

District roundup

PATUAKHALI

No power supply for one month

July 20: The normal life of the people of Boga Bandar in Bauphal thana of the district has become almost paralysed due to lack of power supply for over a month, reports UNB.

The production in local mills and factories remained suspended causing immense suffering to the owners and workers.

It is reported that the transmitter of the area was damaged a month ago. But no initiative has yet been taken to restore power.

The local businessmen alleged that after repeated appeals the Resident Engineer failed to take any initiative in this respect.

The students including HSC examinees are also facing a great problem for lack of electricity.

Meanwhile, anti-social activities are increasing in the area after the shutdown. Local leaders have urged the authorities to take immediate steps to restore power supply.

FENI

Two electrocuted

July 20: Two people were electrocuted and two boys were wounded at Karimpur village of Daganbhuiyan thana in the district, reports UNB.

The dead were identified as Saifullah (60) and Nurul Haque of Karimpur village.

Family sources said Saifullah was electrocuted while catching fish in a paddy field on July 13 and two sons of Saifullah were wounded while they came to save their father. The injured were admitted to Daganbhuiyan Health Complex.

Another person Nurul Haque was also electrocuted in the same village when he came in contact with a live wire in a paddy field.

KUSHITIA

Half-day hartal observed

July 20: The eight-hour hartal protesting the corruption in government and repression on opposition called by Awami League and its allies was observed peacefully here on Monday, reports UNB.

During the 6 am to 2 pm hartal hours, all modes of transports excepting rickshaws went off the roads. The shutters of shops and business establishments were down and bank transactions did not operate. All the educational institutions remained closed.

The district unit of Jatiya Party also supported the strike and took part in picketing with 15-party alliance.

BRAHMANBARIA

Number of school-going children decreasing

From Our Correspondent
July 20: The dropout of school-going children in the primary schools in remote areas of the district is increasing day by day.

It is learnt that many children aged between 8 to 13 years are engaged in petty jobs instead of going to school.

Poverty stricken families employ their children in some income generating jobs like day labour, cattle grazing, smuggling, hotel-restaurant job and rickshawpulling.

The majority of farmers have to engage their wards in some kind of work from childhood. As a result, the children are forced to employ themselves in different works.

GAZIPUR

7-day-long eye camp opens

From Our Correspondent
July 20: A seven-day-long eye camp began at Sreepur thana under the district of Gazipur recently.

The camp has been organised by Islamic Mission with the cooperation of Bangladesh Lions Foundation. This eye camp will render treatment to about 400 eye patients of the locality free of cost and conduct eye operations.

Prof M A Mannan, State Minister for Religious Affairs, inaugurated the camp as chief guest. The State Minister said that the present government was committed to ensure health for all by the year 2000. He said this government has been working ceaselessly for the well-being of the common people.

He urged all to cooperate with the government to fulfil the commitments made to the people. He also stressed the need for popularising Islamic education among the people.

LALMONIRHAT

Box of rifle bullets recovered

July 20: Police recovered a box of rifle bullet from the river Dharla near Shohagpur in Patgram thana on Tuesday, reports UNB.

According to police Tozammel Hossain, a boatman found the sealed box with 800 pieces of live rifle bullets while he was taking bath in the river.

Patgram police recovered the box after being informed by the boatman.

Earlier in last October, police recovered an M16 from the same place.

The tree planting programme has been inaugurated here with the planting of a sapling by the Rajshahi Divisional Commissioner M Aminul Islam.

District administration has undertaken a programme to plant 50 lakh saplings all over the district in the current planting season.

As per the programme, government offices, NGOs, schools, colleges, madrasas, union parishad and other offices of the district have been assigned to plant the saplings, officials said.

Local Forest Department, RDRS, Agricultural Department and Nurseries will supply the saplings to make the programme a success, officials added.

BANDARBAN

Pourashava budget announced

From a Correspondent
July 20: Bandarban pourashava announced its Taka 1.16, 26, 860 budget for the current fiscal year.

Md Ayub Chowdhury, Pourashava Chairman, announced the budget at a press conference held in the conference room of the pourashava. Revenue earning has been projected at Taka 8,79,549 while the expenditure was fixed at Taka 94,28,756. The rest of the money will come from other sources.

Local elite, poura commissioners, journalists were present during the conference.

COMILLA

Students, workers clash, 10 hurt

July 20: Some 10 people were injured, four of them seriously, in a clash between the madrasa students and the transport workers at Barura in the district, reports UNB.

According to witnesses, an altercation took place with the students over charging of exorbitant bus fare. The students were coming from Amratali en route to Barura. At one stage, a clash ensued and 10 people from both the groups were injured.

The four seriously injured were rushed to the health complex at Barura and others were released after first aid. Transport workers filed a case with the police.

BARISAL

BKB disburses Tk 54.15 cr

July 20: Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) distributed Taka 54.15 crore among the farmers of Barisal, Jhalakathi, Bhola, Pirojpur, Patuakhali, Barguna, Faridpur, Rajbari, Madaripur, Gopalganj and Shariatpur during 1992-93 fiscal year, reports UNB.

According to BKB, zonal office source, Taka 6.11 crore were distributed in Barisal, Taka 5.92 crore in Bhola, Taka 5.63 crore in Pirojpur, Taka 3.84 crore in Jhalakathi, Taka 6.59 crore in Patuakhali, Taka 4.84 crore in Barguna, Taka 6.52 crore in Faridpur, Taka 2.87 crore in Gopalganj, Taka 3.65 crore in Madaripur, Taka 3.83 crore in Shariatpur and Taka 4.35 crore in Rajbari.

FARIDPUR

Atrocities of Serbs, Croats slated

FARIDPUR, July 20: Bangladesh Bosnia-Herzegovina Solidarity Front held a big rally in front of Chawkbazar Jain-e-Masjid here on Friday, reports UNB.

Speakers at the rally condemned the atrocities of the Serb and Croat forces on the Bosnian Muslims and demanded immediate stoppage of the "genocide".

They reiterated their firm commitment to stand beside the Bosnian Muslims in their due struggle for sovereignty and territorial integrity.



A group of journalists from national dailies, news agencies, radio and TV visiting Chittaranjan Cotton Mills at Godnail under Narayanganj recently. — PID photo

Erosion situation deteriorates as water flows above danger level

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, July 20: The river erosion in Sirajganj continues unabated as the water of the Jamuna and its tributaries like Gumani and Bangalee is still flowing above the danger level.

During last one week, two sluice gates in Shahzadpur thana were washed away inundating vast tracts of land in Shahzadpur Ullapara, Raiganj and Tarash thanas.

Collapse of about 500 feet area of embankment at Bhatpiari in sadar thana washed away about 125 houses. More than one lakh people of the nine thanas are affected either by floods or erosion.

About 50,000 people of Tarash thana have been marooned by stagnant flood water.

Twentyeight villages have been newly affected by flood under Ullapara due to rise in water level of Fulbar, Gumani,

Devanga and Bangalee rivers.

People living in the charlands of Kazipur, sadar, Belkuchi and Chowhal are in extreme distress for want of fuel and pure drinking water. Erosion of Jamuna has rendered about 15,000 people homeless during last one week. About 8,000 people have taken shelter on the WDB embankment.

The worst erosion affected villages are: Manikpatal, Meghal, Tekani and Subhagacha in Kazipur, Mesra, Bhatpiari, Satiastoli and Saidabad in sadar thana, Charbhanga, Zanglia, Dighalia, Thakurpara, Makimpur, Khidmatia and Meghulia in Belkuchi, Hizulia, Ghusuria, Armasuki, Munshiganj, and Betil in Chowhal, Gala, Rupbari, Kairuri, Porzona and Bahera in Shahzadpur thana.

The erosion affected people of Sirajganj district are living in

immense suffering. No relief operation was reported as yet.

1,78,000 saplings to be planted

Forest Department have taken up a scheme to plant 1,78,000 saplings in Sirajganj district in 1993-94 fiscal year.

Under the scheme, 1,23,000 saplings will be planted on 17 kilometre highway, 76 kilometre approach road, and 22 kilometre embankment. The rest 55,000 saplings will be planted in the campus of different offices, institutions and organisations.

No electricity for three months

The thana headquarters of Kamarkhanda remains without electricity for three months as the 5-kva transformer went out of order. The transformer of Bangladesh Power Development Board has not yet been repaired

in three months even after repeated complaint.

Ansar, VDP rally

Ansar and VDP rally was held in the local Bhashani Milanayatan with ADM Asad Ahmed in the chair.

Alhaj M Solaiman, Director (Operation) and Shahabuddin Mollah, Deputy Director, Rajshahi of Ansar and VDP were present as the chief and special guest respectively.

Among others District Adjutant ABM Ashraf Haq and Instructor of Kamarkhanda VDP Raushan Ara spoke on the occasion.

Three cheques each amounting to Taka one lakh donated by PM were handed over to the authorities of three educational institutions. The educational institutions are Sirajganj Government College, Gouri Arban Girls' High School and Ghorachara High School.

40 arrested with Tk 1.38cr smuggled goods

COMILLA, July 20: Bangladesh Rifles rounded up 40 smugglers and seized a huge quantity of contraband goods worth about Taka 1,38,06,035 from the border areas of Choudhagram and Kashba thanas in the last six months, reports UNB.

The seized goods while being smuggled into the country included Indian sarees, lungis, blouse pieces, cotton yarn, cows, goats, powdered milk, sweetmeat, edibles, salt, video cassettes, drugs and different luxury items worth Taka 1,37,08,345.

The goods while being smuggled out of the country included hilsha, brass, utensils worth Taka 1,07,000.

A total of 27 cases were filed with the police during the period.

Meanwhile, BDR patrol party recovered Indian Phenisidyl syrup worth about Taka 60,000 from Alekarchar on Dhaka Chittagong Trunk Road on July 14.

The contraband goods were handed over to the local customs officials and none was arrested in this connection.

5 children drowned

Five children drowned when a country boat capsized in Gopalpur Haor in Daudkandi thana on Wednesday.

The victims were identified as Abul Kalam (7) and Al-Amin (5), sons of Mohammad Alamgir of Chandpur, Russel (10) and Massom (8), sons of Matiur Rahman of Khayera village and Rekha (8 months).

The boat, carrying 15 passengers of three families, capsized after being lashed by a gusty wind.

Mentionable that eight people drowned at the same place in a boat-capsize in 1989.

In another incident two passengers were killed and five others injured when two buses collided head on at Protappur in Choudhagram thana on Thursday.

The identity of the dead could not be known.

Witnesses said the accident occurred when a coaster collided with a bus coming from the opposite direction on Dhaka-Chittagong Trunk Road, killing two passengers on the spot.

The injured were rushed to Comilla General Hospital. Police seized both the vehicles from the spot, but the drivers managed to flee.

Vendors evicted

The traders who had been running their business by grabbing the footpaths of different parts of the town were evicted on Wednesday.

The illegal occupants were running their business for the last 12 years hindering trading of shop owners and movement of vehicles, official sources said.

Meanwhile, a hawkers' market having 200 shops has been set up at the townhall premises to rehabilitate these vendors and small traders but only 60

traders have so far availed the opportunity.

Meanwhile, dwellers of the town were seen a little bit relaxed seeing the busy footpaths and roads free from the illegal occupants.

Stipend given

Four wards of advocates of Comilla Bar were given 'Karim Memorial Stipend' at a simple ceremony on the occasion of death anniversary of renowned lawyer and social worker Abdul Karim of the district.

The District Judge distributed the stipend and certificates among the recipients. They are Md Mahbul Alam Khan son of Advocate Shamsul Alam Khan, Md Ismail Arafat son of Advocate Md Nazrul Islam, Sajjad Hossain son of Manjor Hussain and Samina Tarannum daughter of Advocate Selim Haq Manju.

The function on the occasion was arranged on Wednesday at the residence of the late lawyer by the 'Karim Smriti Sangsad'.

Early execution of death sentence of Munir demanded

MADARIPUR, July 20: Local elite, social-welfare and cultural activists, journalists, businessmen, advocates, teachers, political leaders in separate statements demanded immediate execution of death sentence of Muniruddin Suruj, reports UNB.

They bitterly criticised the efforts by a section of interested quarter to defend the notorious killer and urged them to refrain from such irrational demand for the sake of law and justice.

Munir brutally murdered his newly married wife Sharmin Rima in April '89.

The signatories to the statements are Prof Abdul Matin Khan, Advocate Ahsanul Haq Khan, Borhanus Sultan, Khaledur Rahman Khan, Jahangir Alam, Forkan Ahmed, Salim Farazi, Subal Biswas, Mizanur Rahman Khan, Enayet Hossain, Mujibur Rahman, Shamsun Nahar, Anwara Khanam and others.

One killed in road mishap

KUSHITIA, July 20: A bus passenger was killed under the wheels of a speeding bus near the town of Kushtia-Iswardi Road on Sunday, reports UNB.

The deceased was identified as Abdur Razzak of village Kalyanpur in Daulatpur thana. According to police, Razzak was travelling on a foot-board of the bus and met the tragic end when he suddenly fell down. The body was sent to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy.

Removal of stagnant saline water demanded

From Our Correspondent

July 20: Revegetations on seventeen thousand acres of cultivable lands under Beel-Dakatia covering Miontrampur thanas of Jessore, Fulta and Dumuria thanas of Khulna district are affected due to failure of WDB (Water Development Board) to remove stagnant saline water from there causing misery to farmers, said a source.

It is learnt, local people cut off Shahpur-Daulatpur side of embankment of the beel at four places in a bid to clear off the saline water. But the result was reverse.

Instead of clearance of the waterlogging, in ebb-tide, beel water dangerously engulfed new areas in flood making the whole scene indescribable.

In the backdrop of this situation, WDB took up a gigantic programme of construction of embankment along the coastal belt of Khulna at a cost of Taka one hundred seventy seven crore out of ADB (Asian Development Bank) fund on physical survey of topography by teams of experts with a plan to clear off waterlogging from fifteen beels connecting Beel Dakatia for cultivation round the year. The work is scheduled to start from beginning of 1995.

Meanwhile, an emergency action plan was initiated by WDB at a cost of Taka one and a half crore allotted by the government to combat the situation temporarily. According to the work plan, it was supposed to be completed by the last day

season with expectation to bring the beel areas under cultivation in current Aman season.

WDB completed re-excavation of two mile-long Salua canal under Food for Works Programme (FWP) and three dredgers were used for dredging of the Salua river.

In the meantime tenders have been invited for earth filling of the fourth place at the mouth of Sondher khal. But the work is being delayed despite issue of work order well in time. As such situation still remains unchanged many villages in the area, went under water during recent heavy downpour, a source added.

It is learnt, dilatory tactics of contractor have been the main reason behind this problem.

First tender was invited in April last for this work and work order was given in favour of Gazi Trader of Taka eight lakhs, being lowest. But it did not work within the stipulated date. A fresh tender was invited in May last cancelling previous work order and forfeiting security deposit. This time, contractors were united themselves and dropped tenders at Taka thirty lakh. It was cancelled again and security money forfeited, being rate exorbitantly high third time, work order was given in favour of Rising Enterprise at Taka fifteen lakh, being the lowest rate. But default of contractor to start work within scheduled date, met similar fate.

Five killed in incidents in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, July 20: Five people were killed in separate incidents in two thanas in the last 48 hours till noon on Sunday, reports UNB.

Police sources said Razia Khatun (13), of village Chak Shahabpur in Kamarkhanda thana allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself from the ceiling of her house at around 7 pm Saturday.

A student of class nine of Jantoli High School Razia killed herself as her mother, on a trifle matter, asked her not to go to school any more.

The post-mortem of the body was performed at a local hospital Sunday morning.

Ayub Ali (9) of village Shyamipur in Kamarkhanda thana was electrocuted when he came in contact with a live wire at around 8 pm Saturday. He met

the tragic end while he was going to respond to the call of nature. Abdul Mujid (28), a railway porter allegedly committed suicide by throwing himself under the wheels of a running train on the Borai Bridge at Dilpasha in Sirajganj Bazar at around 4 am on Sunday.

The reason behind the suicide could not be known immediately. Two pedestrians were killed at Dighor in Raiganj thana on Nagbari-Bogra Highway while a speeding truck hit them from behind on Saturday morning.

According to police Jahurul Islam (30) died on the spot while Babul (17) succumbed at the Bogra Mohammad Ali Hospital.

Separate cases were filed with the police.

Alarming rise of drug addicts in Kushtia

From Our Correspondent

KUSHITIA, July 20: The number of drug addicted youths is growing alarmingly in Kushtia town. Even youths in rural areas are starting to take drugs of different items like foreign made wine, opium, country made wine and drugs like morphine, sedative tablets, Mrita Sanjibani Sura and other type of liquids containing alcohol.

According to non-official survey, Kushtia town and its suburbs have turned into open markets of drugs. All kinds of drugs and wine are available at drug stores grocery and vendors shops. Cigarettes containing Ganza are also available in certain places.

The survey reveals that addicted teenagers are at present 10 per cent but the number was growing fast everyday.

It is alleged that a well-organised crime circle has been smuggling these items of drugs from India and allegedly sold those here.

It is also alleged that the drug addict young men are being involved in various crimes.

Weavers face extinction

Weavers of Kushtia district are facing crisis due to high prices of yarn, dyes, chemicals and other raw materials.

It is feared that if proper steps are not taken immediately the handloom cotton weaving industry of Kushtia which earned a countrywide fame will soon face extinction.

Handloom cotton weaving is a very famous in Kushtia. Most of the people of Kumarkhali thana are weavers by profession. A large number of people in Kushtia and Khoksa thanas are also weavers. The handloom industries in these areas provide opportunity for absorbing a substantial number of men in employment. But abnormal price hike of yarn, dyes and other raw materials have severely affected the industry and the weavers. It is reported Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation (BTMC) has raised the prices of cotton yarn to a great extent as a result the weavers failed to compete with the synthetic products and old garments imported in the country.

Rectified spirit sold illegally

Rectified spirit being consumed as alcohol by most youths in the district town causing moral degradation.

Residents complain that most youths buy the spirit from homeopathic doctors and take it as alcohol mixing in water.

It is alleged that some dishonest homeopathic doctors are selling the spirit to the addicts at an exorbitant price quite illegally.

As per government rule licences for rectified spirit are only issued to the bonafide homeopath practitioners and homeo medicine manufacturers.

Meanwhile drug addiction among the youth has increased here causing concern among the parents and guardians.

School and college students make the largest group of addicts, it is learnt.

Rise in unemployment

The number of landless and unemployed people are increasing in the district almost everyday as a result of erosion and high cost of living.

According to a survey 30 per cent of the people are fully unemployed while nearly 60 per cent depend on agriculture.

Among the farmers, 60 per cent are landless, 20 per cent have a few acres of land and only 30 per cent have adequate land property.

Erosion by rivers have rendered many people homeless. The farmers having a few acres of land can not afford to buy necessary inputs like fertilisers, seeds pesticides and even bullocks for cultivation.



CHANDPUR: Some members of the local Press Club are ready to plant saplings within the club premises. — Star photo