

Upazila roundup

MEHERPUR

Diarrhoea breaks out

April 11: A young housewife died of diarrhoea and over hundred others were attacked by the disease last week in Sadar upazila, official sources here said, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Sabia Begum (27), wife of Sonapur village under the upazila. Her husband Arjan Ali attacked by the disease is fighting for life in a local hospital.

The worst affected areas are Sonapur, Gopalpur and Manthalpota under Sadar upazila. The disease is reportedly engulfing new areas day by day.

Local people complained that after repeated attempts no effective steps have yet been taken to combat the growing menace.

Meanwhile, a team of volunteers of local Jaycees club has been distributing oral saline and other medicines among the affected people.

NETRAKONA

Flash flood damages crops

April 11: Torrential rains for the last few days and onrush of water from the upstream in Sylhet and Sunamganj districts have caused flash flood in different low-lying areas of Khaliakhari upazila under Netrakona district, reports BSS.

The flood water has affected high yielding boro paddy on a vast tract of land of several hours at Jagannathpur, Ajmiriganj and Mandipur areas under the upazila.

An official source said that flood water has entered the area through the breaches occurred in several flood control embankments. The water level of the river Dano at Khaliakhari has registered a sharp rise. It is likely to cross danger mark if the rainfall continued, the source added.

RANGPUR

Kidnapped child rescued

April 11: A 16 months old baby, kidnapped ten days back, has been recovered at last, from a village in Rajshahi district, police said here, reports UNB.

A woman was also arrested in this connection on April 2. According to sources, Mariam Begum allegedly abducted Tarek on March 27, from his father's residence at Gomastapara area in Rangpur town.

Mariam, hailing from Batkandi village in Shajadpur upazila of Sirajganj district, was a tenant of Fazlul Islam, the father of Tarek.

C'NAWABGANJ

Smuggled goods worth TK 88 lakh seized: 2 held

April 11: In an attempt to curb smuggling, BDR personal seized smuggled goods worth over Taka 88 lakh during the last month and arrested two people in this connection, reports UNB.

According to sources, BDR jawans recovered contrabands like Indian sarees, bicycles, sugar, crockeries, polyester cloth worth about Taka 81 lakh while being smuggled into the country and illegal goods like VCRs and VCPs worth about Taka seven lakh were seized while being smuggled out of the country.

The seized goods were later handed over to local customs authorities and 141 cases have been registered with local police.

MAGURA

UP member assaulted by destitute mothers

April 11: A union parishad member of Salika upazila here, who took money promising to provide VGD cards, was assaulted by some destitute mothers Friday, witnesses said, reports UNB.

Abdus Sattar, the member, allegedly took Taka 200 from each destitute mother saying they would be given VGD cards in return. But do months elapsed he did not do anything for them. As a result, about 10 destitute mothers jointly attacked Sattar on a road on the day and bruised him heavily.

Sattar, rescued by some local people, was later sent to upazila health centre. The destitute mothers urged the authorities to take appropriate action against the corrupt union parishad member immediately.

SIRAJGANJ

5 killed

April 11: Five people were killed in separate incidents in three upazilas of the district last week, police here said, reports UNB.

Witnesses said Saiful Islam (12) of Dadpur village in Raiganj upazila was allegedly beaten to death by miscreants. Old enmity was said to be cause behind the killing.

Kanchan Bibi (22) of Noicia village in Raiganj upazila strangled to death allegedly by her husband, relatives said adding that the husband Moazem had been having an illicit affair with his sister-in-law.

In another incident, Somajan Khatun (15) of Borahor village in Ullapara upazila was found hanging in her room. Family sources alleged Mojibur Rahman, the husband, hanged her from ceiling to prove that she committed suicide.

Dukhi Khatun (18) of Kalkapur village in Ullapara upazila and Lokman of Dattabari village of Sadar upazila were found hanging in similar ways. Their relatives, however, said the victims were hanged to conceal killing.

MANIKGANJ

Downpour damages crops on 1500 acres

April 11: Standing rabi crops on about 1500 acres of land were destroyed due to heavy downpour in seven upazilas of the district on Wednesday, reports UNB.

Officials said, crops like lentil, onion, chilly, wheat were severely damaged in Harirampur, Ghior, Sauria, Singair, Shibabaya and Sadar upazilas of the district during the rain which continued for about 10 hours.

Besides, low lying areas were submerged and scores of kutcha houses destroyed rendering over a hundred families shelterless.

MAGURA

4 culverts to be constructed

April 11: In a bid to facilitate rural road communication, construction of four culverts has been undertaken in Sadar upazila here during the current fiscal year, reports UNB.

Funded by CARE, the project will be implemented under Annual Development Programme involving an expenditure of Tk 2.24 lakh.

The culverts will be built at Likhada on C&B road, Kanchanpur-Uthali road, Gabolli-Ramchandrapur road and Uthali-Paccakanpur road.

ERARDIPUR

Sufferings of TV watchers

April 11: Watchers of the district have been denied seeing the programmes of Bangladesh Television for a couple of days, reports UNB.

According to sources, a continuous wave of black lines appear on TV screen as soon as Diaka station is tuned.

Some television traders alleged that due to this problem the selling of TV in the district has decreased. Buyers blame TV sets for the fault.

Local people said despite repeated appeals, Bangladesh Television has not taken any step in this regard.

MAULVI BAZAR

Number of divorces rises

April 11: Number of divorces and marriage of minor girls are gradually increasing with a mushroom growth of unlicensed marriage registrars in six upazilas of the district, reports UNB.

According to sources, polygamy by divorced women are also increasing.

It is learnt, at least 2000 divorce cases were recorded during the last three years in six upazilas of the district.

Under-aged housewives are the worst victims as their husbands divorce them mostly for dowry but blame them for bad character.

There are 15 legal marriage registrars in the district. As per government rule, none above 65 years of age is entitled to conduct marriage proceedings or Talak nama. But this rule is reportedly being violated.

The marriage registrars charge Taka 50 as fee for each case of any description.

Despite ban on marriage below 18 years for women, these registrars are allegedly giving incentives for such misdeeds.



Workmen extricating a body through sawing steel plates at Sripur Textile Mills in Gazipur district on Wednesday. The roof of the mills collapsed following a norwester killing several workers. — Star photo

Farmers incur heavy loss

No grain grows from Pak-81 wheat seed

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, April 11: A new variety of wheat seed named Pak-81 sold to farmers in Rangpur district by BADC during the current season for cultivation in five districts of greater Rangpur Zone has yielded blank ear of corn.

Officials said, crops like lentil, onion, chilly, wheat were severely damaged in Harirampur, Ghior, Sauria, Singair, Shibabaya and Sadar upazilas of the district during the rain which continued for about 10 hours.

Besides, low lying areas were submerged and scores of kutcha houses destroyed rendering over a hundred families shelterless.

According to the sources, to the utter surprise it is found that every stalk of this wheat plant has produced blank grains on the whole cultivated land in all five districts.

This incident has caused huge financial loss to thousands of farmers who cultivated this variety on their lands, it is alleged.

The said wheat seed Pak-81 was imported by BADC and about 4,50,000 kg of this variety was sold to farmers for cultivation without any prior experiment, it is learnt.

According to the sources, due to difference in nature of soil and climate this variety has not yielded any grains.

Office-bearers of the zonal Jute Growers Samity was

held at the office premises of the Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Department, Rangpur recently.

The 9-member executive committee elected is as follows: Mr. Md Sultanul Alam, Vice-President - Mr. Abdul Karim, Secretary - Mr. Ruhul Amin Dulu and Members - Messrs Abdul Baten Sarker, Rafiqul Alam Sarker, Habibur Rahman, Advocate Altaf Hossain Chowdhury and Solaiman Ali.

Shifting of exam centre protested

Hundreds of students and guardians staged a strong demonstration recently at Kalligonj upazila headquarters in protest against shifting of S.S.C examination centre from the Tush Bhandar Government High School to a non-government high school.

The demonstrators chanting various slogans paraded main streets of the upazila headquarters and later assembled at the upazila parishad

compound and held a protest meeting there.

They, however, handed over a memorandum to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer demanding immediate withdrawal of the shifting order of the said S.S.C centre.

Scouts rally

The 15th Rangpur district Scouts rally was held at Rangpur Zila School ground recently.

About 300 Scouts and Scout

teachers from different educational institutions of the district participated in the rally. On the third-day of the rally, camp fire function was held in a befitting manner.

The function was presided over by Mr. Gias Uddin Ahmed, Deputy Commissioner, Rangpur while Mr. Fazlur Rahman, Director General of President's Secretariat attended as chief guest.

A large number of elite were present at the function.

Drinking water scarce in rural areas

From Our Correspondent

SHERPUR, April 11: Acute scarcity of pure drinking water is causing serious problems in the rural areas of the Sherpur district. The existing number of tubewells in five upazilas are quite inadequate to meet the demand of the people.

According to the reports, a large number of tubewells are lying out of order for the last two years causing untold sufferings to the villagers. Innumerable tubewells are out of order due to the damage in filter pipe beneath the earth, leakage in the pipe and more tubewells are lying out of order for want of spare parts. Several representations for resinking the choked up tubewells were given to the authorities but no step has yet been taken. Besides, upper portion of many good quality tubewells were pilfered.

Reliable sources said that adequate funds are needed urgently for resinking and repair of the tubewells.

Moreover, due to scarcity of pure drinking water people have to depend on kutcha wells and tanks for drinking water. As a result various water borne diseases are spreading in rural areas of the district.

Rangpur

Our Rangpur Correspondent writes: About 1460 hand driven tubewells are being fielded in five districts of greater Rangpur Zone during the current fiscal year.

The Public Health Engineering Department is caring out the installation of these tubewells with the financial assistance of UNICEF.

The total number of hand driven tubewells so far installed in greater Rangpur Zone by the Public Health Engineering Department since its inception stands around 64 thousand of which about four thousand have gone out of order.

A scheme is being executed for repairing and re-fielding of over 1500 tubewells in the Zone out of the total 4000 choked up tubewells.

Meanwhile, there are allegations that the efforts taken by the Public Health Engineering Department for repairing of choked up tubewells is far from requirement.

Every year, the number of choked up tubewells is swelling all over the Zone. But the steps so far undertaken by the department concerned with its limited resources to put the choked up tubewells in order is yet to be gauged up.

Meghna erosion threatens Chandpur town again

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, April 11: Erosion by the river Meghna has again threatened Chandpur town.

A vast area at Chandpur Puranbazar has already been washed away by the erosion. Puranbazar is a thickly populated and commercially developed area of the district.

Within a week about 30 shops and many houses were affected by the erosion. At the western side of the town many shops, business firms, and a century old Hindu Akhra are threatened creating panic among the shopkeepers and house dwellers. They have started dismantling their shops and dwelling houses and shifting them to safer places by

winding up their business.

Erosion has also started at Chandpur Nutunbazar threatening Chandpur Railway Station, fish market, launch and steamer ghat.

Bangladesh Water Development Board took up Chandpur Town "Protection Scheme" in 1970 at a cost of Taka five crore. Accordingly dumping of boulders along the banks of the river was done and till now only 4000 feet at Puranbazar and 5000 feet at Nutunbazar have been protected by dumping about 72 lakh cubic feet boulders.

Besides, 400 feet boulders embankment was also constructed.

Previously the people appealed to the former govern-

ments pressing the urgency of permanent town protection measures to save this district headquarters from further erosion but no steps were taken, though small protective measures were taken once or twice but proved to be futile.

Last year WDB drew up a scheme at a cost of Taka 21 crores.

Accordingly 2,70,000 cement blocks and 82,500 geotextile bags were dumped in the Meghna to check the erosion and rest of the scheme could not be materialised due to shortage of funds. So the people have urged the government to take immediate measures to save the Chandpur town from further erosion.

Fertility of farmland declines considerably

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, April 11: Fertility of agricultural land is declining rapidly in Jamalpur district due to rampant use of chemical fertilizer and rare use of cow dung manure.

According to the sources, use of cowdung is essential for keeping pace in land productivity. But it is not used proportionately due to the fact that the number of cattlehead has come down considerably, and also because use of cowdung as fuel has increased in rural areas following scarcity and price spiral of firewood.

It is further reported that the number of cattlehead in 1986-87 was more than six

lacks and in 1988 it has decreased to 3,15,420. Every year 20,000 cattlehead die due to attack of various diseases and other natural calamities resulting in serious shortage of cowdung.

This scarcity of cowdung has forced the farmers to use chemical fertilizers in almost five lakh acres of land in the district.

The Livestock Department has failed in motivating cultivators to use cowdung as manure as the department cannot do the needful in this regard.

Country-made wine recovered

From Our Correspondent

DINAJPUR, April 11: The police of Hakimpur PS recovered 25 jars of country-made wine from Hakimpur upazila on Tuesday last.

Acting on a secret information, the police raided a shop at Bangla Hill Bazar and recovered 25 jars of country-made wine from an unauthorised wine-shop. Twelve persons were also arrested from the shop. Cases have been registered with Hakimpur PS in this regard.

Rahman (22) of village Bhuapur in Tangail district was killed under the wheels of a running truck on Dinajpur-Phulbari highway near Barahat in Sadar upazila on Friday last.

Non-govt schools face hardship

From Our Correspondent

BHOLA, April 11: All the non-government secondary and junior high schools in seven upazilas in the district are facing serious financial constraints. As a result the quality of education has gone down.

These schools lack basic amenities. Even required number of furniture, class rooms and supply of pure water are not available.

According to a report, about 90 per cent of these schools have no science buildings and educational equipment. Fifty per cent institutions lack suitable play ground.

At present there are 290 secondary and junior private

schools functioning in Bhola. Of the total number of students, 90 per cent prosecute their studies in these schools.

Shortage of fund is faced by these schools resulting in the irregular payment of salary to the teachers and other schools staff.

Some of the schools have no source of income as the guardians cannot pay tuition fees for their wards. The houses for the schools are mostly thatched structures in 50 per cent cases while 30 per cent are semi-pucca and the rest have buildings. But many school buildings are in a pitiable condition. Any moment some may collapse as these are too old and maintenance is non-existent.

Maulvi Bazar needs bus terminal

From Our Correspondent

MAULVI BAZAR, April 11: The project for the construction of bus stand at Maulvi Bazar taken up by the then Chittagong Divisional Development Board in 1979-80 financial year with an allocation of Taka two lakh has not yet been executed.

It is gathered that Comilla Regional Development Board (CRDB) had also allocated an amount of Taka four lakh for the construction of the bus stand during 1985-86 financial year but the allocated fund was withdrawn by the authority concerned and diverted the fund for the development of Maulvi Bazar Women's College.

The bus passengers of Dhaka, Comilla, Hobigonj, Brahmanbaria, Sylhet, Sunamganj are facing great inconveniences due to absence of a bus stand and other facilities at Maulvi Bazar since long.

Thousands of bus passengers badly suffer for want of a suitable waiting room, both for male and female passengers. The female passengers are often found standing on the road.

Absence of urinals also are causing immense trouble to the passengers particularly the female children. Their sufferings become more acute during rainy season when waiting passengers find no alternative but to stand under the open sky.

It is also noticed that there has no place of systematic parking of vehicles. Buses are parked here and there creating much trouble to passengers and traffic jam.

The passengers expect the authority will do need full for early construction of a bus terminal.

World Health Day observed

The World Health Day was observed in Maulvi Bazar recently. District health department organised programme to observe the day.

A discussion meeting was held on the occasion at Maulvi Bazar town club auditorium. It

Fish stealing rampant at Siddhirganj area

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, April 11: Alarming rise in stealing fishes from the fisheries of different areas of the district is threatening the farming.

Owners of over 50 farms of Adamjee, Demra, Tekpara, Simrail and Siddhirganj areas alleged that an organised gang of thieves were continuing their practices since long. Stern action by the members of the law enforcing agencies should be taken to stop fish theft immediately, they added.

Such action was a must to encourage the fish farmers who meet about 20 per cent of the total demand of fish for the people dwelling in the capital they viewed.

Family welfare centre opens

MEHERPUR, April 11: A family welfare centre built at a cost of Taka 13 lakh at Amdah under Meherpur Sadar upazila was inaugurated on April 7, reports BSS.

Deputy Commissioner, Meherpur, Momtazur Rahman was the chief guest at the inaugural function presided over by Upazila Chairman Saidul Huq Bhuiyan. Among other, Civil Surgeon, Meherpur, Dr. Rafiqul Akhtar, Upazila Family Planning Officer Mrs. Shamima Sultana and Amtali Union Council Chairman, Mr. Alauddin spoke on the occasion.

The function was followed by a Milad Mahfil at the new building of the centre.

Notes from Dinajpur

From Our Correspondent

DINAJPUR, April 11: Eighteen metric tons of wheat worth about Taka two lakh which was allocated under Food for Works Programme were recovered by the District Anti-Corruption Department on Sunday last.

According to the report, the said quantity were of wheat were allocated under Food for Works Programme in 2 No. Sundarpur Union Parishad in Sadar upazila. Total wheat were taken delivery from Dinajpur CSD godown on Saturday last. Later entire wheat were booked for Saidpur Rabeya Flower Mills in Saidpur upazila under Nilphamari district. Acting on a secret information, the District Anti-Corruption Officer rushed to the spot and seized a truck loaded with those wheat. A case has been registered with Kotwali PS and further investigation is proceeding.

30 houses gutted

Thirty dwelling houses including property worth about Taka three lakh were damaged in two separate fire incidents on Saturday and Sunday last.

Twenty-three houses of 13 families and all other valuables worth about Taka 2.30 lakh were burnt to ashes in a devastating fire in the village Satalna under Chiribandar upazila on Sunday last. The fire originated from the kitchen of one Muslimuddin Ahmed. Besides, seven houses and property worth about Taka 60,000 of Abdul Gayum and Bahauddin Ahmed of village Amtali in 5 No. Abdulpur Union Parishad under the same upazila were burnt to ashes on Saturday last.

Housewife beaten to death

Marjina Begum (20), a housewife of Parbatipur upazila was allegedly beaten to death by her husband in a triangular love affair.

According to the report, Kallu Mohammad of village Harirampur, husband of Marjina was fallen in love with his late elder brother's wife (sister-in-law) Jahanara Begum. Marjina was tortured regularly by her husband in this triangular love affair. On Wednesday last, Marjina was beaten mercilessly and died on the spot. The body was sent to the Dinajpur General Hospital for autopsy. Kallu Mohammad managed to escape. A case has been registered with Parbatipur PS in this regard.

Training on wheat farming

A week-long training on wheat cultivation in modern method was arranged under the auspices of Dinajpur Wheat Research Institute at Rajbari, six kilometres off Dinajpur town on Thursday last.

Dr. M.A. Razzak, Project Director of the Institute inaugurated the training course. Mr. M. A. Majid, Additional Director of Agricultural Extension Department, Rangpur zone was present as chief guest. Mr. Awal Ahmed, Principal of Dinajpur Ilajj Danesh Agricultural College and Mr. Matial Banik, Deputy Director of Dinajpur Agricultural Extension Department were present as special guests.

Sixty agricultural officers from different districts of the country participated in the training course.