

District roundup

RAJBARI

Afforestation programme taken up

June 27: The local Forest Extension Department has taken up a tree plantation programme in four thanas of the district as part of government afforestation programme, reports UNB.

Under this programme at least 2.36 lakh saplings of various types of trees will be planted in Sadar, Pangsha, Baliakandi and Goaland thanas.

The saplings will be planted alongside of 15 km roads, 4 km railway and 1 km feeder roads.

Forest Department has also taken up a programme for planting about 7,000 saplings in different educational institutions in the district.

B'BARIA

Two kidnappers arrested

June 27: Two kidnappers, demanding ransom of Taka 90,000 for their hostage, were rounded up from the town recently, police said Friday, reports UNB.

Police also rescued the hostage, Montazuddin — an employee of Haque Engineering Enterprise in Chittagong, from Maindh village in Sadar thana.

Police acting on secret information rounded up the kidnappers, Aswat Ali Khan and his associate Yunus Miah, from Court Road area in the town.

They were demanding the ransom from Montazuddin's wife over telephone and threatened to kill him in case of failure to pay the money.

It was learnt Montazuddin was called out of his residence at Nasrabad Industrial Area of Chittagong, by the accused and later taken to the Brahmanbaria town.

SIRAJGANJ

11 injured in storm

June 27: At least 11 people were injured due to collapse of houses when a storm lashed over two unions in Kazipur thana of the district Thursday night, reports UNB.

Of the injured, Abdur Rahim (47), was admitted to Shuvagacha health clinic. The affected unions are Nischintapur and Tekant in the thana.

Local people said some 125 kutcha houses were also damaged in the storm which lasted about half an hour from 10 pm.

TANGAIL

Farmers' training course ends

June 27: A farmers training course on poultry and dairy farming concluded Wednesday at district livestock office campus, reports BSS.

A total of 87 persons took part in the workshop in four batches. Dr Farid Uddin, District Livestock Officer distributed kits and certificates among the participants.

Speaking on the occasion he urged the participants to utilize their knowledge in economic field.

FARIDPUR

Dacoity committed

June 27: A daring dacoity was committed in the house of an engineer in the Gopalpur area of this town recently, reports BSS.

The dacoits looted cash and kind worth about Taka one lakh and seventy thousand. According to a police source, at the dead of night a gang of armed dacoits numbering ten broke open the house of Syed Mohitul Islam, an engineer of rural employment sectoral programme.

The dacoits looted twenty two tolas of gold ornaments, twelve thousand taka in cash and one VCP. A case was registered with Kotwali police in this connection.

KHULNA

Two robbed of Tk 65,000

June 27: Two youngmen were injured and robbed of Tk 65,000 by a gang of miscreants at Khalisapur in the town on Tuesday, reports UNB.

The miscreants swooped on Ilias (25) and Babul (35) and assaulted them while they were returning home at about 4 pm.

The looters left the scene exploding at least four hand bombs, witnesses said.

The injured were admitted to Sadar Hospital and a case was filed with local police.

MAGURA

One killed, 25 injured in road mishap

June 27: A man was killed and 25 others were injured when a bus fell into a road side ditch at Ramnagar in Sadar thana on Dhaka-Khulna highway recently.

Police said an unidentified bus passenger died on the spot when the Dhaka bound bus tumbled into a ditch while going side to another one at 4 pm.

Ten of the injured were rushed to Magura Sadar Hospital with serious injuries. Of them, condition of Mukter Hossain (30) of Jhalakathi and Mushir (35) of Bagerhat were said to be critical.

Police seized the bus but the driver, however, managed to escape.

A case was filed with the local police in this connection.

PIROJPUR

Installation of 250 STW nearing completion

June 27: The installation of 250 shallow tubewells (STW) is nearing completion in six thanas of the district, reports UNB.

Of the total, 34 are being installed in Mathbaria, 32 in Bandaria, 25 in Kaulkhali, 45 in Nesarabad, 54 in Nazirpur and 60 Sadar thana.

The UNICEF and Public Health Engineering Department are jointly implementing the installation programme.

LALMONIRHAT

40 attacked by malaria

June 27: About 40 people, mostly children and women, were attacked by malaria in Hatibandha thana during the last week, reports UNB.

The fever, caused by a protozoan parasite, posed a serious turn in recent days and is spreading rapidly, doctors and local people said.

Lack of medicare facilities in local health complex has aggravated the situation further, they alleged.

Everyday a good number of patients pouring into the health complex from remote villages for treatment. But most of them returned home without having any treatment.

The patients can not examine their blood due to lack of laboratory technicians for the last one month, health complex sources said.

Children of poor families are the worst sufferers as their parents cannot afford necessary medicines and food stuff.

Thana Health and Family Planning officials said that the District Civil Surgeon was well informed of the matter adding that steps were being taken to meet the situation.

Meanwhile, the affected people urged the concerned authorities to take necessary steps and ensure proper treatment.

BARGUNA

200 prisoners facing problems

June 27: Prisoners of Barguna sub-jail are passing their days with multifarious problems including acute accommodation crisis, reports UNB.

More than 200 under-trial prisoners are huddled in the jail, which hardly accommodates 120 prisoners, and are passing sub-human lives.

Sometimes, the number of under-trial prisoners increased several times than its actual capacity due to rise of criminal activities and the figure is increasing day by day.

But the capacity of the jail, established in 1969 as a thana headquarter, still remains unchanged. The two-storied building has turned to a district jail in July, 1988. But neither the strength nor any other facilities were increased.

Besides, absence of staff quarters, lack of proper drainage system and medicare facilities have aggravated the situation further.

NAOGAON

Kabadi training course ends

June 27: A three-day kabadi training course was held at the Sadar Thana Nirbahi Office premises here recently, reports UNB.

About 40 players from various sports bodies took part in the course organised by the District Sports Department.

Thana Nirbahi Officer Probab Chakravarty attended the function, on the concluding day, as the chief guest and distributed prizes and certificates among the winners.

A large number of sportsmen and local elites were also present.

Diseases from iodine deficiency
1.26cr victims in the country

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, June 27: Over one crore and 26 lakh people are attacked with goitre including different fatal diseases such as blindness, begetting dull-witted, cretinism etc in the country due to only Iodine Deficiency, according to a survey jointly conducted by UNICEF and Public Health Department.

It is learnt that the number of goitre patients have been increasing here rapidly for the Iodine Deficiency.

Goitre disease occurs when the thyroid gland enlarges then its normal size due to shortage of iodine. The disease is locally known as 'ghag'. It is the main symptom of Iodine Deficiency that is noticed mostly in northern regions of the country.

According to a statistical report conducted throughout the nation over 36 per cent people of our total population are suffering from various diseases caused due to Iodine Deficiency.

About 21 to 30 per cent people are suffering from

goitre in greater Rangpur, Jamalpur, Mymensingh, and Dinajpur districts.

11 to 20 per cent people are affected in Bogra, Dhaka,

Barisal, Sylhet and other areas of the country.

A specialist on this subject informed this correspondent that these diseases including



A few of the victims.

Tangail, Khulna and Chittagong districts.

About five to 10 per cent people are suffering from Iodine Deficiency related diseases in greater Rajshahi, Pabna Faridpur, Jessore

— UNICEF

goitre may break out in an epidemic form if necessary steps are not taken immediately to protect Iodine Deficiency.

He further informed that there are some remote areas in northern parts of the coun-

try where every people are affected by Iodine Deficiency caused diseases.

People of these areas are said to be very weak, and their reproduction capacity in very little. Even the animals of these areas are victims of similar diseases.

While talking to The Daily Star Dr T Haq a consultant of UNICEF explained that there are enough opportunities to meet the demand of iodine for the population in Bangladesh. The problem can be solved by taking iodised salt in our food.

Iodine is mixed with normal salt to make iodised salt. Since salt is one of the unavoidable food material it was chosen for simple method of intake into digestive system. Salt is also available at a comfortable price, he added.

Dr T Haq further explained that Bangladesh Government is pledge-bound to solve the problems of Iodine Deficiency. For this reason a law has been enforced to have salts in the country iodised by 1993.

Bamboo production on decline in Kishoreganj

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, June 27: Bamboo production is declining due to lack of proper maintenance, nursing of bamboo clusters and absence of planned Plantation Programmes.

The district was once very famous for bamboo Production. There were thousands of clusters on vast tracts of land of the district but now they are gradually vanishing. Such acute scarcity of bamboo in these areas has consequently raised prices of bamboo several times.

On the other hand, no efforts is being taken to save the bamboo clusters from decaying in these areas. The owners of the clusters lack proper Production method. The bamboos are lifted at random and sold in the markets. Tender bamboo plants are not left for future growth.

Production of bamboo is not increasing according to the growing needs of the people.

This has also created an adverse affect on both day labourers and bamboo based Cottage Industries.

Meanwhile, repair and construction works of kutchas houses in the rural areas are being hampered badly for want of bamboo and traditional Cottage industry depending on bamboos is also facing extinction.

It may be mentioned that 90 per cent of the houses in the rural areas are kutchas and bamboo is basically used for the construction of these houses. The price of a single matured bamboo is now between taka 75 to 90 whereas the price used to be much cheaper. As a result, 75 per cent of the villages are unable to buy bamboos at exorbitant prices.

The suffering of those who depend on bamboo based industry for their livelihood are uncountable. Many of them are sitting idle for want of work

while others have been compelled to leave the profession.

Another report adds: Passengers have been facing manifold problems due to the absence of basic amenities at the Gouripur railway junction.

The platform area of the station is not adequately covered with overhead sheds to protect the waiting passengers from the scorching heat of sun and rain. Besides, the only waiting room is quite unfit for use as it remains dirty. Poor accommodation arrangement for male and female passengers is another problem.

The urinals and toilets are not regularly cleaned and unhygienic condition of latrines pollutes the atmosphere of the station.

The rush of hawkers on the platform causes much annoyance to the passengers. It is hardly possible for the passengers to move easily on the platform especially when the trains arrive in the station.

2 SSC candidates arrested with answer scripts

PABNA, June 27: Police arrested two SSC examinees and recovered five answer scripts from their possession while they were making them afresh at Boalmari village in Sathia thana Saturday, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip, police raided the house of Moazzem at the village and nabbed Rafiqul Islam (15) and Mohammad Sakhawat Hossain with the scripts of Mathematics.

The accused Rafiqul Islam and Mohammad Sakhawat Hossain have appeared in the last SSC examination from Sathia High School.

The scripts, bearing the roll numbers Sathia — 571, 567, 564, 563 and F-548 are now under police security.

Rafiqul in his confessional statement to the police said that he collected the scripts from Mohammad Abul Kalam Azad, a teacher of Pukuri High School in Fulkuri thana of Dinajpur district.

3 commit suicide in Lalmonirhat

LALMONIRHAT, June 27: Three people, including two house wives, committed suicide in the district during the last week, reports UNB.

The victims were identified as: Abdul Gaffar (60) of Fakirpara village in Sadar thana, Sakina Khatun (19) of Dolapara village and Sahara Khatun (32) of East Noudabash in Hatibandha thana of the district.

Abdul Gaffar committed suicide by offering himself to a running train near Barakhatha station on June 17.

Villagers said Gaffar had been suffering from severe stomach ache for a long and killed himself to get rid of the sufferings.

Meanwhile, Sakina Khatun, wife of Zahurul Islam of Dolapara village and Sahara Khatun (32) of East Noudabash in Hatibandha thana committed suicide by taking insecticides on June 18 and 23 respectively.

The causes behind their deaths could not be known immediately. Two separate UD cases were filed with Hatibandha thana in this connection.

Another report adds: A Young boy, of Gagra village in Kaliganj, suffering from rabies died in the local thana health complex allegedly due to lack of medicare facilities last week.

Seminar on rights of children held in Faridpur

FARIDPUR, June 27: A seminar on 'Rights of children' jointly organised by Dr Zahed Memorial Shishu Hospital, Faridpur and Save the Children Fund, Australia was held on Friday at local Kabi Jasimuddin Hall, reports BSS.

Speakers at the seminar stressed the need for ensuring the basic needs of the children in our society for their well-being and healthy growth up. They also urged all concerned to stop child labour from our society.

KM Nurul Huda, Deputy Commissioner of Faridpur attended the seminar as chief guest while it was presided over by Dr Kazi Syed Ahmed, Civil Surgeon of Faridpur. The seminar was addressed, among others, by Abul Bashar Mia, President of Shishu Hospital Committee, Principal Mia Lutfar Rahman, and Professor MA Samad.

Highway robbery — a menace in Jessore

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, June 27: Highway robbery is frequently causing problems for night coach passengers here for quite a long time.

According to a source, a number of about fifteen night coaches, on way back from Dhaka, averted such dangers when driver of a coach bearing No. Jessore BA-1388 successfully ran over the barricade put up by the dacoits at Mandartala near Bahadurpur on Magura-Jessore via Khajura road four miles away from here defying firing and bomb blasts.

It is learnt, for the last six months, about one hundred night coaches and trucks were attacked and looted away valuable worth Taka lakhs at various crime points in Jessore area, injuring many passengers.

Every night, over hundreds of night coaches and trucks pass through these routes to and from Dhaka. But the robbers prefer mostly the night coaches to trucks for the purpose of looting.

Previously, to avoid highway

robbery, two Ansars with arms, were provided for each night coach as per arrangement made with local administration.

But it was with drawn when instead of robbers, outlawed party activists began swooping night coaches and stray cases of rifle looting from Ansars were reported. Subsequently, a strategy was devised to foil such attempts.

A number of night coaches began to move together in a bid to face such situation jointly. But this system is not found doing no good to be effective now.

Most recent incidents of robbery were reported in night coaches at Kanaltala and Dulal-Mundia on Jessore-Jhenaidah, at Pule rhat on Jessore-Benapole-Satkira Arpara and Mandartala on Jessore-Magura via Khajura roads causing losses worth Taka fifty lakhs including ornaments.

It is alleged that highway police patrol has never been seen during such occurrences.

Primary edn programme faces numerous hurdles

From Our Correspondent

MADARIPUR, June 27: The Compulsory Primary Education Programme is different thanas of the district is suffering setbacks due to shortages of educational appliances.

Sources said lack of awareness among the rural poor, particularly the farmers is hindering the advancement of the programme.

The sources said, of the total one lakh children enrolled to government and non-government schools last year. Nearly 25,000 failed to continue their education due to poverty. It is learnt reluctance on part of the parents and guardians of the children is also responsible for low attendance rate in the schools.

The popular believe, 'Farmers children should be farmers and potter's children should be a potter' is also a

major hurdle for the success of the educational programme.

Moreover, the government schools are running in a deplorable state with inadequate class rooms and benches for providing accommodation for the students. Absence of reconstruction works in schools which were damaged in natural calamities also adds to the problems in implementing the programme.

The reconstruction works are learnt to have been long pending due to fund shortages and departmental irregularities. As a result, students in many schools are taking classes in the open sky.

Local leaders have urged the government to immediately remove bottlenecks to make the compulsory education programme a success.

Salvage operation of sunken wagons on in Gaibandha

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, June 27: Rescue operation of Teestamuk ghat marine is going on to salvage six drowned pulse loaded wagons which fell down from the railway barge during transshipment and sunk into the water of river Brahmaputra on June 19.

Two Railway barge mishaps took place in between Teestamuk ghat and Bahadurabad ghat within the span of one week in which ten food grain loaded wagons sunk into the river that incurred a loss of Tk. 57 lakh.

In the first incident, on June 13 a loaded wagon barge MV Titumeer sailed from Teestamuk ghat. Suddenly it ran aground two kilometre off Teestamuk ghat. Due to sudden jark, four wagons fell down from the board of barge and sunk into the river. Rescue team recovered three wagons but they could not recover one

which later declared abandoned.

In the second incident, another mishap took place on June 19 in which a pulse-loaded wagon barge dashed with the shoal at Baikamari char. Due to impact of collision six loaded wagons fell down into the river and drowned.

Teestamuk ghat Railway rescue team started operation on June 20 and recovered three sunken wagons by June 22. The wagons were carrying pulses for Rohingya refugees from Nepal.

Railway barge mishap has become a regular feature in between Teestamuk ghat and Bahadurabad ghat. Earlier, several such incidents took place on the river Brahmaputra due to alleged carelessness of marine staff.

High officials of western Railway visited the spot and suspended four persons including a marine super.

Blindness, skin disease
20,000 children affected

NARAIL, June 27: About 20,000 children in three thanas of the district have been suffering from skin diseases and blindness due to poverty and malnutrition, local doctors said, reports UNB.

Children of the floating families, who earned their livelihood by doing odd jobs due to abject poverty, and belong to the age group from five to nine years, are the worst sufferers.

Vitamin deficiency, malnutrition and lack of medicare facilities are the main causes of the diseases, Resident Medical Officer of Sadar Hospital said last week.

The children, finding no other alternative, are compelled to work as labourers at different factories and mills, as tea-boy at hotels and restaurants, rickshaw-pullers and working boys in the houses, a recent study revealed.

A handful of rice, a piece of bread, apparel and a small shelter are the bare need of the infant labourers who have been experiencing hardship, a study said quoting local people. Taking the opportunity of this situation, people of privileged class often exploit them.

The children have no shelter in the town. After the day's

work they spend the night at the bus terminal, in front of cinema halls and residences.

Local people urged the concerned authority to take proper steps to rehabilitate these tender aged children immediately.

Coach plunges into ditch in Sirajganj: 33 hurt

SIRAJGANJ, June 27: A night coach skidded off the Bogra-Nagarbari highway and plunged into a roadside ditch Friday night, injuring 33 people, seven seriously, reports UNB.

Two of the seriously injured were admitted to Mohammad Ali Hospital in Bogra, another two to Raiganj Thana Health Complex in Sirajganj and three others — Abdul Allim, Ruhul and Anwar Hossain — to the General Hospital in Sirajganj.

Police and witnesses said the Dhaka-bound coach from Joypurhat skidded off the road at Ambagan Park in Raiganj thana of the district at around 10 pm while giving side to a truck.



The 20-bed Natore Sadar Hospital is deprived of medical equipment for quite a long time. There is acute shortage of doctors. Moreover, sweepers are not seen attending duties on the hospital ground regularly.

Despite govt ban
Random felling of trees causes ecological imbalance

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, June 27: Rampant use of fire woods despite government ban in the brickfields of the district is going on unabated hastening the process of deforestation and causing ecological imbalance.

Earlier the brickfield owners used trees such as latin, raina, chhatim and other trees which did not bear fruits but now they are using trees even bearing fruits as fuel despite availability of coal in the depots, local people allege.

The brickfield owners are said to be collecting good number of trees as mango, jack fruit, tamarind, berry date and other fruit bearing trees and shimul etc. from the village areas and stored at brick fields.

Besides bamboo and date trees are also being used as fuel for burning bricks in six thanas such as Saikupa, Jhenidah sadar, Harinakundu, Kaliganj, Kotchandpur and Mohespur while old age fruit bearing trees are being felled down. Date trees on the other hand, are being chopped down indiscriminately to feed the

brickfields and the tally fields affecting production of molasses from date, it is reported.

Meanwhile, the environmentalists have expressed

Tk 4.85 cr land revenue yet to be realised

MYMENSINGH, June 27: A total of Taka four crore 85 lakh 80 thousand Land Development Revenue has remained unrealised in Mymensingh district, official sources said, reports BSS.

Meanwhile, a total of Taka one crore 67 lakh 78 thousand Land Development Revenue was collected by May 15 this year.

Thanawise outstanding and revenue collection is: Kotwali Thana outstanding—Taka one crore 19 lakh 53,806; collection—Taka 21 lakh 84,824; Muktagacha, outstanding—Taka 33,73,209; collection—Taka 30,99,527; Fulbaria, outstanding—28,74,230; collection—Taka 13,79,415; Gaffarganj, outstanding—Taka 36,41,951; collection—Taka 10,70,663.

grave concern over the increasing felling of trees which is affecting the ecological balance in the district through the government in July 1989 imposed ban on using fire-woods in brickfields to curb deforestation all over the country.

Local people urged upon the government to take proper action against the brickfield owners for violating government laws without delay.

On the otherhand the brickfield owners appealed to import sufficient coal from abroad to run the brickfields smoothly for development works in the country.

Dacoit held

Ismail Hossain, a notorious road dacoit of Jhenidah was arrested by police near Hotel Ananda in the town recently.

Acting on a secret information police personnel from Jhenidah and Kaliganj raided the area and arrested him. The accused was absconding following road dacoities for long. He was sent to jail—hazat.