

Upazila roundup

**GAIBANDBA**  
3 electrocuted,  
two hurt in  
separate incidents

From Our Correspondent  
Apr 7: Three persons were electrocuted and two received injuries in separate incidents within the course of last few days.

In first incident on March 25, one school teacher Kallipada Das (45) of Kantannagar High School under Sadullapur upazila was electrocuted when he came in contact with live electric wire during the ironing of clothes.

In second incident, two persons were electrocuted at Mokamtola under Shibganj upazila on March 24. Two tubewell fitters namely Abdus Sattar (40) and Refadul Islam (25) were working at Kaahpur under Mokamtola-Jatpurhat Road.

They were sinking a tubewell in a husking mills. When they were lifting pipe upward, suddenly it touched with 11 KV high tension electric line in which the victims died on the spot. The victims were the inhabitants of village Bhagkhat.

Two persons received severe injuries when an air compressor exploded at Pratva Vacantizing shop, Gaibandha town. The compressor was over loaded and it exploded injuring one pedestrian and worker of shop. They were removed to local hospital.

**KUSHITIA**  
Note books  
sale unabated

From Our Correspondent

Apr 7: The sale of note books is going on unabated in different upazilas of the district.

Despite government ban note books are being sold in most of the book shops at Kushitia and different markets.

It may be mentioned here that the Government has imposed ban on publishing and selling of note books upto class eight.

But some unscrupulous traders are publishing sub-standard note books in fake names and addresses. These note books are full of errors and distortion of facts.

Some guardians complained that these note books are being sold at an exorbitant prices in different markets of the district. It is reported that the book stall owners do not sell text books without note books.

The students and guardians have urged the concerned authorities to take necessary action regarding the matter.

**RAJSHAHI**  
100 ulema for  
release of  
Golam Azam

Apr 7: A total of 100 ulema of the district have demanded immediate and unconditional release of Jamaat chief Prof Golam Azam and arrest of the organisers of 'Gana Adalat', reports UNB.

In a joint statement recently they said, Prof. Azam was not only the leader of Islamic Movement, he was also a citizen by birth.

They urged the government as well as the people to resist the conspiracy of leftists against Islam and independence and sovereignty of the country.

They said holding a 'People's Court' was illegal and unconstitutional as the country had a written constitution. The act was tantamount to taking law in their own hands, they said.

**KISHOREGANJ**  
Power failure  
frequent

From Our Correspondent

Apr 7: Frequent power failure and loadshedding have become a regular feature at Bajitpur town and its adjoining areas causing much inconvenience to the residents and heavy losses to the businessmen and industrialists.

Town dwellers complained that the areas plunge into darkness almost everyday giving rise to anti-social activities. Many electric goods like radio, television, VCR, VCP, refrigerators have become inoperative due to erratic power supply.

Production in local mills and workshops including irrigation to IRRRI-boro blocks have also been affected. The price hike of foodstuffs in the market is largely attributed by the frequent power failure as people can not crush their paddy and wheat due to power disruption.

Owners of mills and factories complained that frequent power failure has decreased the production causing huge economic loss.

**PATUAKHALI**  
One awarded  
life-term for  
killing wife

Apr 7: A man has been awarded life imprisonment here on charge of murdering his wife, court sources said, reports UNB.

According to prosecution story, the accused Forkan Gazi of Bohalganga of Sadar upazila killed his wife Hason Banu on the night of February 10, 1991 by cutting her neck with a sharp weapon and gave false information to his father-in-law that in a daring dacoity on the night, Hason Banu was slaughtered by the miscreants.

It is further reported that the accused Forkan Gazi had earlier married another woman and drove out Hason Banu from his house. Later on village arbitration, the matter was settled and Hason Banu was brought back from her father's house.

The District and Sessions Judge, S M Abdus Samad after examining the records and evidences awarded the punishment recently.

**DURGAPUR**  
College faces  
problems

Apr 7: Durgapur College is facing manifold problems including vacancy in the post of Principal for a long time, reports UNB.

The former Principal was removed three years back in the face of student agitation on allegation of irregularities, college sources said.

Since then, one of the lecturers has been acting as Principal. Teachers said proper running of the college was being hampered in absence of a full-fledged Principal.

Moreover, it has been upgraded to a degree college with approval of Rajshahi University obtained in February last. There is no provision for running a degree college by an Acting Principal.

The college has been lacking in accommodation facilities for classes and apparatus for teaching science subjects. It has no library in the true sense of the term. A very small room with few books passes for library.

Besides, interference of 'tricky local politics' in the college affairs, sometimes, impedes proper functioning and development of the college, situated at the Durgapur upazila headquarters.

**JHENIDAH**  
Boro cultivation  
expanded

Apr 7: Boro paddy cultivation has been expanded in six upazilas of the district during the current season, reports UNB.

A total of 75,830 acres of land has been brought under the boro cultivation scheme, Agricultural Extension Department (AED) sources said.

The previous target had been fixed at 61,151 acres of land with a production target of 1,11,387 metric tons.

Upazila wise cultivation target were: 16,470 acres in Sadar, 12,900 acres in Kaliganj, 6,410 acres in Kotchandpur, 20,716 acres in Moheshpur, 2,900 acres in Shalikhapa and 1,761 acres in Harinckada upazila.

'Boro paddy cultivation is more profitable than wheat and other crops' farmers of Meakunda village in Sadar upazila said.

Boro cultivation have increased in the area as its production doubles within a short time, sources said.

**MAHESHA**  
Maastans stab  
hospital staff

Apr 7: Local maastans stabbed a hospital employee when he resisted their entry in the emergency section of the Noakhali General Hospital, reports UNB.

Abdul Matin, a ward boy of the hospital was stabbed when he was on duty in the emergency unit.

The incident occurred when Matin saw the door of the unit as per order of the doctor who was attending a pregnant mother.

It has been alleged that local maastans were creating trouble in the hospital and even harassing the patients.

They were also creating disturbances in the office and nurses hostel inside the hospital.

The clubs in the adjoining area of the hospital were being used by the maastan for goasp, local people complained.



AGRI-VARSITY: The Vice-Chancellor of BAU, Prof M Ashraf Ali Khan distributing certificates among the participants of a-day-long farmers' training on seed health, production and storage of healthy seeds held at the library cum museum of the Department of Plant Pathology recently. — Star photo

**Drought affects paddy, other crops**

MAGURA, Apr 7: Continuous drought has been prevailing in the district for the last few days affecting standing crops including Boro paddy seriously, reports UNB.

All the canals, ponds, beels and rivers of the district have dried up owing to absence of rainfall. About 35 per cent of Boro paddy and other crops have already been damaged. Mango sprouts have almost dried up. Further damage to crops is apprehended if the drought continues.

Local people said, cracks were developed on the land in the absence of moisture in the soil. Shallow tubewells may also become unserviceable soon as the ground water level is falling alarmingly. About 20 per cent hand driven tubewells have already gone out of order.

Cultivation of summer crops has also been affected due to the persisting drought in the district.

Zharo Mandal (50), of village Bahrmollik in Salikha upazila was beaten to death allegedly by a group of rival villagers.

The villagers fell on him last week with lethal weapons while he was working in the field. He was rushed to Magura

Sadar hospital in a critical condition but succumbed after some time.

The body was sent to morgue for postmortem. Tension has been prevailing in the village since then.

A case has been registered with local police. Investigation is going on but none has been arrested so far.

**Bicycle riders killed**

Two bicycle riders, an aged man and his young grandson, were killed instantly when a speeding truck ran over them at Jagla bridge on Magura-Jessore Highway.

The victims were identified as Subal Das (50) and his grandson Ajoy Kumar Shikder (14).

They were on their way to Sanda village in Salikha upazila from Akhali village at Sadar upazila.

The Jessore-bound truck, driving recklessly, hit them from behind at the bridge crossing, witnesses said.

Police seized the truck and arrested its driver Jahangir Alam.

A case has been filed with the local police. About 200 leaders and

workers of JSD (Rab) of Bogla union in Sadar upazila of the district joined Jatya Party on Monday.

Advocate Hasan Seraj Suja Joint Convener of Ershad Sena and General Secretary of the district Jatya Party welcomed the newcomers in a simple function at the party office.

The function was addressed, among others, by Syed Rezaul Kabir and Fateh Ali Tizu.

The speakers demanded immediate release of their party Chairman H M Ershad and other JP leaders.

Two women of Sadar upazila of the district allegedly committed following family feud last week.

The dead were identified as Keshi Begum (20) daughter of Akmol Biswas of village Parla and Khodeja Begum (35), wife of Ismail Hossain Mondol of village Darimgura.

According to the family sources, Keshi took her life by hanging herself while Khodeja committed suicide by taking poison.

The bodies were sent to morgue for postmortem. Separate U/D cases were filed with the police.

**Hope for interest exemption, loan recovery down**

JHANIDAH, Apr 7: Loan recovery in the district has become difficult in the backdrop of public assumption that government will announce further exemption on interest accrued on loans, reports UNB.

Bank officials said that recovery of overdue loans has slowed down in the recent days due to this assumption.

The creditors of over Taka 5,000 are not willing to pay their dues with the expectation of further relaxation of loans upto Taka 10,000.

Bangladesh Krishi Bank alone has outstanding overdues over Taka 2159 crore after the government exemption notice.

BKB Jhenidah Region exempted Taka 1,92,318,213 crores from 27,108 loans. It has an overdue loan of Taka 41,11,89,000 crore.

'There is no effective law for loan recovery' officials complained saying even a certificate case against the defaulters can be refuted with filing a counter case against the bank or financial institution.

When the cases land at higher courts, the procedure becomes more cumbersome and lengthy.

The defaulters are mostly the big creditors, the officials alleged. They get scotfree due to bank protection for their goodwill.

They also alleged that misuse of loan and lack of proper supervision of its utilisation

deteriorates the repaying capacity of the creditors.

Recovery is satisfactory with the small creditors who usually repay to avoid certificate cases.

**Sharbahara Party**

man killed

A member of outlawed Sharbahara Party was killed by some unknown miscreants at Kushbaria village in Sadar upazila on Wednesday night, police said.

The victim Showkat Hossain (Manal) was suddenly attacked near the village by some armed miscreants as he was returning home from Kushbaria bazar. He died on the spot.

Villagers suspected that political rivalry might be the cause behind the killing.

Manal was arrested with arms during 1989 upazila parishad election and granted bail on March 24, 1992.

The body has been sent to Jhenidah Hospital Morgue for autopsy.

**Call to make a**

secular state

A conference of Bangladesh Hindu-Buddha-Christian Otkya Parishad was held at Madan Mohan Temple here on Friday.

Workers from Kushtia, Meherpur, Chuadanga, Magura

and Jhenaidah took part in the conference.

Chairman of the parishad, Maj Gen (Retd) Chitta Ranjan Dutta in his address said, 'War of Liberation was not waged to make Bangladesh a religious state and passage of the bill in parliament, the very spirit of the war has been jeopardised.'

He demanded repeal of the bill to make the country a secular state where the members of all communities would share equal religious rights.

Chaired by Narayan Biswas, president of the district unit, the conference was addressed, among others, by Dr Him Chandra Bhaumik, Bodhipal Mohathero, Bidyut Kanti Sarker, Sk Mukherjee and Sujit Shaha.

Police recovered a body of an unidentified young man (25), from the field of Arparan Shibnagar village in Kaliganj upazila on Monday.

Police suspected that the victim was poisoned to death by the miscreants. The body was sent to morgue for post-mortem.

A U/D case was filed with local police.

Another report from Jamalpur adds: An unidentified teen aged boy (12) was run over by a running goods train in between Norundi and Paurpur railway stations in the early hours of Monday.

**Notes from Maulvibazar**

MAULVIBAZAR, Apr 7: Acute shortage of bullock and cows has been prevailing throughout the district hampering cultivation and milk production, reports UNB.

According to informed sources, 40 to 50 per cent farmers in the district have not cattlehead to plough lands which adversely affect production.

Most of the farmers cultivate their lands on share basis as they can not afford to buy bullock.

At times, they hire bullock and even use milch cows for ploughing.

Knowledgeable sources said the shortage is largely due to heavy toll of livestock caused by various diseases and floods. Lack of medicare facilities in veterinary hospitals also is said to be responsible for loss of livestock.

Besides, slaughtering of bullock for beef has aggravated the situation.

**Scarcity of firewood**

Rampant felling and cutting of trees and plants have created scarcity of firewood in the district for a long time.

It is reported that due to non-availability of coal, the owners of brickfields and other related industries have been using wood as fuel.

At present, a maund of firewood is being sold at Taka 70 to 90 according to quality.

Experts are of the opinion that if the process goes on, it will create ecological imbalance, erosion and silting of rivers and canals.

**Arable land decreasing**

Arable land in six upazilas of the district is shrinking due to rampant construction of residential and commercial buildings.

About 15,000 acres of cultivable land in Rajanagar, Kulaura, Kamalganj, Berlekha, Sreemangal and sadar upazilas had been lost to pucca structures during the last couple of years.

Besides, brick fields are being set up on farm land indiscriminately further hampering crop production.

Moreover, erosion by the rivers Monu, Kushlira and Dnoli also devoured hundreds of acres of cultivable land over the last few years.

**House rent up**

House rent has increased manifold at Maulvibazar town over the past few years due to acute shortage of accommodation.

At present, a single unit residential quarter is being let out at a monthly rent of Taka 1500. In many cases, the house owners realise advance rent from the tenants.

As a result, many tenants especially the fixed income group find it difficult to pay the rent.

Due to accommodation crisis, a large number of professionals have been living alone with their families left at village homes.

The accommodation crisis, both for residential and commercial purposes and rent hike have been attributed to non-availability of land at reasonable prices and lack of investment and government initiatives of house-building in this commercial centre.

**931 tubewells out of order**

At least 931 tubewells have gone out of order in the rural areas of six upazilas of the district causing acute scarcity of drinking water.

The number of tubewells sunk by the Public Health Engineering Department is not adequate to meet the requirement of the people in the district. There is virtually no arrangement for repairing or resinking of tubewells.

Representations made for rehabilitation or replacement of these tubewells have fallen in deaf ears, local leaders alleged.

They called for immediate attention of the higher authorities to mitigate the problem.

**Customs Dept sells Indian cattle worth Tk 4.50 lakh**

FARIDPUR, Apr 7: Local Customs authorities have earned Taka 4.5 lakh by selling 224 cattleheads which were seized by them after being smuggled from India, official sources said, report UNB.

The cattleheads were seized by the BDR personnel in the river Padma while those were on way to Dhaka by mechanised boat in the early hours of April 1.

Local Customs authorities in the same evening arranged the auction and sold the cattleheads for Taka 2,000 each the cattleheads, in fact, could be worth about Taka 40 lakh, the Customs authorities added.

**6 killed, 14 hurt in road accidents**

JAMALPUR, Apr 7: Three persons including a girl were killed in a road accident at Mangalpur on Tangail-Jamalpur road, reports BSS.

A Jamalpur-bound truck skidded in to a roadside ditch, Fazal (14) and Shah Alam (14) of Rahmatpur under Fulsari upazila in Rangpur district and an unknown girl (12) were killed on the spot.

Truck driver and his assistant managed to escape. Police visited the spot and seized the truck.

A UNB report from Rangpur says: Two people were killed and 13 others injured in two separate road accidents on Rangpur-Sayedpur road, police said.

According to police, one truck driver Abdur Rashid (24), received serious injury when his truck collided with another truck on Saturday at Ramondigha area of the town. He died on the way to Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

Police arrested helper of the other truck Sahjahan, but the driver managed to escape.

In another mishap one Abdur Rahim (15), was killed and 13 others were injured on Sunday at Jagotola when a Rangpur bound minibus hit him from behind. The bus also damaged a rickshaw before rammed into a road side tree.

The victim died on the spot. The seriously injured six people were admitted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

Hospital. Driver of the minibus managed to escape but police arrested its helper Abdul Halim.

Another report from Maulvibazar adds: A head on collision between a truck and a motor-bike left one person dead and another injured on Chowmuthana area of the town, police said here.

The accident took place when a loaded truck (Dhaka Na-3985) hit a motor-bike, coming from opposite direction. Chapal (20), driver of motor-bike died on the spot and Jiban (22) received injury.

Late Jiban was removed to Sadar hospital.

Police seized the truck. A case was filed with Sadar police in this connection.

**One beaten to death**

SATKHIRA, Apr 7: A man was beaten to death at Haidatpur village of Shyamnagar upazila of the district on Thursday night, reports UNB.

Police said, Al Mahmud Al Baki (30), son of late Attar Rahman beat two boys suspecting them as thieves. Later a group of people attacked Baki in protest of the incident and injured him seriously.

He was rushed to Shyamnagar Health Complex and later shifted to district general hospital where he died.

**Property worth Tk 4 lakh gutted**

JAMALPUR, Apr 7: Property worth about Taka 3 lakh was burnt to ashes in a devastating fire at village Hazipur in sadar upazila Tuesday morning, reports UNB.

According to witnesses, the fire originated from a cowshed of one Khalilur Rahman, soon engulfed the adjoining areas and gutted 31 houses of 10 families.

Fire service personnel from town rushed to the spot and after frantic efforts brought the fire under control.

The affected families have urged the government to grant relief to rehabilitate them immediately.

Another report adds: Sonali Bank here has taken up a programme to disburse loan of Taka 47 lakh among the farmers to help them attain economic self-sufficiency.

About 10,000 farmers of Jamalpur and Serpur districts will get benefit out of the scheme of the bank.

A report from Dinajpur adds: Property worth about Taka one lakh was gutted and eight cows roasted alive in a devastating fire at village Alokdhuti in Nawabganj upazila.

**MP's shops, office ransacked**

**2 killed, 40 injured in clashes**

SIRAJGANJ, Apr 7: A man was killed and 10 others were injured in a clash over a land dispute in village Chhoto Maharajpur in Shahjapur upazila on the holy Eid Day Sunday, reports UNB.

According to the police, while the victim Ayat Ali (30), was supervising the crops of the disputed land his cousin Idris Ali (40), came to the spot and suddenly hit him on the head with a piece of bamboo.

Later Ayat Ali was rushed to local hospital in a critical condition where he died on Monday.

A case has been filed with Shahjapur police station.

Another report says: At least 25 people were injured, five seriously, in an intra-party rival groups clash of Shahjapur upazila BNP unit on the holy Eid day Sunday.

According to police, the clash ensued over sharing of money between the groups led by Arafat and Sabuj Sunday night which continued till Monday.

The agitated activists of both the groups attacked each other and hurled at least 25

bombs during the clash. They also ransacked the shops and offices of local MP Kamruddin Yahya Khan Majlish and local BNP leader Manik Miah.

Police arrested Shamim (30), Shaheen (28), Abdul Momin (30) and Mithu (32) in this connection.

A report from Magura adds: A man was killed and five others were injured in a clash between two rival groups of people at Sreeko Hat at Shoronyagar in Sreepur upazila recently.

The victim Mokbul Hossain (50), son of Afzar Uddin was killed on the spot when rival groups attacked him with lethal weapons.

All the injured identified as Hossain, Enamul Haque, Omar Ali, Alam Laskar and Saiful Islam were admitted to sadar hospital.

According to police, the quarrel ensued between the groups over a petty matter. The body was sent to morgue for post-mortem.

A case has been registered with the Sreepur police. Further police investigation is going on but none was arrested so far.

**21 commit suicide in last one month**

MAGURA, Apr 7: A total of 21 people including 15 women allegedly committed suicide in four upazilas of the district during the last month, reports UNB.

According to police, of the total, 13 allegedly committed suicide by taking poison while the rest by hanging themselves.

Of them, 8 people died in Sadar, 4 in Mohammadpur, 5 in Sreepur and 4 in Salikha upazilas.

Family dispute, poverty and demand for dowry money were the main reasons for the suicide, the sources added. Three housewives allegedly