

District roundup

SATKHIRA

Heavy siltation hampers navigation

Apr 7: The water transports between the Khulna city and four thanas of the district through the river Haribhanga is being hampered due to heavy siltation, reports UNB.

The river, flowing between the border areas of Kaliganj and Assasunt thanas, is being blocked due to heavy sandy silt.

As a result, boatmen and the people engaged in water transport in the route are being rendered unemployed.

In the rainy season, the adjacent areas are flooded as siltation causes the rise of river bed damaging standing crops on vast acres of land.

Local leaders have urged the authorities to remove siltation from the river bed for safe navigability and maintenance of economical and commercial activities in the area.

AGRI-VARSITY

Study tour to begin from Apr. 10

Apr 7: Study tour programme for the B.Sc Ag (Hons) final year students of Bangladesh Agricultural University for the session 1988-89 will begin on April 10, says a university press release, reports UNB.

Under the programme the students will visit the major agricultural research institutes and various government organisations directly linked with agricultural development of the country in order to have practical knowledge about their programmes and activities.

DINAJPUR

Skin diseases break out

Apr 7: Skin diseases have broken out in an alarming form in different parts of the district causing great suffering to the people, reports UNB.

Children of the poor families are the worst sufferers as their guardians cannot afford to buy necessary medicine for them.

Local doctors attributed protein deficiency, taking of adulterated food and living in unhygienic condition to the outbreak of diseases.

Local people alleged that district health department has not yet been taken any preventive measures to combat the growing menace.

Necessary medicines are not available at the health complexes and sadar hospitals, they added.

Local people have urged the authorities to take immediate steps to check the spread of the diseases.

BARISAL

Plan to distribute 7.88 lakh packets of oral saline taken up

Apr 7: Barisal Development Society (BDS), a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) has taken up a programme to distribute 7.88 lakh packets of oral saline among the people of diarrhoea affected areas of six southern districts, reports BSS.

The districts are: Barisal, Bhola, Jhalakati, Pirojpur, Patuakhali and Bargna.

UNICEF has made financial support of 2,800 US dollars for purchasing these oral saline, BDS source said.

Meanwhile, 4.88 lakh packets of this saline have already been distributed in the districts.

Another report adds: State Minister for Education Principal Md. Younus Khan emphasised the importance of newspaper reading to know the condition of the country. "The necessity of newspaper reading can not be over emphasised", he said, reports BSS.

He was addressing a seminar on "newspaper and the development of the nation" organised by the Bangladesh Council of Editors at Ashwini Kumar Town Hall premises.

The meeting was addressed among others by Syed Shahidul Haque Jamal MP, Chairman of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, S M Iqbal, President of Barisal Press Club, Mojibur Rahman MP, Sudhir Sen and Principal Abdul Rashid Khan.

The state minister said that a newsman was both a motivator of political view points and a socio-economic ideas.

Syed Shahidul Haque Jamal referred to the contribution of journalists and newspapers to the independence of the country.

COMILLA

Four smugglers with two Indian nationals held

Apr 7: Bangladesh Rifles arrested four smugglers including two Indian nationals on Wednesday from Kernal Bazar in the town, reports UNB.

The Indian nationals were handed over to Border Security Force (BSF) in a flag meeting and the Bangladeshi nationals were handed over to Akhaura police.

During the last month BDR Jawans nabbed 10 alleged smugglers and seized contraband items worth Taka 23.7 lakh. Of them, Indian goods worth Taka 22.71 lakh and Bangladeshi goods worth Taka 35,100 were seized; official sources said.

TANGAIL

Indoor games contest ends

Apr 7: Prize giving ceremony of indoor games competition of Tangail Press Club was held on Thursday, reports BSS.

The competition was arranged on the occasion of Independence and National Day.

In chess Jafar Ahmed became champion and Salauddin Ahmed became runner-up. In caroms Zakerul Molla became champion and Sjarip Salauddin runners up.

A total twenty three teams took part in the competitions. Among others Atwar Rahman, Azad, Prof Md Kamruzzaman, Humruz Ali and Suamrul Hasan Chowdhury spoke on the occasion. Md Abdur Rahman, President, Tangail Press Club presided over the function.

BUNDEBAN

Post-Cyclone Agri Rehabilitation Programme facing setback

Apr 7: The Post-Cyclone Agriculture Rehabilitation Programme has been facing a setback in the district due to shortage of fund, reports UNB.

The Agriculture Ministry allocated less than 10 per cent of the estimated amount.

The damaged caused by the devastating cyclone in the agriculture sector was about Taka 5 crore according to an official estimate against which an amount of Taka 32.71 lakh was received from the ministry.

Paddy on 6,500 acres of land and horticulture on 16,000 acres of land were totally damaged in the last devastating cyclone, official sources said.

The ministry in two separate instalments allocated Taka 32.71 lakh for five projects which were implemented through district, thana and union parishad Agriculture Rehabilitation Committees.

At least 23,303 families were benefited with the implementation of the projects while rest of the affected families are still suffering.

KISHOREGANJ

Two killed in separate incidents

Apr 7: One Abdul Mannan (35) was killed by his nephew at Bahadurpur of Mazzampur union under Nandail thana recently.

A case was filed with the local police in this regard. The body was sent to the Kishoreganj Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

In another incident, a bicycle rider was killed in a road accident on Kishoreganj-Bhatrab road at Binnati and Kishoreganj Sadar thana recently.

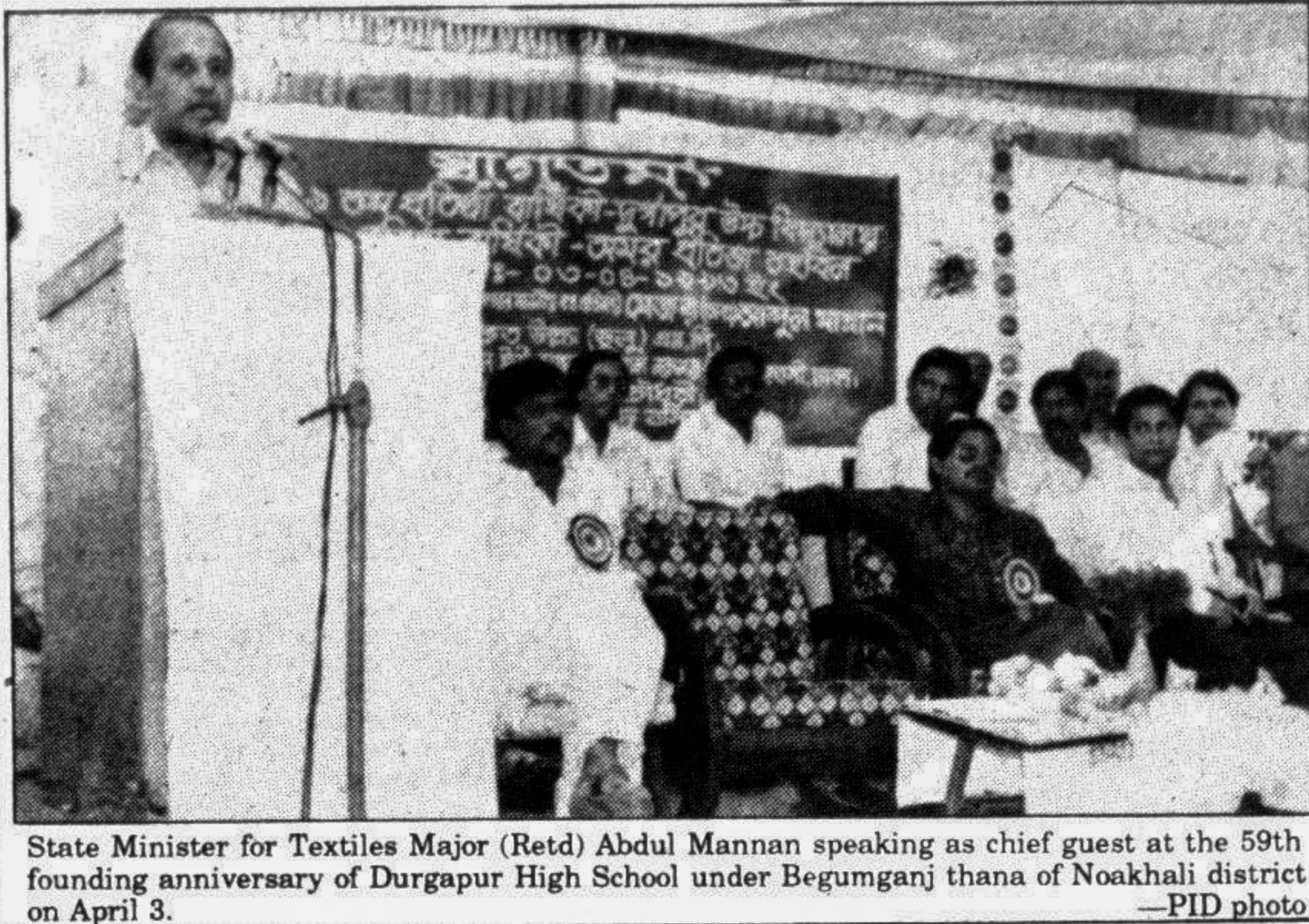
The Kishoreganj bound passenger bus bearing no Chittagong Ja-1157 hit the bicycle rider Azizul Haque (26) from behind. He died on way to the Kishoreganj Sadar Hospital.

A case was registered with Kishoreganj police station in this connection. Police seized the bus but the driver managed to escape.

RAJSHAHI

RMC reopens today

Apr 7: Rajshahi Medical College reopens today. It was decided at a meeting of the academic council of the college here on Saturday with principal in the chair, reports BSS.



State Minister for Textiles Major (Retd) Abdul Mannan speaking as chief guest at the 59th founding anniversary of Durgapur High School under Begumganj thana of Noakhali district on April 3. —PID photo

Dowry, non-registration help increase divorces

From Our Correspondent

CHUADANGA, Apr 7: More than 5,000 divorce cases were recorded during the last three years in four thanas of the district.

Non-payment of dowry and polygamy have been identified as the main reasons behind the separation.

Women of poor families are the main victims. Due to non-registration of the marriages the poor women fail to take any legal action against their husbands.

Another report adds: Due to absence of some important district level offices at Chuadanga the people are to suffer a lot.

The district level office are : Office of the Executive Engineer — Power Development Board, office of the Executive Engineer — Roads and Highways, office of the Deputy Director — Rural Development Board, office of the Deputy Director — Youth Development Directorate, office of the Deputy Director — Social Welfare Directorate and office of the Assistant Director — Women Affairs Directorate.

The district development Co-ordination Committee at a meeting held recently at the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner of Chuadanga urged upon the government to set up all the above six important district level offices at Chuadanga for the overall development.

Our Satkhira Correspondent reports: The number of divorce cases is increasing in Satkhira district. Non-registration of marriages is the main cause of oppression of women including physical torture.

A survey conducted in some rural areas of the district, shows that marriages in most of the poor families are not registered.

As a result, the victims can not take any legal action against the husbands.

Besides, defying the government restriction many married people take second wife without the written permission of the first wife.

Now the divorce has become a common feature in the rural areas. Most of the victims of these divorces live in utter despair.

It is informed that some dishonest marriage registrars in the rural areas charge higher fees.

Betel leaf farming facing setback

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Apr 7: The betel leaf farming in seven thanas of Satkhira district has been facing setback for want of necessary loan and scarcity of raw materials—like jute stick, bamboo, oil cake, pesticides and other necessary materials.

It is gathered that betel leaf farming was the main occupation of some families of Kumira, Islamkati, Tenulia, Nagarghata, Magura, Jalalpur of Tala thana, Murarikati, Juginathpur, Bamankhali, Baman Ali and Dhandia of Kularoa thana, Patharghata, Amtola, Akhrahkhola, Dhulihar and Brahmarajpur of Sadar thana, Bishnupur, Moutala, Town Sreepur, Rothnopor, Iswaripur and Basakpur of Kaliganj thana, Parulia, Kulla and Sreerampur of Debhata thana, Atulia, Nakipur, Nuraganj and Ramjan Nagar of Shyannagar thana and Khajra, Praial Nagar, Sreeulia, Budhhata, Kulla and Durgapur of Assasunt thana.

It is further learn that reasons behind this scarcity and dearth of necessary materials are cyclone, excessive rainfall and drought for the last few years.

When contacted some betel leaf growers of the area said that they are thinking of giving up betel leaf farming because of poor returns.

It needs to be mentioned here that the farmers have to invest Tk 60,000 for cultivation per acre of land which is more than its sale-price.

On the other hand, due to scarcity of jute stick and 'Dhaincha' the farmers have to use bamboo/sticks with an exorbitant price for constructing frame of the betel leaf garden. A piece of bamboo is now being sold at Taka 50-80 which is not also available in the market.

Besides, the prices of oil cake, fertilizers and insecticide have also gone out of purchasing capacity of the poor farmers.

However, the Agricultural Department doesn't play any role to encourage the farmers who have no proper knowledge for cultivating the same. Even they don't know how to use insecticides or fertilizers for boosting production.

Moreover, the hazardous communications of the district are also hampering transport of betel leaf to Dhaka and other districts of the country where it has a great demand.

The farmers are cultivating this crop by adopting local process which unscientific. Agricultural experts opined, if scientific process of its cultivation is applied, the production will be doubled.

The price of betel leaf is lower than the previous years. At present one pone (80 pieces) betel leaves are being sold at Taka 20 to Taka 25 in the local markets which is below the production cost.

The local elite and growers of the district have urged upon the government to take necessary steps to save the cultivators.

Another report adds: About 1120 hats and bazars in seven thanas of Satkhira district have been facing innumerable problems for a long time.

It is mentionable that a huge amount of revenue is being collected from these hats and bazars every year but no scheme has yet been taken for the development of these hats and bazars.

Besides, it is also alleged that the 40 per cent collected revenue allocated for the development of the same is not spent properly and the authorities always pay deaf ear to this problem.

There is no drainage system in the market and as a result water remains stagnant on the roads for days together in the rainy season.

Moreover even after a slight rainfall these roads become muddy and slippery causing sufferings to the pedestrians and movement of vehicles.

On the other hand, most of the roads in these hats and bazars are narrow cracks and potholes have developed at many points hindering the movement of vehicles as well as passers-by.

Across the country

Shatgumbaz hardly visible from a distance

by K R Zakhmi

KHULNA, Apr 7: The fifteenth century Shatgumbaz Mosque, situated about three miles to the south-west of the tomb of Hazrat Khan Jahan Ali, at Bagerhat is the largest as well as the most magnificent mosque of our country. It is 160 feet in length and 108 feet in breadth with 77 domes and 7 chachuala roofs. Numerous men and women not only visit the holy Dargah Shareef of Hazrat Khan Jahan Ali, but also make it sure to visit Shatgumbaz Mosque built by that solder-saint who spread Islam to this region. Hundreds of visitors come from the distant corners of the subcontinent and from outside it.

A few days ago when I alighted from the bus carrying me from Khulna to Bagerhat, near Shatgumbaz Mosque, I found myself on the verge of collapsing with grief. I could not believe my eyes for a moment. The mosque was not visible as it was previously. Before, even a cursory glance was sufficient to catch full view of the mosque in full dimension with its total grandeur, sublimity and sanctity. But unfortunately all the visual glory of this historical mosque which used to transport us to newer spiritual planes, have been destroyed by the Archaeological Department due to construction of a big on-storied building on the facing side of the Shat Gumbaz Mosque at a distance of only a few steps from the wall of the mosque. This building has covered the mosque more than half and it is impossible to view the mosque in full from any place of its facing side. Even a photograph cannot be taken from the front side. On enquiry, I learnt from a few nearby petty shopkeepers that the local people had protested against the construction of the said building on the front side of the mosque, but the authority concerned did not pay any heed to their requests. Even the local administration was reportedly approached by the people to prevent construction of such a foolish thing but nothing happened.

Religious devout, lovers of antiquity and all men and women of culture strongly feel that this abnoxious building should immediately be demolished and the old grandeur of the mosque restored once more. There is plenty of vacant land alongside the huge ditch on the back side of the mosque; if necessary they may construct the building on the west-south or west-north side of the mosque at a distance of at least two to three hundred meters.



KHULNA: The present view of the Shatgumbaz mosque. —Star photo

Number of gay girls increasing

BARGUNA, Apr 7: The number of gay girls is increasing day by day in the district headquarters giving rise to anti-social activities, reports UNB.

According to local people, the gay girls are found alluring people in launch ghat, Bazar Road, Tahsil office and some parts of the Katpatty area in the town.

Some gay girls said due to acute poverty and finding no other alternative to earn their livelihood they were forced to take up the profession.

After sun down, the gays come out to the streets to look for the clients. A middle aged woman at Katpatty area in the town is said to be acting as pimp. She is involved in collecting the young girls from different villages on the plea of giving good jobs and later compel them to resort to immoral activities for earning money, it is alleged.

The guardian community expressing their grave concern said their young wards were getting spoiled due to the influence of the gays in the town.

Local elite urged the concerned authorities to check the growing menace and take immediate steps to rehabilitate the floating gay girls so that they can lead a decent life.

Woman gets life-term for selling heroin

PABNA, Apr 7: A woman was awarded life-term and a man three years rigorous imprisonment Saturday on charges of selling heroin, reports UNB.

According to court sources, Shahhaj Begum(30) was sentenced to life term while Golam Mustafa (35) awarded three years prison term. Both of them hailed from Nayapara village in Bera thana of the district.

Narcotics Control Department in a raid on March 29 last year recovered 75 grams heroin from Shahhaj's possession and acting on her confession statement Mustafa was arrested on the same day. A case was lodged and police after investigation submitted charge-sheet against them.

The District and Sessions Judge Abdul Mazid after examining the witnesses and records delivered the judgement.

Another report from Noagaon adds: A woman was sentenced to life term imprisonment for killing her husband, court sources said here on Monday.

According to the case, Farida Begum, mother of three children, killed her husband Badsha Miah, a night guard of Patnitola thana Engineering Department of the district a year back. The body was concealed under water.

Police later on the basis of the confession statement recovered the body.

District and Sessions Judge Monsuruddin Mohammad Munsef Ali in his judgement Thursday also fined her Taka 1,000 or in default to suffer one year more rigorous imprisonment.

57 cattle seized

SATKHIRA, Apr 7: Bangladesh Rifles seized 57 cattle worth about Taka 4 lakh from the border areas of Kalaroa on Monday, reports UNB.

Official sources said BDR men chased a group of smugglers when they were moving suspiciously along the border areas and seized the cattle.

The smugglers, however, managed to flee the scene.

The cattle were handed over to the local Customs Department and a case was filed with Kalaroa police.

Another report adds: An alleged woman smuggler was arrested by the BDR jawans with 20 pieces of Indian Benarasi sarees worth about Taka 20,000 on Monday.

BDR sources said Parvin of Mirpur, Dhaka, was nabbed from a Dhaka bound bus at Kalaroa check post.

A case has been filed with the police.

A boy was run over by a speedy minibus at Baira in Debhata thana on Satkhira-Kaliganj road Monday.

Witnesses said Sayeed (5), son of Samad of Baira met the tragic end while he was playing beside the road in the evening. He died on the spot.

A case was filed with the local police.

BKB disburses Tk 4.32 cr among Barisal farmers

BARISAL, Apr 7: Bangladesh Krishi Bank has disbursed about Taka 4.32 crore as agricultural loan among the farmers of the district against its target of Taka 7.35 crore during the current fiscal year, reports UNB.

Official sources said the bank also realised Taka 3.34 crore from the farmers against target of Taka 8.57 crore during the same period.

The loan is being disbursed through the 23 branches of the bank to boost agri production in the district.

A BSS report says: A meeting of the editors of different dailies of Barisal division was held at the office of the local daily Biplabi Bangladesh recently with Md Hossain Shah, Editor of daily Shahnama of Barisal, in the chair.

A nine-member committee of the editors of the division was formed with Nurul Alam Farid, Editor of Biplabi Bangladesh, as President and K M Enayet Hossain, Editor of daily Rupantar of Patuakhali, as Secretary.

Other office bearers of the committee are: Hossain Shah, Vice-President, Indrajit Kumar Das, Treasurer and M A Matin, Office Secretary.

UNB adds: Five people received burn injuries, 14 dwelling houses and property worth about Taka 30 lakh were gutted in a devastating fire at Charmedua village in Mehendiganj thana on Thursday.



MYMENSINGH: Students are coming out from Mymensingh Medical College on April 2 boycotting the admission test of MBBS course for the session of 1992-93. They were detained for three hours inside examination halls as answer sheets were not attached to the questionnaire. —Star photo