

Upazila roundup

AGRI-VARSITY

Three children burnt to death

From Our BAU Correspondent
Apr. 25: Three children were burnt to death and at least 40 finished and kutchha houses, 100 maunds of paddy and other valuables were gutted in a devastating fire at village Lalpur under Gaingar upazila of the district recently.

Witnesses said that the fire was originated from a kitchen and soon spread to the nearby houses. Local people tried to extinguish the fire but they failed to do that.

The loss in the fire was unofficially estimated at Taka 20 lakh.

It is informed that no firemen came to the spot.

JHENIDAH

Bus dacoity: 5 hurt, cash, valuables looted

Apr. 25: Five passengers were injured and cash and valuables worth about Taka 20,000 were looted in a bus dacoity at Purandarpur here on Kalganj-Jibannagar road recently, reports UNB.

According to witnesses, a gang of dacoits numbering 10 armed with lethal weapons boarded the Chuadanga bound bus (No. Khulna BA 1013) coming from Kalganj in the guise of passengers. When the bus reached Purandarpur point in Moheshpur upazila they suddenly attacked the passengers.

The dacoits asked the passengers to hand over their money and valuables at daggers' point. But when some of the passengers tried to resist the dacoits they beat and stabbed them injuring five people.

A case was filed with Moheshpur police in this connection.

KISHOREGANJ

Indiscriminate growth of markets

From Our Correspondent
Apr. 25: Indiscriminate growth of markets and slaughter houses, dumping of garbage and defecation in open places have been posing threat to health and sanitation in the district town.

According to the sources, sick animals, like cows, buffaloes, sheep and goats are slaughtered in make-shift slaughter houses which are left uncleaned.

Garbage and household trash are thrown here and there causing environmental degradation. Defecation in open drains adjacent to shopping centres has been polluting the areas in and around.

Markets have sprang up like mushroom at different places affecting the movement of pedestrians and vehicles.

Local people have been demanding suitable measures to ensure sanitation in the town area.

FARIDPUR

Mother, daughter commit suicide

Apr. 25: A mother and her daughter allegedly committed suicide by taking pesticides at Joykali in Nagarkanda upazila of the district recently, reports UNB.

According to police, Noren Poddar picked up a quarrel with his wife Chapala Rani (35) over a petty matter and he also tortured her. At this their daughter Laksmi Rani (10) was shocked and subsequently both the mother and daughter killed themselves by taking pesticides.

The bodies were sent to Faridpur General Hospital for autopsy. A case has been filed with local police.

BARISAL

Training course on disaster management held

Apr. 25: A ten-day training course on disaster management under Cyclone Preparedness Programme began at Barisal Development Society office recently, reports BSS.

Jointly organised by Bangladesh Red Crescent Society and the Minister of Relief and Rehabilitation, the training programme was inaugurated by the Deputy Commissioner, Nurul Alam Khan.

The participants of the training course include 110 union team leaders and 14 development officers of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society from 25 upazilas of Bhola, Barisal, Patuakhali, Barguna and Pirojpur districts.

RAJSHAHI

House building, renovation hampered

From Our Correspondent
Apr. 25: Construction and renovation of houses are being hampered in the 9 upazilas of the district due to the shortage of building materials.

Prices of brick, cement, sand, timber, bamboo and other materials have registered a rise by 30 to 35 per cent adversely affecting the buyers.

A bag of cement is being sold between Taka 230 to 240 in the local markets. The dealers have attributed the price up due to short supply of the construction materials.

Taka 80 to 100 is needed to purchase a single bamboo at local markets while timber is being sold at Taka 400 per cft for the lowest quality.

CHANDPUR

Lack of requisite facilities in trains

From Our Correspondent
Apr. 25: The passengers travelling from Chandpur court station to Shahatali, Modhuroad, Balakhal, Haziganj, Meher, Uruk, Sharasti and Laksham by trains have been facing immense difficulties for want of requisite facilities.

Everyday hundreds of passengers travel through these important railway stations. But the sufferings of the passengers both males and females have reached utmost for want of proper arrangements of waiting rooms and toilets.

In some stations, there are no door, window, and furniture. The condition of latrine in the stations are miserable.

Railway lands in some of the stations are occupied by public houses, shops, and markets. These lands are leased out by some corrupt officials violating rules and regulation.

PABNA

Three held with robbed goods

From Our Correspondent
Apr. 25: Pabna police arrested three persons with robbed goods from Radhanagar Majumder Academy hostel recently.

Acting on a secret information, police raided the house of one Masud (19) and arrested him with Anis (20) and Rafiqul (20).

Another report adds: One beaten to death by a group of miscreants at Lohagarah area of the district recently.

It is informed, the victim Mizan (22) was a mental patient who was moving aimlessly at Ataikula under Pabna Sadar upazila. Then the people suspected him a thief and beat him mercilessly. As a result, he died on the spot.

A case was registered with Pabna sadar thana in this regard.

PATUAKHALI

Work on 29 uplift plans complete

Apr. 25: Twenty-nine projects were completed under the third Post-flood Rehabilitation Programme in Pirojpur district recently at a cost of Taka 2 crore, reports UNB.

Of the projects, 11 were implemented in Bhandaria Upazila, 8 in Nazirpur Upazila and 10 in Madbaria Upazila of the district.

The projects included construction of pavements, culverts and bridges.

Meanwhile, a project for improvement of the road communications system in six districts has been undertaken at an estimated cost of Taka one crore.

The project, expected to be completed in four years, will facilitate trade and commerce in the southern region comprising the districts are Patuakhali, Barguna, Barisal, Pirojpur, Jhalakhati and Bhola.

NARAYANGANJ

15 hurt in road mishap

Apr. 25: Fifteen people were injured, four of them seriously, in a head on collision between a minibus and a truck at Dapa in Fatulla here on Dhaka-Narayanganj Highway on Thursday, reports BSS.

Seriously injured bus passenger Kuddus (40) was sent to Pangu Hospital while three others were admitted to Narayanganj Hospital.

Witnesses said the accident took place when driver of the Dhaka-bound minibus from Narayanganj lost its control and collided with the truck coming from opposite direction at about 10 am.



SIRAJGANJ: Passengers frequently travel on foot boards and engines for want of compartments on Sirajganj-Ishwardi Route in Western Zone of Bangladesh Railway. —Star photo

Train fare maximum, services minimum

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Apr. 25: Bangladesh Railway has been facing huge revenue loss and lakhs of passengers have been suffering much due to the irregularities and corruption in railway Western Zone.

It is gathered that the Western Zone of Bangladesh Railway is divided into Paksey and Lalmonirhat divisions.

Out of 985 miles of railway lines in Western Zone 685 miles are broad gauge and 300 miles are meter gauge. The railway lines at many points have become very risky as there is shortage of sleepers.

The rail routes on Ishwardi-Sirajganj, Ishwardi-Faridpur, Chapainawabganj-Sirajganj, Santahar-Parbatipur and Dinajpur-Panchagar are almost unfit for smooth running of trains and some where speed limit remains within 10 to 12 miles per hour.

There are 124 trains in the Western Zone which are carried by only 51 engines. Twenty four inter-city trains, 24 mails and 76 local trains run on these routes. Halting of trains for hours together on the way for disturbances of engines, has become a regular feature.

During the Third Five-Year Plan, the railway authority took

up a scheme to procure 117 broad gauge coaches and 20 engines which was later dropped. More than two crore passengers travel by the existing 565 coaches every day of which more than 50 per cent are not fit for use at all.

Due to shortage of coaches, some trains run with only two compartments. The railway coaches of the local and mail trains are very nasty. There is no water, light, and fan in the local trains. Time-table is hardly maintained even in the inter-city trains.

More than 60 per cent passengers of the local and mail trains travel without tickets in collaboration with some unscrupulous railway employees. The services in inter-city trains are not satisfactory.

Following corruption in Western Zone, a 3-member enquiry team was formed. It was reported by the enquiry team that a group of railway employees in collaboration with some contractors carried 210 wagons of bricks without booking for reconstruction and repair of flood ravaged railway bridges and lines in 1989. It incurred loss amounting to Taka 44,71,73 paise as fare. Departmental action is yet to be taken in this regard, said a source of Bangladesh Railway.

During the last 25 years, train fare has increased considerably but quality of service has not been improved which is largely discouraging the passengers to travel by trains in the Western Zone.

Press Club body

The committee of Zila Press Club, Sirajganj has been formed recently with Abdul Qudus in the chair.

Rafiqul Alam Khan, Saidur Rahman, Nurul Islam Babu, Ranjan Das Gupta, Nurul Amin Khan and Asim Mondal were elected President, Vice President, Secretary, Joint Secretary, Publicity Secretary and Treasurer respectively for 1992-94 term.

Ideal institutions

Sahzadpur Government College, Changaikana High School, Shohagpur Pilot Girls High School and Chougacha Senior Fazil Madrasa in Sirajganj have been declared 'ideal educational institutions' during the Education Week.

Besides, Principal Araman Ali, Principal local government Mohila College, Shakhawat Ali Mia, Headmaster of BL Government High School and Maulavi Asfar Ali, Principal-in-Charge, Haji Ahmed Ali, Alia Madrasa were declared best teachers.

Upazila Parishad to build 4 primary schools

PATUAKHALI, Apr. 25: Mirzaganj Upazila Parishad has decided to construct four primary school buildings in the current financial year, reports UNB.

Official sources said, an amount of Taka 15,60,000 has been sanctioned for the schools to be built at Bhika-Khali, Karabunia, Jophkhali and North Madhabkhali.

Another sum of Taka 60,000 has been sanctioned for renovating the Kalagasia Government Primary School.

The Upazila Parishad will also repair the official residence of the UNO in the current financial year and for this purpose Taka 23,130 has also been sanctioned.

9 projects under FWP in progress

Nine projects under Food for Works Programme is in progress in Dashmina Upazila

of the district. According to official sources, about 305 metric tons of wheat were sanctioned for execution of the projects.

The projects included construction of roads, embankments, development of play grounds of various educational institutions and excavation of derelict ponds.

According to sources, about 60 per cent work has been completed and remaining work is expected to be completed by June next.

Another report adds: 179 metric tons of wheat were sanctioned for execution of 32 projects under FWP in four upazilas of Borguna district in the current financial year.

According to official sources, 10 projects will be executed in Sadar and Amtali upazilas and six will be executed in Betagi and Patharghata upazilas.



CHANDPUR: Doctors are examining the baby at a show arranged here on the occasion of World Health Day. —Star photo

Notes from Comilla

COMILLA, Apr. 25: Twentyone smugglers were arrested and goods worth about Taka 43.36 lakh were seized by Bangladesh Rifles from the border areas of the district during the first quarter of the current year, reports UNB.

About 408 smuggling cases were lodged with different police stations during the period, official sources said.

Contraband goods seized while being smuggled into the country included Indian sarrees, lungis, blouse pieces, luxury items, medicines, motor, rickshaw and cycle parts, spices, sugar and liquor.

Those seized while being smuggled out of the country included fish, dry fish, edibles, power milk, electronic goods, old garments and aluminium utensils.

10 shops gutted

A fire gutted 10 shops a house in a market of Daulatganj in the district recently.

The loss caused by the fire was estimated at about Taka 8 lakh.

Laksam Fire Brigade extinguished the fire after fighting for more than an hour.

The cause of the blaze that engulfed the market on the night of April 20 could not be ascertained.

Orientation course for newsmen ends

Rural Development Orientation Course for Journalists at the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) here ended Thursday with a call the develop a sound rural information net work.

The orientation course jointly organised by the academy and Comilla Union of Journalists stressed on the coverage of rural masses and their problems.

The concluding functions was presided by BARD Director General T K M Tipu Sultan.

Among others UNDP Consultant, Dr Dibendhu Sen addressed the function as chief guest.

Transport workers

District transport workers union recently submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner demanding restriction on plying of private jeeps on Comilla-Padnar Bazar Route.

Earlier, the transport workers, mostly taxi drivers, brought out a procession in the town to press for realisation of their demand.

Khelagherer Ashar unit formed

District unit of 'Khelagherer Ashar' has formed a committee for a term of three years (1992-94) with Md Nurul Islam as President and Anisur Rahman General Secretary.

Serajul Islam Rabi, Md Jahangir Kabir, Abul Hoshen Nani, Prof Selina Rehman Opel, Tapan Karmaker and Kazi Ahmed Ferdous Swapan were made Vice-Presidents of the committee.

The committee was formed at a meeting here on April 17, which was attended by Prof Abdul Wahab, Editor of Daily Rupashi Bangla, as chief guest.

Business man stabbed, cash snatch away

KUSHTIA, Apr. 25: A gang of miscreants stabbed one businessman and snatched away Taka 11,000 from his possession of Tuesday, reports UNB.

According to police, the victim Adiluddin (45) of village Kushlibasha in Kumarkhali upazila while going to Halsa from Poradah by train the hoodlums attacked him.

Jute farming prospect uncertain in S Zone

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, Apr. 25: A massive programme for jute cultivation on a total of 2,83,000 acres of land in ten districts of southern zone has been taken up during the year 1992-93.

According to the plan, Tosa variety of jute will be cultivated on 2,77,681 acres and local variety on 5,400 acres.

The target of production has been fixed at 11,12,548 bales, said a source.

Jute will be cultivated on 60,445 acres in Jessore, 37,808 acres in Jhenidah, 33,400 acres in Magura, 2,938 acres in Narail, 5,683 acres in Khulna, 2,224 acres in Bagchhat, 23,845 acres in Satkhira, 26,240 acres in Kushtia, 27,971 acres in Chuadanga, 25,985 acres in Meherpur districts.

The prospect for jute cultivation in the districts appears bleak at the backdrop of current drought. The lands have not yet been prepared for cultivation due to absence of moisture in soil.

Feasibility of its return in view of prevailing atmospheric condition is slim and no definite forecast weather department about immediate rain is available, while under ground

water level is fast falling. At present, the ground water level is 30 feet below during this month, according to Hydrological Department. Cumulative affects of the situation renders the jute cultivators in southern zone quite uncertain in the coming season.

The drivers of the local transport agencies are on strike in protest against misbehaviour, inhuman, torture and whimsical activities of the BDR personnel causing total disruption of bus communication. It is informed that BDR personnel use to stop the Jessore bound trucks loaded with legal goods.

The BDR personnel orders the unloading of goods without verifying chalan and other relating papers in support of the consignment. They use to the drivers and helpers in some cases, it is informed. They sometimes lodge cases against such goods which harass the traders and truck drivers.

As a result, prices of necessary articles in the area have shot up, the local administration is quite indifferent regarding the matter.

Loadshedding hits output in fields, factories

BARISAL, Apr. 25: Loadshedding has been seriously affecting industrial and agricultural production in five southern districts of Barisal, Patuakhali, Bhola, Jhalakathi and Borguna, reports UNB.

Out of the daily requirement of over 30 M-W, only 18 to 20 M-W power were being supplied from different power generating stations in the Barisal Zone.

Local Power Development Board officials said power shortfall would cause extended loadshedding in the next year.

They said power generating stations at Bheramara, Siddhirganj, Kaptai, Sikhabagha, Goalpara and Barisal have reduced supply from March last.

Power supply from Siddhirganj and Kaptai is being hampered due to short supply of gas and fall of water level in Kaptai lake, a knowledgeable source said.

Many power generating units of different power stations have been left without repair and renovation work due to fund constraints.

BSS adds: Bangladesh Chhatra Union (BCU), in observance of its 40th founding

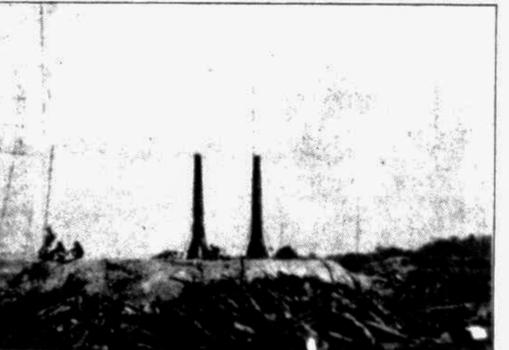
anniversary, arranged a reception for Freedom Fighters at Ashwani Kumar Town Hall here recently.

Eminent educationist Professor Panna Kaisar attended the function as the chief guest while President of Barisal Unit of Bangladesh Teachers' Association, M A Gafoor and renowned Freedom Fighter Mahbubuddin Birbikram were the special guests. Chaired by Saidur Rahman Sabuj, President of BCU, the function was also addressed, among others, by the organisation's General Secretary Quliyum Khan Kaisar.

In her inaugural speech Prof. Panna Kaisar called upon the Freedom Fighters to dedicate themselves to translate into reality the hopes and aspirations of the people.

Mrs. Kaisar stressed the need for consolidating the unity of the pro-liberation forces to uphold the ideals and spirit of the freedom struggle in all spheres of the national life.

The function was rounded off with a cultural function and a dream staged by the Barisal unit of 'Udichi' and 'Barisal Natak'.



RAJBARI: Despite government ban, the use of firewood in local brickfields is unabated. —Star photo

Social forestry can help prevent ecological imbalance

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Apr. 25: Social forestry can help a lot in keeping the surroundings fresh and prevent ecological imbalance.

This was stated by Dr Abdul Hamid, Vice-Chancellor of Islamic University while he was speaking at a prize giving ceremony of the social forestry training programme organised by Forest Department recently.

The function held at a local auditorium was presided over by Prof Atahar Ali Dewan, Principal Government College and it was attended by Vice-Chancellor as chief guest, Divisional Forest Officer, Abdul Hamid.

The chief guest in his speech said that overall development of the country was not possible ignoring the women folk constituting half of the total population. Training in afforestation and social forestry to the women folk has rightly been taken up by the organisers, he mentioned.

Professor Atahar Ali in his speech said that plantation of trees in large number can save the environment for future generation and urged upon all to take up afforestation and social forestry programmes. Ban on use of wood in brickfields should be implemented to save environment, he added.

was attended by 50 female members where were given certificates.

Tagore's birth day May 8

The 131st birth anniversary of Rabindra Nath Tagore will be celebrated in a state level function on May 8 at Shelaidah Kuthibart. The Deputy Commissioner, Kushtia, Syed Hafiz Ahmed said here that the government has sanctioned Taka one lakh for the purpose.

The function is expected to be inaugurated by the Speaker of Parliament, Shaikh Razzak Ali.

Details of the programme will be chalked out after holding meetings in this connection, Deputy Commissioner added.

It may be mentioned that state level celebration of the programme in observance of 129th anniversary of birth of the poet was held here in 1990 for the first time in the history of Bangladesh.

Three-day state level function was participated by 300 people comprising poets, litterateurs and artists from different areas of the country including neighbouring West Bengal.