

Upazila roundup

COX'S BAZAR

Lightning kills minor boy, girl

June 17: A boy and a minor girl were killed when lightning struck them at Taziakata village in Moheshkhali upazila on Tuesday, reports UNB.

According to witnesses, the victims Abul Bashar (10) and Jannat Khatun died on the spot while they were returning home with their cattlehead.

A U/D case has been lodged with the police.

MAGURA

Awami League unit confce concludes

June 17: Biennial conference of the district Awami League was held at the Zila auditorium recently, reports UNB.

Mofidul Islam Khan Kamal, Social Welfare Secretary of Awami League Central Committee attended the conference as chief guest. Akbar Hossain Mia presided over the conference.

A number of delegates from four upazilas of the district attended the conference.

In the council meeting, a new district committee was formed with Advocate Asaduzzaman MP as President, Md Altaf Hossain as Secretary, Md Abu Naser Babloo has been made the Organising Secretary.

Speakers at the conference discussed the present political situation and blamed the ruling party for terrorism in different districts including Magura.

JHENIDAH

30 hurt in road mishap

June 17: At least 30 people were injured, five seriously, when a Khulna bound bus plunged into a roadside ditch on Kaliganj-Chuadanga road at Kagmari in Kotchandpur upazila Monday, reports UNB.

According to the witnesses, the accident occurred when driver of the speeding bus lost its control.

Of the injured, 22 were taken to the Kotchandpur Hospital. Ataur Rahman one of the critically injured, was admitted to Jessore Sadar Hospital.

The identity of the rest could not be ascertained.

Police seized the bus but the driver managed to escape. A case has been filed with the Kotchandpur police.

MANIKGANJ

Minor girl raped

From Our Correspondent

June 17: A minor girl was allegedly raped in village Krisnipur of Sadar upazila of the district recently.

According to the police, the victim, Shikha Rajbongshi (10), daughter of Ratan Rajbongshi of the village was allegedly kidnapped by Krisno Rajbongshi (27) and raped her in a paddy field.

Later, villagers caught the culprit red-handed and handed him to the sadar thana.

Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, Krisnipur branch, organised a programme for global environment at Barahi Pragati Sanga ground of sadar upazila of the district recently.

The programme was presided over by SM Mofizur Rahman, Manager of BRAC, Krisnipur branch. AFM Nuraj Alam, President of Manikganj Press Club as chief guest.

Addressed among others by Jalaluddin, Mottul Islam, Mofazzal Hossain, Sharmin Akhter and Pritimoy Pal.

KISHOREGANJ

Law, order situation deteriorates

From Our Correspondent

June 17: Law and order situation in the district has deteriorated causing concern to the peace loving people, local leaders and elites.

Highway robbery, theft, murder, kidnapping, dacoity, rape, cattle lifting, smuggling and mugging have been rampant in all the 13 upazilas, they said.

The miscreants always move about with unauthorised lethal weapons including guns and engage in anti-social and criminal activities with impunity.

Open sale of spurious drugs and liquor is rampant in the urban areas giving rise to anti-social activities, they added.

Local elites have urged the authorities to nab the criminals and give exemplary punishment to them.

SYLHET

Hot spell claims 2 lives

From Our Correspondent.

June 17: Hot spell has caused the death of two villagers in Biswanath upazila recently.

According to the reports, one Abdul Aziz of village Taotikona went to a nearby canal for fishing at noon, due to scorching heat, he felt uneasy there and returned home soon. Within a short time, he breathed his last in the house.

Another Latu Miah (35) of the same village also felt serious uneasy while working in the paddy field and returned home. He died in his house within a short time.

Another report adds: Over two hundred labourers brought out a protest procession in Sunamganj town recently against the misappropriation of huge quantity of wheat allocated for a project under the Food for Work Programme.

The processions paraded the different roads of the town and chanted slogans. They went to the divisional office of the Water Development Board in Sunamganj and met the Executive Engineer.

GAIBANDHA

Protest meet held

From Our Correspondent

June 17: A protest meeting of all party alliances was held at Bogdha High School Ground on June 9 against firing incident of Shahebganj sugar cane farm in which two labourers were killed when Ansar platoon opened gun shots on June 8.

The meeting was presided over by Zulfikar Mahmud Khasru, an Awami League leader. Those Jamalur Rahman Prodhon, Tozammel Hossain, Md Hossain Faku, Jakaria Islam Jewel, Ataur Rahman Bablu, Sadek Ali spoke in the meeting.

The speakers demanded judicial investigation and exemplary punishment of the accused persons.

SIRAJGANJ

Dacoits swoop on boat: goods, cash robbed

June 17: Dacoits swooped on a boat in river Jamuna and robbed its passengers of their belongings and goods worth about Taka 60,000, on Tuesday last, reports UNB.

Witnesses said a gang of about 16 robbers attacked the Sirajganj-bound mechanised boat 6 km of Jagannathganj ghat at around 9.30 am.

None of the 27 passengers were hurt. The dacoits who came in another boat decamped unchallenged with the booty, including lungs and sarees.

CHAPAINAWABGANJ

Best college teacher

From Our Correspondent

June 17: Md Aminur Rahman, Principal of Nawabganj Govt College has been adjudged as the best college teacher in Chapainawabganj district for 1991.

He has been teaching in different colleges since 1965.

GAZIPUR

3 child-lifters held

From Our Correspondent

June 17: Tongi thana police caught red-handed three child-lifters along with four children from Mankun village in Tongi poura area recently.

Acting on secret information, police raided a house of village Mankun and arrested three child lifters, Amin Hamja, Ratsuddin and Sirajuddin. On their confessional statement, police recovered four children named Siraj (8), Kamal (7), Abu Sema (6) and Fakir Ahmed (6).

CHUADANGA

5 live bombs recovered

From Our Correspondent.

June 17: Chuadanga thana police recovered five live hand bombs from the premises of a sawmill of the town recently.

Acting on secret information, this Chuadanga thana police went to the spot and recovered the hand bombs.

A case has been started in this connection with Chuadanga thana police.



BOGRA: The rickshawpullers cross the rail gates taking the risk of life. —Star photo

Will Ganges Barrage project be implemented?

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, June 17: Construction of the Ganges Barrage Project at Bheramara in Kushtia is yet to be after expending a total amount of Taka 16 crore.

According to sources, the project was initiated in 1961 by the then WAPDA. It took six years from 1963 to 1968 for the feasibility study of the project and the primary work began in 1969. The further progress of the project came to a halt due to the political turmoil and consequently the Liberation War.

The Bangladesh government in 1980 took up a fresh step regarding the project and accordingly the foundation of the project was laid at the site at Bahirchar under Bheramara Upazila, three miles off Harding Bridge.

Construction of the project was felt sometimes in fifties to face the adverse effects of the Farakka which would also help boost food production, extend irrigation facilities, control flood, resist flow of saline water during dry season and maintain ground water level in northern and southern region of the country.

A total of Taka 1,131 crore including foreign exchange component of Taka 220 crore was earmarked for the implementation of the project in 1980.

It is learnt that the project covered a vast area of land in this region. There were arrangement of 100 sluice gates, three pump houses having capacity to lift 15,000 cusec water and three regulators to facilitate the irrigation to the lands of the area.

Successful implementation of the project as per the specification and design would bring 61 lakh acres of land under irrigation in northern and southern zones which could minimise the food deficit and combat ecological imbalance of the area.

Will the project be implemented for the greater interest of the people of the locality is question of the inhabitants of the northern and southern zones of the country.

A total of 2,994 cases of different nature was registered with eight police stations of the district during the last six years from 1986 to '91.

According to sources, 345 were murder cases, 159 dacoity, 337 highway robbery, 761 rioting, 740 theft and burglary cases were registered with the concerned police stations during the period.

Call to expand self employment scope

An earlier BSS report says: Social Welfare and Women

Affairs Minister, Tariqul Islam recently called for promoting the scope of self-employment in various fields with a view to generating sources of earning of unemployed.

With this end in view, the present democratic government had programme for providing facilities to the unemployed so that they could earn their livelihood through self-employment, he added.

The Minister was addressing a function at Jessore Social Welfare Office premises arranged in connection with the handing over of loan to the unemployed trained women for self-employment.

Twentyseven women were provided with the loans. The Minister said that the government was endeavouring properly to utilise the creative talent of the youth in the production oriented activities.

Earlier, inaugurating the newly constructed Rural Development Programme Building of BRAC in Jessore sadar upazila, the Minister called upon the NGOs and other voluntary organisations to take more effective and expanded programme for curbing population explosion and eradicating illiteracy from the society.

Plan to extend civic amenities

RAJSHAHI, June 17: Rajshahi City Corporation has taken up a programme to extend civic facilities in the city at a cost of Taka 84 lakh during the current fiscal year, reports UNB.

The programme includes building of five public toilets in busy market areas, 12 passenger sheds, 75 dustbins, 50 concrete benches on the bank of the Padma, extension and renovation of the Sonadighi Jame Mosque.

Works on these schemes will begin from this month. With the implementation of the schemes some long felt demands of the dwellers will be met to a great extent.

Re-excavation work has been completed of about 50 km-long canal stretching from Tebaria to Faliar Beel in Paba Upazila of the district.

About 97 metric tonnes of wheat was allocated for the work in which about one lakh cubic meters of earth was removed.

State Minister for Land, Advocate Kabir Hossain and the City Mayor Mizanur Rahman Mtnu took part in the re-excavation work at different stages.

With the completion of the project, about 700 acres of

land will be protected from water-logging and an additional 1000 metric tonnes of grains will be produced every year.

Meanwhile, a target has been fixed to plant 1500 saplings along the banks of the canal. State Minister for Land inaugurated the plantation programme recently.

The Minister urged the people to work unitedly for bringing about self-reliance in all sectors.

A project for establishing a girls' high school at Durgapur

2 commit suicide, one beaten to death

RANGPUR, June 17: Three people including two housewives met unnatural deaths over the last one week in Pirgachha upazila of the district, reports UNB.

Lili (20), wife of Sujokanta Das committed suicide by hanging herself from the ceiling of her house on Sunday.

Family feud is learnt to be the main reason for her suicide.



CHANDPUR: Mohiuddin Patwari, a social worker presenting a colour Television to the President of Chandpur Press Club recently. —Star photo

Across the country

Lost is the traditional welcome to Sylhet

S. B. Das

Sylhet, June 17: Time was when the humming and fluttering of Jalali Kobtor everywhere formed a part of life in Sylhet — they were a beauty and they were loved ones.

Jalali Kobtor or the pigeons with azure body and glossy green neck and head is so called because Hazrat Shahjalal introduced the species here about 600 years ago. He brought two pairs of these pigeons from Delhi which were presented to him by Nizamuddin Aulia when the two great saints of the sub-continent met there. They were reared lovingly and the Darga-e-Shahjalal soon became a sanctuary for hundreds of their offsprings. As their population swelled, they found safe havens everywhere in Sylhet, in every house-roof and nobody every harmed them. On the contrary, roosts and foods were provided to them.

But during the last two decades or so, their population in Sylhet and its suburb has been progressively waning.

around freely and fearlessly. The book also quotes the remark by an eminent historian of the sub-continent, Dr Najini Kanta Bhattashah, on the subject, as follows: The people of East Bengal believe that if and when Jalali Kobtor makes nest in anybody's roof, the event augurs fortune and prosperity for the inmates. And if any adversity or misfortune looms large, they desert the nest, even if they were already roosting there. The belief is still in vogue among the Hindus and Muslims alike. The writer has come across the belief in his personal life many times. Pous, 1348 B. S."

But that was the time when nobody poached with them for his dishes — that was the time when people patronised them honouring their roosts. Every house and every shop sprinkled rice, pulses, or other grains for their pigeons in the morning. There were some who would not start transaction in their business establishment without feeding them. People from remote

of them to roost and breed safely. Night prowlers have frightened away the birds from their perching places in the Keane Bridge, though some of them got electrocuted in the process. Anyone returning to town after a few years' stay outside will no more be greeted by the humming of the bridge.

Thus unnoticed and uncared for, a traditional beauty of Sylhet life stands threatened today. A little bit of consciousness and care on the part of town dwellers and Sylhet Pourashabha can redeem it yet. The Pourashabha has a special responsibility in the matter. Everywhere in the world pigeons receive attention from all as a symbol of peace, and efforts are directed to make them approach men without fear in parks and squares. They built Trafalgar Square and Clifton Beach and we have un-built them here in Sylhet. It is not that expensive to be sure — a few roosts in the Keane Bridge and the umbrellas of traffic islands and atop the



SYLHET: Darga-E-Shahjalal

Few houses now have them. The Keane Bridge over Surma is no more busy with the hovering of thousand pigeons. And even the most common sight — scores of pigeon fluttering and gliding on the big dome of the mosque of Darga-e-Shahjalal — is infrequent today.

No Hindu or Muslim kills them, wrote Syed Murtaza Ali in his authoritative book on Sylhet — 'Hazrat Shahjalal O Sylhet' lithas — only twenty five years ago. And he continued, 'In East Bengal and all parts of Sylhet and around the Dargah of Nizamuddin Aulia in Delhi, these Jalali Payra hover

villages carried their harvest's share for pigeons in Dargah. Some still do, but their number is very few. The Jalali Kobtor were really free and fearless. They mingled with man and would not mind children chasing them.

None are those days. Today shelter is scarce and food is also not spread that way. The pattern of houses has changed and their nests in the Keane Bridge rendered unsafe. The former tin-top bamboo-roofed houses, called Assam type, have been replaced by buildings. The Assam type had in-built space in between the top and the roof enough for a score

Poura bazar and market buildings can do the job for the Pourashabha. People will not mind a few nests atop their buildings as well. Properly motivated a few dozen rice mills and bread factories in and around this town can give a lot of food for the purpose. Pourashabha may also enforce a ban on poaching with the birds.

This way we can recreate a fading tradition of Sylhet and show respect and pay homage to a great saint of the sub-continent, Hazrat Shahjalal, who brought this peace symbol to Sylhet from another saint.

Poster exhibition on Japanese culture held

MADARIPUR, June 17: A day long poster exhibition depicting Japanese culture was held at the United High School premises of Madaripur district recently, reports BSS.

Arranged by the Madaripur district unit of UNESCO Club, the function was presided over by Md Mahtab Uddin Ahmed, Vice-Principal of Madaripur College and Advisor of UNESCO Club hill Ashikul Haq Chowdhury. Deputy Commissioner of Madaripur, inaugurated the exhibition. Md Mahbur Uddin Chowdhury, Secretary General of UNESCO Club of Bangladesh was also present on this occasion.

One to suffer life term for murdering wife

SATKHIRA, June 17: A youngman of Kamalnagar village in Sadar upazila has been sentenced to life imprisonment in absentia for murdering his divorced wife, court sources said, reports UNB.

He was also fined Taka 2000 or in default to suffer another year in prison.

According to the prosecution, Abdur Rashid killed his former wife Minara Begum of the same village on February 23, 1988 following a dispute with her family.

Another report adds: A man died and six others fell sick due to food poisoning here on Saturday, reports UNB.

Sources said all family members of Mokedd Ali in Sonatika village of Kaliganj Upazila took their supper on Friday night which was cooked in the morning and after that they all fell sick.

Border areas along Maulvibazar paradise of smugglers

From Our Correspondent

MAULVIBAZAR, June 17: Some points of the border areas of Maulvibazar district has become a paradise for the smugglers.

Smuggled goods including sugar have flooded different markets of the district.

Indian goods like cosmetics, sarees, sugar, spices, cattle, pulses, onion, chilli, cardamom are being smuggled into the country through the borders.

Meanwhile, goods like electronic goods, old clothes, baby foods, powered milk, crockeries and hisha fish are being smuggled out of the country in large quantity everyday.

Juri and Fultala of Baralekha Upazila, Rabirbazar of Kulaura Upazila and Shamsnagar of Kamalgonj Upazila are the main centres of the smugglers.

According to witness, most of the Indian goods are being smuggled by jeeps, trucks and buses via Fultala-Juri-Kulaura route, Rabirbazar-Kulaura route and Shamsnagar-Maulvibazar road and the appointed agents of the smugglers unload the goods at certain points to transport those to different destinations.

The smuggled Indian goods reach the places through different border areas of these district and are on sale in different markets without any restriction. It is informed that few established traders of the district are also involved with smuggling.

It can be mentioned here that four upazilas, out of six in the district are along the Indian border.

Hot spell leaves 12 dead in 3 days

BOGRA, June 17: The severe hot spell sweeping across the four northern districts for the last three days claimed at least 12 lives, reports UNB.

Of them, five people died in Pabna district. They were Asta Khatun (32) of Sadar upazila, Deraj Mistri (44) of village Kumarpura, Kulsum Begum (47) of Balurhat, Nabiran Khatun (90) of Afridipara and Aziruddin (70) of Lauthia in Ullapara Upazila.

The heatwave also claimed one in Joypurhat and two each in Dinajpur and Gaibandha districts, informed sources said.