

## Upazila roundup

## SIRAJGANJ

## Fresh areas inundated

June 26 : Fresh areas in Shazadpur, Chauhall, Kazipur, Belkuchi and the Sadar upazilas here were inundated over the last 24 hours by gushing waters of Jamuna entering mainly through the breaches in flood protection embankment of the Water Development Board.

Local administration sources said nearly 40,000 people in five upazilas of the district have been affected by the onrush of flood waters.

Belkuchi Upazila Chairman Abdul Latif Biswas told UNB that about 800 families in low-lying areas have been severely affected by the flooding of Jamuna which was receded 4 cm during the period.

Waters entering through damaged portions of the WDB embankment at Meghat, Sonali Bazar and Beara inundated seven unions of the Sadar, Kazipur and Chauhall upazilas while the breach at Badalbari flooded fresh areas in Shazadpur.

More than 2,500 acre of standing crops have also been submerged in Shazadpur by the fresh flood. Continuous erosion of the river Jamuna has been devouring its banks at Makhra in the same upazila.

The Korotoa, a tributary of the Brahmaputra, submerged nearly 1000 acres of croplands in Ratganj upazila of the district, residents said.

## FENI

## Diarrhoea claims 3 lives

June 26 : Three people including a baby died of diarrhoea in two upazilas of the district, hospital sources said here today, reports UNB.

The deceased identified as Abul Kashem (24) and Fatema Khatun (45) of Allokadia village in Sadar upazila and Moriom Bibi (2) of Alamur village in Daganbhuiyan upazila died of the water-borne disease of Friday.

About 38 medical teams are working to combat the disease in worst-affected Sadar, Daganbhuiyan and Sonagazi upazilas.

## PATUAKHALI

## 102 unions affected by cyclone

June 26 : About 102 unions of Patuakhali and Barguna districts here have been affected by the April 29 devastating cyclone and tidal surge, reports UNB.

According to Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) officials, at least 24,019 loans of these districts have been badly affected by the cyclone. The damage of standing crops including irri-boro, betel leaf, mango, banana etc. and cattle heads and other pet animals perished during the catastrophe was estimated at Taka 5.15 crore.

It is learnt that the BKB authorities have started Taka 5.31 lakh post cyclone agricultural rehabilitation programme in these districts.

BKB sources further said out of 2,45,778 total loans in Barisal zone covering 11 southern districts, at least 71,313 loanee farmers have been badly affected by the tidal surge.

Of the 330 unions in Barisal zone, 266 unions have been seriously affected by the catastrophe, the sources added.

In these 11 districts BKB has taken up a post cyclone rehabilitation scheme of over Tk 16.80 crore. The amount will be disbursed to the affected farmers as loan to make up the loss.

## KHULNA

## Tk 27.19 crore electric bill lying outstanding

June 26 : Electric bills amounting to Taka 27.19 crore has been lying outstanding with different government and private organisations in the district, reports UNB.

According to local Power Development Board (PDB) sources, Taka 10.79 crore has been lying unrealised only with different government offices. Government Jute department with arrears bills worth about Taka 5.87 crore is at the top of the defaulter list.

Meanwhile, PDB has formed a task force to curb system loss which is increasing in the metropolitan area. During the last month, system loss was shown at 37.86 per cent.

Illegal connections at residential houses and shops were attributed to high rate of system loss.

A section of dishonest PDB employees are allegedly assisting the users to consume power illegally.

## JHENIDAH

## 11 commit suicide in 2 weeks

June 26 : At least 11 people including five housewives allegedly committed suicide in four upazilas of the district over the last two weeks, reports UNB.

Family feud, failure in love, diseases were attributed to their suicide.

Of the deaths, four were in Sadar, five in Shalakup, one in Kaliganj and one in Hornakunda upazilas.

The housewives Feroza Khatun (23), wife of Abu Bakar of villages Shitalidanga in Shalakup, Manjira Khatun (30), wife of Abdul Jabbar of village Kuthidurgapur, Tanu Rani Pal (21), wife of Ananda Kumar Pal of village Bankira in Sadar upazila, Halima Khatun (20), wife of Omar Ali of village Monoharpur in Kaliganj upazila and Maju Bibi (45) of the same upazila allegedly committed suicide by taking insecticides.

The four minor girls and the boys were identified as Mukti (12), daughter of Abdul Mannan of village Nujrat, Shila (11), daughter of Amanat Ali of village Kalkula and Albari (15), of Shalakup upazila and Nilufar Yasmin (10) daughter of Atiur Rahman of village Shadhuhati in Sadar upazila. They allegedly committed suicide by taking poison.

Of the rest two, Nader Ali Mollah (55), of village Chandial Para in Shalakup upazila committed suicide last week while Nawab Ali (35) died of excessive drinking of wine of Zoradha in Hornakunda upzila.

## FARIDPUR

## Revolver recovered

Police recovered one revolver, two pipe guns and five revolver bullets from Faridpur sugar Mills area, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip, petrol police challenged a man carrying a plastic hand bag near the area on June 17. He, however, managed to escape leaving the bag.

Meanwhile, in another drive Madhukhali police arrested a man and recovered one revolver, five cocktails from his possession.

Two separate cases were filed in this connection.

## MURADNAGAR

## Govt firm to eliminate corruption

June 26 : State Minister for Labour and Manpower Rafiqul Islam Mia said, it was the for most task of present democratically elected government to establish a happy and prosperous Bangladesh by eliminating corruption from all walks of our society, reports BSS.

He was addressing a meeting of Muradnagar upazila level officers and elected representatives at Muradnagar upazila sadar in Comilla on Thursday.

Mr. Islam urged all concerned to engage themselves in various welfare activities by promoting their efficiency. They must have reward for good activities and punishment for evil deeds, he added.

## PIROJPUR

## Miscreants violate pregnant housewife

June 26 : A pregnant young housewife was violated by a gang of miscreants in presence of her helpless husband at Uttar Gazipur village in sadar upazila on Wednesday, police said, reports UNB.

Villagers said a gang of armed culprits entered the house, tied up Siddipur Rahman, the house owner and violated his wife Saleha Begum. She became senseless after the incident.

A case has been filed with local police in this connection but the criminals are allegedly threatening Siddipur Rahman to withdraw the case.

Siddipur Rahman urged the authorities to bring the culprits to book without further delay and provide necessary security for his life, it is learnt.

## PIROJPUR

## A tragic death

June 26 : A row over trifling family matter claimed the life of an one-month old baby, police said here on Friday last.

Relatives said Fatema Begum, the mother, threw her tiny into a nearby pond after she got infuriated over a feud with her husband on Sunday in Balishari upazila.

The husband Zahurul Haque immediately jumped into the pond but it all went in vain, witnesses said. The baby died already.

Police later arrested Fatema.



With the advancement of science many equipment have been developed to husk paddy. But these modern equipment are yet to reach the rural people. Photo shows women at a village in Comilla husking paddy by 'Dheki' an indigenous tool. —Star photo

## Response to kitchen gardening encouraging at Northern zone

From Our Correspondent

DINAJPUR, June 26 : How an organised efforts can result in the proper growth of kitchen gardens into an adequate source of nutritional food for the family members was demonstrated by a number of inhabitants in three northern districts of Panchagarh, Thakurgaon and Dinajpur.

Most of our people suffer badly due to high market price of essential commodities. The condition of both the middle class and the poor is equal. They cannot meet their daily necessities as the price of green chili, onion and vegetables also has increased to a great extent. Such a situation has compelled most of people, specially the house wives to

grow vegetables as far as possible at their courtyards.

During a recent visit to some houses of these three districts, it was found that the young housewives had been working in their small gardens early in the morning or in the evening. Legume, kidneybean, pumpkin, fruit, sweet potato and other vegetables have been grown in their kitchen gardens.

Hasna Hena Dolly, a housewife at Station Road under Thakurgaon town told this correspondent that her courtyard was of immense benefit to her.

Gulshan Ara Begum, a newly married housewife of Haripur

upazila in Thakurgaon district said that it the housewives take the courtyard gardening seriously then one of the major problems of malnutrition of the people in rural areas could be overcome to some extent.

Mrs. Sanjida Kausar, mother of two children and housewife of Dhakkamara in Panchagarh town also echoed similar feeling about the courtyard gardens.

Mrs. Nazmun Nahar Begum, reporter of the Daily Star and a housewife of New Town in Dinajpur town earned Taka 650 by selling vegetables produced in her garden during the last one year while she spent Taka 60 to establish the garden.

Mrs. Rokeya Begum, a mother of four children and housewife of a very poor family of village Muradur in Birol upazila under Dinajpur district earned Taka 1,325 by selling vegetables produced in her courtyard garden during the last one year while she spent Taka 95 only to establish her garden.

During the survey it was found that 'kitchen gardening' is gaining popularity in these three northern districts now a days and establishing of the same in most of the houses is going on enthusiastically. Malnutrition can be tackled and also family income be increased through courtyard gardening, stated by all.

## Divorce cases increase

BORGUNA, June 26 : The number of divorces as well as marriage of minor girls are increasing in the district in an alarming proportion, reports UNB.



Rush of passengers at Chittagong bus terminal after Eid vacation. —Star photo

## Money lenders active

From Our Correspondent

MADARIPUR, June 26 : Money lending business at high interest rate has been going on all over the district. The poor farmers and middle class people have become the victims of this illegal business.

The rate of interest is Taka 20 per month or one and a half maund of paddy for a loan of Taka 100 only. The interest is usually realised at the end of the week. Paddy field, houses, cattleheads, gold ornaments are taken as security against the loan.

The farmers generally take loan from these blood suckers during the bengali month of Chaitra and Baisakh.

## Satkhira

Our Satkhira Correspondent adds:

Money lending business is going on in full swing in all the seven upazilas of Satkhira district throwing the poverty stricken borrowers into uncertainty.

## 2 dacoits arrested in Comilla

COMILLA, June 26 : Bangladesh Rifles caught red handed two dacoits with looted goods from areas near Kharera border outpost in Burichong upazila of the district, reports UNB.

According to sources, a gang of dacoits after committing dacoity in a house at Banasua village in Burichong upazila were fleeing when a BDR patrol party challenged them and nabbed Abul Hossain of Sadar upazila and Alamgir Hussain of Burichong upazila. The rest, however, managed to escape.

## BNP aims at happy society: Badruddoza

ULLAPARA (Sirajganj), June 26 : Education and Cultural Affairs Minister Professor AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury on Sunday said BNP government would take all steps towards consolidating democracy, reports BSS.

The steps will also materialise the dreams of those who made supreme sacrifices during last mass movement against autocracy, he added.

The minister was speaking as chief guest at the inaugural function of a residence constructed for the bereaved family of Shahid Jehad who made supreme sacrifice on October 10 last in Dhaka during mass movement.

Presided over by the Chairman of upazila unit of BNP AY Mohammad Kamal, the function was addressed by State Minister for Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Ansar Ali Siddiqui Members of the Parliament Mirza Muratuzzaman, M Akbar Ali, Kamruddin Yaluya Khan Mijlish and Abdul Mannan Talukder also spoke on the occasion.

The Education Minister said, the dreams of BNP and Shahid Jehad are the same. It is possible to materialise the dream of Shahid Jehad through establishing a democratic and happy society based on justice and equality, he added.

## Obscene films being exhibited on VCR

SHERPUR, June 26 : Screening of Indian and obscene films on commercial basis are going on unabatedly at different places of the pourashava affecting the serene atmosphere, reports UNB.

A group of rowdy youths allegedly in collaboration with law enforcing agencies are engaged in exhibiting blue films in different parts of residential areas.

People of different age-groups including school boys are the customers of these film shows. They usually through the area and commit violence.

Prof. Chowdhury said BNP will take step towards changing the form of the government for giving institutional shape to democracy. He said Shahid Jehad will be remembered in the history or democracy of the country.

Speaking on the occasion the State Minister for Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control, Ansar Ali Siddiqui said the supreme sacrifice of Shahid Jehad will be remembered by the people for a long period. He also called upon the people to work unitedly for materialising the hopes and aspirations of the martyrs of mass movement.

Later, the Minister formally inaugurated the house. He talked to the mother of Shahid Jehad and inquired about her well beings.

## Notes from Nandail

From Our Correspondent

NANDAIL, June 26 : Numerous tubewells were lying inoperative causing acute scarcity of pure drinking water throughout 131 villagers under Nandail upazilas.

According to informed sources, the number of tubewells throughout the upazilas is quite insufficient to meet the required drinking water. Moreover, 200 tubewells are lying incapable of pumping out water due to mechanical and other disturbances. As a result, villagers are compelled to drink polluted water from ponds and ditches which a pose a serious threat to their health.

## One commits suicide

One Abdul Gani of village Hiloehia under Bajitpur upazila committed suicide by hanging himself from a tree.

It is gathered that the victim had a quarrel with his wife are consequently at late night he hanged himself from a nearby tree of his house by twisting lungi round his neck.

An unnatural death case has been registered with the Bajitpur police in this connection.

## Mosquito menace

Mosquito menace has assumed an alarming proportion in Nandail, Kendna and Ishwarganj upazilas causing much disturbance to the people of both urban and rural areas.

It becomes quite impossible to carry on work after sundown due to severe mosquito bites. The students are the worst sufferers as they are bound to prepare their lessons at night.

The day labourers are passing their nights amid untold distress as they are unable to afford mosquito nets or coils due to financial hardships.

## 140 madrasahs face closure

Thousands of children in all 12 unions of Nandail Upazila are deprived of Quranic cum primary education as 140 Ebtedal Madrasahs faced closure due to the shortage of fund, absence of essential furniture and other facilities.

It is learnt that following the circular issued by the government 140 Ebtedal Madrasahs were opened at various unions of the upazila in early eighties. The Madrasahs were provided with government grants to manage housing and furniture. The teaching staff were also supported by government allowance and the madrasahs were functioning very well upto class five following a special syllabus introduced by the Madrasah Education Board.

But suddenly the government grants were stopped and the teachers remained unpaid for several months. At last being disappointed the teachers were compelled to leave the institution resulting in closure of madrasahs leaving the children deprived of the Quranic and primary education.

The student and guardians urged the government to take immediate step to resume the Ebtedal Madrasahs for betterment of the child education.

According to another report, the primary students of Nolaipara and Bilhadira areas of Nandail Upazila are unable to attend school as the road link between Kashinagar Primary School and Nolaipara has been lying disrupted for want if a bridge over the river.

The guardians alleged that the Rajgati Union Parishad took no initiative to reconstruct the old bamboo bridge which has broken down in middle of March this year. The students of primary schools of northern bank of the river have been compelled to discontinue their studies for the same reason.

## Books stolen

Eight thousand sets of books kept for free distribution among the primary school students at Gaffarganj upazila were pilfered from the store room recently.

## Universal primary edn faces setback

From Our Correspondent

## Prices of building materials up

Prices of construction materials of thatched houses in rural areas have increased abnormally following the recent cyclone and tidal surge in coastal areas of the country. Nails being an essential item for building houses in rural areas prices of the same have gone up by 20 percent within two months. One kg of one inch nails is being sold at Taka 40 against Taka 32 before the cyclone, one and a half to four inch nails are being sold at Taka 30 per kg against Taka 26 previously.

Prices of wires have gone

up to a remarkable extent 24 gauge wire is being sold at Taka 59 per kg against Taka 38 per kg before tidal surge. Wire of 14 to 22 gauge which was sold before Taka 34 and 36 before cyclone now sells at between Taka 48 and 54. Prices of Rods and other important construction materials produced locally have marked a sharp rise. Two-inch diameter rods which used to sell at Taka 18,200 per ton in April now sells at Taka 20,500 a ton, three to five inch diameter rods which sold at Taka 16,500 a month ago now being sold at Taka 18,500 per ton.

Prices of Chinese made hinges have shown steep rise while home made hinges re-

mained constant.

Price of a dozen of two and a half inch Chinese made hinges is being sold at Taka 33 against 22.50 while three inch hinges is sold at Taka 46 against Taka 40 and four-inch hinges at Taka 110 per dozen against Taka 95 before cyclone.

Besides, a bag of cement is sold between Taka 210 and 214 instead of Taka 200 the 205.

According to the traders, prices of these materials have increased as most of the consignments from abroad have been badly damaged by sea water. As a result, these items are running short of supply compared to the increased demand.