threat to the embankment which is now becoming weak day by day.

The people of the village adjacent to the embankment urged the concerned authorities to take action against illegal occupation of khas land. They also opined the need for protecting the embankment.

Maulvi Bazar

UNB from Maulvi Bazar adds: Frequent violation of traffic rules by the drivers has made the journey hazardous and risky to and from the district headquarters, travellers alleged.

Passengers complained that most buses plying on different routes are over loaded making life risky. Reckless driving and over taking also lead to frequent accident.

Drivers stop their buses several times at different points according to their whims causing delay in reaching destinations. They often charge high fare leading to frequent altercation with the passengers.

Moreover, many drivers have no valid licence and no step has yet been taken in this regard after repeated complaints.

Passengers have urged the authorities to take stringent action against violation of traffic rules to ensure safe journey.

Illegal leasing of forest land

Govt losing Tk 3.5 cr per year

MAULVI BAZAR, March 1: Local forest land has been leased out to farmers without government sanction and the rent is being diverted to the personal account of some forest officials. It was alleged here, reports UNB.

About Taka 3.5 crore has thus been defalcated over the last eight years, it is further alleged.

According to departmental sources, the land was leased out to the farmers as it was found fertile enough for crop cultivation and not suitable for afforestation.

There are about 3,000 acres of land in the reserve forest area of Chunarughat upazila in Habiganj district.

The land is leased out at a rate of Taka 1500 per acre for one year. Thus Taka 45 lakh are being defalcated every year depriving the government of the huge revenue, sources said.

It is learnt that before

September 1982 all these lands were distributed among 600 families on the condition that they would guard the forest against unauthorised woodcutters to help implement the afforestation programme of the department.

But after September of 1982, the landless farmers had been ignored and made destitute.

The matter was brought to the notice of the higher authorities in Dhaka but no action was taken, some deprived farmers said.

Unrestrained use of chemical fertilizer on croplands has decreased soil fertility in the district.

The cultivators of Barlekha, Kulaura, Kamalganj and Rajnagar upazilas said unscientific application of chemical fertilizer, production of crops in recent years has decreased at least by 32 to 41 per cent.

Smuggled clothes cripple weaving industries

From Our Correspondent

CHUADANGA, March 1: Indigenous weaving factories of the district are on the verge of closure and the weavers are facing a serious setback to carry their ancestral business.

Due to financial crisis, price hike of dye, yarn and other chemicals and widespread smuggling of Indian clothes into the country local cloth industries have been crippled.

There were 1,400 weavers

in the district after liberation but the number has gradually decreased to 500 now.

When contacted, Mr. Nowsher Ali, Secretary, Chuadanga District Weavers Association said that the weavers of Alamdanga, Hatboalia, Kaldhapur, Belgachi and other places are heavily burdened with government loans.

Besides, they are in dol-

ness. The weavers demand exemption of taxes on government loan, financial help, modern technology to continue their ancestral trade.

The annual meeting of Chuadanga Red Crescent Unit was held in the local Zila Parishad Auditorium recently.

The meeting had a threadbare discussion on the last years' proceedings and approved it.

Dowry demand increasing

MANIKGANJ, March 1: Increasing demand for dowry has left a large number of poor young girls unmarried in the district, according to sources, reports UNB.

There are nearly 1000 marriageable girls in Satturia, Shingair, Chitor, Harirampur, Daulatpur, Shivalaya and Sadar upazilas whose parents can hardly offer any dowry to get them married.

Besides, continued aggravation of the economic condition of the parents, most of whom peasants, has made them incapable of providing endowments.

Beggars on rise in Borguna

BORGUNA, March 1: Beggars are on rise in the town causing great inconveniences to the dwellers.

There has been a continuous influx of large number of beggars into the town for the last few months due to shortage of food and work.

Poor people of rural areas facing acute food crisis are plying into the town with the hope of securing jobs. But in absence of job opportunities, most of them including their children resort to begging.

Besides, a large number of able bodied man and women are found in the town who prefer begging to earn their livelihood.

Political scene

Post election celebrations

Townpeople still crowd villages

Star report

Townpeople still crowd villages. There was an exodus of people from cities and towns to villages before the parliamentary election. The polls were held on Wednesday (February 27) which was declared as a holiday. But many have not returned to their urban homes as yet.

Attendance in offices at district towns is still thin. Even in metropolis many employees are yet to join their duties. Those who are now staying back to villages took the advantage of weekly holiday on Friday. Between Wednesday, which was the election day and Friday the employees managed to enjoy leave or "absence" on Thursday. This gave them a total of three consecutive days as holiday.

Now that the election is over. Our out station correspondents are reporting the post election celebrations in different parts of the country. Election arches colourful posters, festoons, banners and wall writings are still there as a reminder of hectic electioneering by political parties and independent groups.

It is now expected that the villages will get rid of extra load of urban people after the observance of Shab-e-Barat today (Saturday). Sunday is a government holiday for Shab-e-Barat.

Butchers slaughter sick animals

From A Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, March 1: Narayanganj Pourashava maintains a slaughter house to ensure supply of good quality meat to the town dwellers. But due to the failure of examining the animals by a veterinary surgeon before slaughtering, the quality of this vital food is not maintained and it spreads various diseases among the consumers. It is reliably learnt.

Everyday, a good number of cows and goats are slaughtered

at Narayanganj town. The sick animals are also reportedly slaughtered, it is alleged.

Sometimes, it is seen the animals specially the cows are being carried on a cart or van as they are unable to move due to sickness.

A veterinary surgeon is of the opinion that the consumption of the meat of such animals contaminates the food resulting in the spread of various diseases.



PABNA: This is how barbers run their trade in the open air in district towns beside modern beauty parlours.

—Star photo

Tk 3.75 cr electric bill unrealised

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, March 1: The total arrears bills of about Taka three crore 75 lakhs of Narayanganj electricity department are lying unrealised till December last year.

The big defaulter are Narayanganj Municipality and Shahid Zia Hall. The amounts are Taka 60 lakh and 4 lakh respectively. Arrears lying with industries and small consumers are around Taka 25 lakhs.

The previous year's arrears stood at Taka three crore 60 lakhs at the end of the 1989-90. About 70 to 80 per cent of the bills has to be realised excluding the consumers backlog payments.

The major causes of the accumulation of arrears are the inability of the power department men to disconnect the 32,000 defaulting lines in time. Besides a section of citizens is treating the electric supply demands rather lightly in comparison with other government demands.

The unrealised arrears bills has already touched a staggering figure leading to public sufferings and inconveniences. Under Narayanganj Division of the power department there are 123 employees with 17 on deputation while 33 posts still remain vacant. Transport are also inadequate. One pick-up and two ramshackle tempos

can hardly cope. Other work like car repairing and small purchases are delayed as local authority holds no financial powers.

Narayanganj Electric Supply is taking all possible measures to streamline its work with a view to providing all possible services to people and redress their grievances.

Eight alleged dacoits held in Netrakona

From Our Correspondent

NETRAKONA, March 1: Eight alleged dacoits were arrested and one gun and 30 rounds of ammunition were recovered by Netrakona police recently.

Acting on a secret information, a contingent of police headed by Ayet Ali, Officer-in-charge of Netrakona Thana raided the village Pukuria and Barhatta in Pourashava area and arrested the dacoits from two separate houses.

Siddique (22), son of Alhaj Chandumia of Barhatta and Jahangir (20), son of Abdul Gafur of Joynagar were arrested with point 22 bore revolver with 29 rounds of live ammunition on the same night.

A case has been filed with the Netrakona Thana and further investigation is going on



Now-a-days tubewells — deep and shallow — are used to irrigate the croplands. In remote areas where electricity is still a dream, people use indigenous tools for this purpose. These two minor boys are irrigating farmland by a boat-shaped equipment locally known as 'doan' at a village in Munshiganj.

—Star photo by Shafiuddin Bitu