

## National

## Khulna city to be further developed

**KHULNA.** Mar 20: An extensive development programme has been drawn up by the Khulna Development Authority (KDA) to provide more civic amenities for the city dwellers, reports BSS.

This was disclosed in a meeting of the KDA held Thursday at its conference hall.

Presided over by the chairman of KDA Brigadier Kazi Mahmud Hassan, the meeting was attended by Speaker of Jatiya Sangsad Sheikh Razzaque Ali as chief guest. The meeting was attended among others by Vice Chancellor of Khulna University Prof Dr Golam Ali Fakir, members of KDA, concerned officials and elite of the city. The meeting reviewed the activities of KDA. Elaborate discussions were held in the meeting for making KDA more active.

It was further apprised in the meeting that appropriate measures were being taken for further strengthening the activities of KDA. A proposal was made to revise the existing master plan to suit the needs of time.

The proposed development programmes included, construction of 18 kilometre long Phultala-Bohra by-pass road, development of Sonadanga residential area, establishment of Rupsa residential and commercial area, construction of city park, proper utilisation of unused railway lands and establishment of zoological and botanical gardens.

Addressing the meeting, Sheikh Razzaque Ali sought co-operation from all for ensuring proper implementation of the development programmes with a view to making Khulna an ideal modern city.

**Tk 2.6 crore land tax remain unpaid**

## From Our Correspondent

**NATORE.** Mar 20: The Land Development Taxes (LDT) amounting to Taka over 2.60 crore have remained unpaid in Natore district, official sources said.

Different government semi-government and non-government bodies in the district are said to be the main defaulters.

Taka 1.92 crore were collected as the LDT as against its target of collection fixed at Taka four crore 60 lakh 65 thousand 612 during the 1992-93 financial year.

Official sources said that the target was not achieved due to the government's deceleration for forgiving the land tax upto 25 bhigas.

The LDT office has also fixed its land tax collection target at Taka one crore 94 lakh 62 thousand and 303 for the 1993-94 fiscal year.

**Equal rights of man, women demanded**

**FARIDPUR.** Mar 20: Speakers at a seminar recently stressed the need for establishing equal right for man and women and an honourable position for women in the society, reports BSS.

The seminar was organised by women's directorate at its office premises in connection with the observance of international women's day.

Speakers also felt the need for framing necessary legislation to remove all sorts of discrimination against women. They also said that proper measures were required to reduce the unnatural deaths of women in this country.

The seminar was addressed among others by Deputy Commissioner K M Nurul Huda, Police Super Fazlur Rahman, women's directorate officers Mamta Dewar and Press Club Secretary Abdul Ali Sikder.

**Five dacoits held, arms ammunition recovered**

## From Our Correspondent

**NARAYANGANJ.** Mar 20: Narayanganj police arrested five miscreants recently in connection with dacoity committed on January 25 last from in front of local Janata Bank corporate branch. Police also seized one 32 bore revolver, one Yamaha-RX motor cycle and Taka 1.15,000 cash from their possession.

The arrested persons are Babul, Abdur Rahim, Shahjada, Bhutti and Habib. All the arrested persons confessed their offences. Police also recovered the private car which was used in the dacoity. A special police team led by SI Md. Rafiqul Alam and SI Golam Sarwar arrested the dacoits from different districts of Bangladesh.



FISHING DURING DRY SEASON: Villagers catching fish in a haor area with different kinds of fishing equipment.

Star photo By Sk. Enamul Haq

## Problems hit irrigation

## From Our Correspondent

**CHUADANGA.** Mar 20: In the absence of necessary irrigation facilities, the farmers of Chuadanga district have been left at the mercy of nature for nursing crops resulting in constant economic hardships to the people living in the villages of the district.

The irrigation facilities in the district fails to provide necessary services due to frequent disorder of machines, shortage of spare parts, irregular supply of power and fuel and above all, malpractice and large scale corruption by a section of officials working in the fields.

According to Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) sources, there are 92,233 hectares of cultivable land in the district out of which 43,738 hectares of land have been brought under irrigation facilities.

During the current season another 40 thousand hectares of land are expected to be included under the irrigation network in the district.

According to BADC sources about 75 thousand hectares of land can be brought under irrigation facilities with the present network of irrigation ap-

paratus. However, only 45 per cent of the total land is provided with the irrigation facilities.

A total of 508 deep-tubewells has so far been installed in the district. Ten of those remain out of order. Beside a number of engines of the main deep-tubewells need minor repair works but are left untouched due to lack of spare parts.

About 2000 shallow tubewells have been installed by the BADC and local farmers in the district. But 200 or more do not work for a long time.

Moreover many engines of these shallow tubewells are being used in wheat and rice mills.

Some also allege that a number of people, who were allotted shallow tubewells for irrigation purposes, have been renting their engines to run country-made boats.

The BADC meanwhile, has stopped providing any shallow and power pumps in the district since 1992.

There are 568 power pumps in four thanas of the district. However, hundreds of them are said to be lying out of

order for a long period.

Corruption and malpractices have further deteriorated the situation. Crop production in the district has shown a dramatic decline as compared to early records. Peasants and low income growers have been facing economic hardship. Many of them are leaving farming and are heading for towns for old jobs.

Fresh irrigation network projects can help these farmers and ensure proper water supply to their crop land.

Another report adds: Despite bright prospect of ground nut cultivation, thousands of acres of lands remain unplanted.

Over 10,000 acres of sandy land in different areas of four thanas of the district have been left untouched for years.

According to experts, about 30 maunds of ground nut can be produced from every acre of land. At present only 100 to 200 acres of land are being used for ground nut cultivation. Growers who have already seen satisfactory results say, motivation and financial aid can convince more interested growers to come forward.

## 12,000 tubewells out of order in Sathkhira

## From Our Correspondent

**SATHKHIRA.** Mar 20: More than 12,000 tubewells out of 55,150 tubewells in seven thanas of Sathkhira district have gone out of order due to abnormal fall in underground water level and lack of maintenance. The most affected thanas are Kalaroa, Tala, Debnath and Sadar.

Thousands of people have been suffering for non-availability of drinking water in the areas, according to reports.

As many as 4000 tubewells out of 11,575 tubewells in Kalaroa, 3000 tubewells out of 10,000 tubewells in Tala, 22,50 tubewells, out of 15,000 tubewells in Sadar and 450 tubewells out of 2000 tubewells in Debnath thanas are not in operation. The rest of the tubewells are in poor shape requiring repair works.

This shortfall in underground water level has contributed to rise in various diseases already noticed in some parts of the district.

Sudden fall in underground water level has severely affected the situation. In addition, theft of a large number of

## Condition of rly tracks deplorable

## From Our Correspondent

**KISHOREGANJ.** Mar 20: The wagons of goods train could not be taken to the godown attached to Bhairab LSD at Bagabari for the last nine months for loading and unloading of goods due to deplorable condition of the railway tracks from the Bhairab Railway Station to godown.

The railway track approximately one and a half kilometre was damaged at different points during the last year's flood.

The condition of the railway track near the canal of Haji Amber Ali Estate is pitiable due to erosion of earth beneath the tracks. Consequently the wagons for loading and unloading the goods are placed on the tracks attached to railway power house causing loss to the clients.

The businessmen collect goods especially rice, paddy, molasses from outside. They are facing immense troubles in carrying imported items from the railway wagons to their business premises. The businessmen are to pay additional wage to labourers.

Besides goods are damaged during rainfall while loading and unloading. The smooth transport of paddy and wheat to the Bhairab LSD is also being hindered.

## District roundup

## SIRAJGANJ

**Body recovered, two arrested**

**Mar 20:** Police recovered a dead body and arrested two youngmen in connection with the killing at Channagar village in Kazipur thana Friday, reports UNB.

Nazrul Islam 18, son of Inul Haque 40, a day labourer of Channagar village, was found dead at their kitchen early Friday.

Police suspected Nazrul was killed in sequel of previous enmity on payment of Taka 10 loan between his father and Abdul Halim 20 of the same village.

Inul Haque had borrowed Taka 10 from Halim a few months back, but failed to pay the loan in due time, causing quarrel between them several times.

On Thursday, Halim along with his associates took Nazrul to beauty Cinema Hall at Pipul Baris in sadar thana to enjoy the film.

However, on way back home, they allegedly killed Nazrul and kept his body at the kitchen, police suspected.

Police arrested Abdul Halim and Mukul 14 in connection with the killing.

The body was sent to the Sirajganj general hospital for autopsy and a case was filed with Kazipur thana.

## NARAYANGANJ

**Property worth Tk 20 lakh gutted**

**Mar 20:** Ten shops were gutted in fire at a ready-made garments market at Deobhog area in the town Tuesday, fire brigade sources said, reports UNB.

The fire broke out at about 9:15 Tuesday morning and quickly engulfed the neighbouring shops. Six fire brigade units from Mondalpara and Hajiganj rushed to the spot and brought the blaze under control in an hour.

However, nobody was injured.

Local people said the fire had originated from a bread factory. The loss was estimated at Taka 20 lakh.

## LALMONIRHAT

**Rly staff gherao**

**Divisional Manager's office**

**Mar 20:** Some 2,000 employees of Lalmonirhat rail station gheraoed the offices of Divisional Railway Manager on Saturday demanding their salary in advance on the eve of Eid, official sources said, reports UNB.

The employees staged demonstration around the office for six hours from 10:00 am until police intervened at 4:00 pm. They also halted the Kurigram-bound 442 down train for about an hour in the morning.

A railway source in Dhaka told UNB on Saturday night that the employees were provided with festival bonus in the first week of this month.

The demand of the employees came as the workshop employees got their salary before Eid as a special case, the source said. Railway employees get their salary on the 17th of every month.

## MYMENSINGH

**1053 crimes committed in 6 months**

**Mar 20:** A total of 1053 crimes were reported in the district of Mymensingh during the last six months of 1993, says BSS.

The reported cases included 22 dacoities, nine robberies, 106 burglaries, 39 thefts, arms act-14, 27 cattle lifting, 25 kidnappings and abductions nine smuggling and 748 other types of crimes.

Police sources said the total number of reported cases of the period is less than that of the corresponding six months of 1992.

The police recovered 12 firearms including 18 rounds of ammunition during the months of January and February last. The firearms included two revolvers one SMG, one pistol and eight pigeons. In this connection 13 persons were arrested by the police.

## COMILLA

**Cow lifting frequent**

**Mar 20:** Cow lifting has become rampant in the district causing alarm to the poor farmers, says UNB.

According to the farmers, some 60 cattle have been stolen from sadar, Burichang, Brahmanpara, Barura and Nangalkot thanas in the last fortnight.

Most of the farmers sleep at the cow-sheds to protect their animals. Meanwhile many farmers have been made destitute due to rampant lifting of their cows.

They said some organised lifters demand ransom for the stolen cows and majority of the farmers cannot afford to meet the demand.

They alleged that the matter was brought to the notice of law enforcing agencies but no step has yet been taken to stop the lifting of cows.

## B'BARIA

**One crushed under wheels**

**Mar 20:** A young man was killed when he fell from a coaster on Nabinagar-Companygaj road near Battali bus stand last week, says UNB.

Witnesses said the victim, identified as Khandaker Ataur Rahman Mintu, was pushed from a running Companygaj-bound coaster on March 9 allegedly by its contractor while he was trying to board the vehicle.

As a result, he fell from the coaster and was crushed under its wheels.

Meanwhile, a rickshaw puller, Helaiddin, was seriously injured when a van pushed his vehicle on the by-pass road in the town on the same day.

He was admitted to the sadar hospital.



NARAYANGANJ: The railway station was one of the busiest centres of the country but due to lack of proper care it has become a less important one.

— Star photo

## Unhealthy Situation at railway station

## From Our Correspondent

**NARAYANGANJ.** Mar 20: The facilities for the passengers at Narayanganj railway station are quite insufficient.

Hundreds of passengers travelling through this station everyday have been experiencing on toll sufferings.

More than 1.5 lakh passengers travel through the station every year. A good number of passengers travel without tickets every year, it is alleged.

The waiting rooms and the spaces at the platforms are generally occupied by the vendors.

A number of tea-stalls and small shops have also been set up on the platform which create space problems. The only over bridge at the station have been left untouched.

The floating people uprooted by natural calamities have occupied the platforms area. They take bath, cook food and sleep at night here. The surrounding of the station remain dirty. Bad smell emits round the clock polluting the

atmosphere of the station.

It was also observed that the station has turned into a common place of gamblers, drug addicts and floating prostitutes. Unsocial activities are carried on without any resistance from the authority.

Passengers are often harassed by the drunk gamblers and prostitutes. Railway police are often seen to take toll from the floating prostitutes and gamblers.

Most of the lights of the platform area are out of order.

As a result, some areas of the platform plunge into darkness giving advantage to the antisocial activities.

The ticket booking counters often open very late. Departing passengers crowd around the counters for tickets.

Those who cannot buy tickets on time are said to travel without possessing any tickets, it is also alleged.

