

Dhaka-Faridpur bus services resume

FARIDPUR, May 8: Road communications of 16 southern districts resumed Saturday after three days strike of the district transport workers following a clash between the workers and the local people on Thursday, reports UNB.

The strike was enforced to protest the attack on transport workers by the local people following the death of a college girl in an accident on Thursday.

Popy Akhter, 18, a second year student of Government Saroda Sundari Women's College, was run over by a Dhaka-bound bus at Komarpur on the Faridpur-Dhaka highway.

Meanwhile, a condolence meeting of the teachers and students of the college was held at the college auditorium with Vice-Principal Haridas Kundu in the chair on Saturday.

The meeting expressed deep shock at the unnatural death of Popy and sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

Later, a silent procession was brought out in the town in protest against the death of the student and demanded exemplary punishment to the absconding killer driver of the bus.

Outlawed party activist killed in police fire

CHUADANGA, May 8: An activist of Purbabanga Communist Party was shot dead in a gunbattle between police and the party activists at Paraxampur village in Alamdanga thana on Friday, reports UNB.

The deceased was identified as Abul Hashem, son of Khukai Mondal of Tiboriya village of the same thana.

Acting on a tip, a contingent of police led by DIG of Khulna range, Asraf Huda and SP of Chuadanga, Jahangir Hossain raided the area when the party activists were holding a secret meeting.

After the arrival of the police the activists opened fire at them, police also replied with counter fire which continued for one and a half hours. Abul Hashem died on the spot while others managed to escape.

The body was sent to hospital for postmortem. A case was lodged.

Dacoits injure 3 policemen

SATKHIRA, May 8: Three policemen were seriously injured in a scuffle with dacoits when they raided a den of dacoits at Jhaokola area in Sadar thana at midnight Friday, reports UNB.

The injured cops, TSI, Rabiul Islam, SI, Ataur Rahman and constable, Fazlur Rahman were admitted to Sadar hospital.

The dacoits attacked the cops with dao, spears and other lethal weapons when they raided the place where a group of dacoits numbering 12, were preparing to commit dacoity.

Two dacoits were also injured during the scuffle.

Police, however, arrested four of the alleged dacoits and recovered a pipe gun and four rounds of ammunition from their possession.

Too much for them

SIRAJGANJ, May 8: Heat wave sweeping across the country claimed two lives in two villages of Chowhali thana Saturday in the district, reports UNB.

Witnesses and family sources said, Omar Ali, 49 of Shakpal village and Abdur Rashid (42) of Metwani village fell unconscious when they were working in fields at about 11 am due to scorching heat.

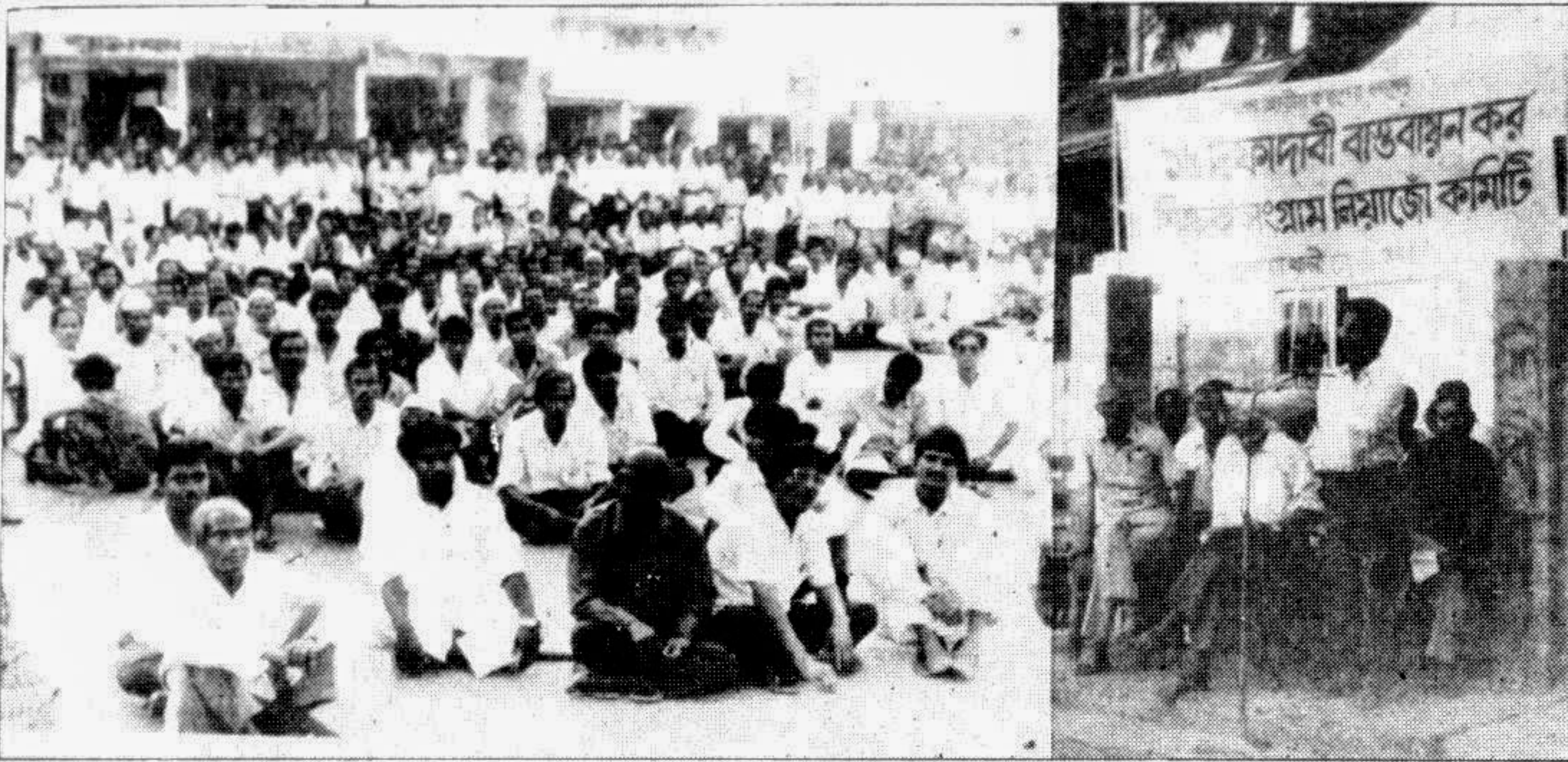
They died on their way to the local hospital.

Cultivation of jute reduces in Maijdee Court

MAIJDEE COURT (Noakhali), May 8: Jute cultivation in different parts of the district has been reducing day by day due to shortage of seeds, fertilisers, high price of pesticides and low market price of jute, reports UNB.

According to officials, jute used to be cultivated on at least 10,000 hectares of land in Begumganj, Chandraganj, Sonaimuri, Senbag, Sadar and Chalkhil areas of the district sometimes back is now being cultivated on only a few hundred hectares.

Although there is a bright prospect of jute farming in some areas of the district, the cultivators are reluctant to grow jute due to lack of market facilities and necessary inputs. They are now interested to cultivate IRRI-Boro and rabi crops in their farmlands.



MAIJDEE COURT: The Shikhak Sangram Liaison Committee of the district recently organised a meeting to press home their 15-point demand. The committee members also gheraoed the DC's office recently. — Star photo

Extensive farming programme in Kishoreganj 37,000 hectares of land to be brought under Aus cultivation

KISHOREGANJ, May 8: A total of about 37,000 hectares of land will be brought under the Aus cultivation under intensive farming programme during the current summer season in 11 thanas of the district.

According to an official source, 18,000 hectares under the different of high yielding varieties Aus and the 19,000 hectares under the different varieties of local Aus.

Of the total, 5500 hectares will be cultivated in Hossainpur thana, 8295 hectares in Kishoreganj sadar, 6485 hectares in Pakundia, 6600 hectares in Katiadi, 7125 hectares in Karimganj, 540 hectares in Tarail, 340 hectares in Nikli, 5 hectares in Austagram, 1510 hectares in Bajitpur, 470 hectares in Kularchar and 130 hectares in Bhairab thanas.

Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Department, Kishoreganj, Md Rafiqul Islam Molla said under the programme, the target of Aus paddy production has been fixed at 5,000 tonnes. It includes, 36,000 tonnes from the different high yielding varieties and 19,000 tonnes from the different local varieties.

He also said that 60 demonstration plots have been set up in the district to acquaint the farmers with the modern methods of BR-21 variety of Aus paddy cultivation.

Necessary measures were being taken to ensure supply of different Agri-inputs to the farmers, the source informed. The sufficient amount of money had already been sanctioned by the government for distribution as loan among the farmers, the sources added.

Rampant smuggling
River port of Bhairab has become a paradise for the smugglers, spurious and smuggled goods have flooded the port town.

The smuggled goods include spices, sarees, sugar, jira, pulses, cosmetics, onion, turmeric, chilli, seeds, cumin, cardamom, salt, dyes, chemicals, razor blades, cattleheads, cotton yarn, medicine, etc.

These items are smuggled into Bhairab Bazar through Akhaura border and bordering areas of Brahmanbaria and Comilla districts. They are sold in the market without any restriction. This illegal entry of Indian goods have badly affected the local traders. Worst of all is the entry of cheap and low quality Indian printed sarees which have engulfed Bhairab Bazar. Most of the smugglers are rural women who procure these from the agents and sell from door to door at prices ranging from Tk 130 to Tk 250.

The traders of Bhairab informed that smuggled goods entered through Kanchanpur, Sripur via Brahmanbaria and Ashuganj by buses, trucks and trains from Akhaura.

Afterwards they are unloaded at Bhairab railway junction and Meghna ferry ghat.

Some political leaders of Bhairab alleged that the local administration is responsible for such corruption and also due to the inaction of local law enforcing agency.

Local merchants and traders also disclosed that smugglers carry cartons of 555, and Benson brands cigarettes and Burmese betelnuts by inter-city trains coming from Chittagong.

A section of women are found to carry sarees, blouse pieces and sugar bag in both the trains. The goods are also kept in the toilets and water-tanks of the trains.

The smuggled goods specially cosmetics, toothpaste and blades are sold openly in the markets. Some shopkeepers of Bhairab Bazar told this correspondent that Colgate

toothpaste and Super Max razor blades are imported. The smuggled items of same brand are kept with the imported items in the showcases.

However, import of Super Max blades has been banned recently by the government in response to a prayer of a local manufacturer.

Due to rampant availability of smuggled cotton yarn and sarees, blouse pieces, etc, local cotton mills and handloom factories face setback causing adverse affect on economy of the country.

Smuggling by trains takes place on broad daylight in presence of the law-enforcing agencies.

Insecticides from India on sale

UNB adds: The standing crops of greater Mymensingh district are being adversely affected due to extensive use of smuggled sub-standard Indian insecticides.

Indian pesticides like Thiodin, Thionel, Hengidel, Vidol which are harmful to animals, crops, necessary insects, fish and frogs have captured the markets of Kishoreganj, Netrakona, Mymensingh, Sherpur and Jamalpur districts, local people alleged.

These insecticides are being openly sold in the border markets of the districts. Some pesticide traders informed that they are selling the con-traband insecticides in the open market on the basis of monthly payment to some concerned officials.

Local cultivators alleged that most of the indigenous insecticides available in the markets are adulterated, ineffective and expensive. Finding no other alternative, they are compelled to use Indian pesticides because of cheap price.

They also alleged that not a single Agriculture official goes to the villages to explain the adverse effect of Indian pesticides to the farmers.

Besides, the agriculture experts said extensive use of Indian spurious insecticides is destroying soil fertility resulting in the decline in the production.

They suggested that locally produced insecticides supplied by the BADC should be made available to the farmers at reasonable prices.

Blood dysentery claims 19 in Pabna

PABNA, May 8: At least 19 people, including 14 children, died of blood dysentery in three thanas of the district in last two days, reports UNB.

Unofficial sources here said today six people died in Iswardi, five in Sujanager and eight in Bera.

District Health Department, however, confirmed 11 deaths.

The Civil Surgeon attributed the outbreak of the disease to paucity of drinking water and hot spell.

Prices of rice, oil up in Jamalpur

JAMALPUR, May 8: Price of different varieties of rice and soyabean oil have shot up in the local market during the last week, reports UNB.

Per kg *pajam* rice is now being sold at Tk 15 as against Tk 13 and per kg coarse rice is being sold at Tk 12 as against Tk 11.

Besides, the price of soyabean oil has also been increased by Tk 10 as per kg which is now selling at Tk 52. The poorer section of the people are hard-hit.

District Food Department sources said, at present government godown of the district has shortage of adequate stock of rice and soyabean and as such they are not in a position to start open market sale operation.

The local leaders have urged the concerned authorities to take immediate steps to bring down the price hikes of essential commodities.

District roundup

MYMENSINGH

Workshop on farm production

May 8: Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh Agricultural University Dr Shah Mohammad Faruk has said modern farming system should be introduced throughout the country to boost production, reports UNB.

"We cannot step backward as modern technology is being used worldwide in cultivation leaving conventional mode of production behind", the VC said while addressing a workshop on "Farm, Protection of Environment and Our Farmers" at the university last week.

"Our agricultural research is aimed at extending cooperation to the farmers by providing data and theories through the activists of our Farming System", the VC told the workshop.

Presided over by Project Director of Khamar Kunja Dr SM Altaf Hossain, the function was addressed, among others, by Dr Monwar Ahmed, Mohammad Mutakinur Rahman, ABM Mahbubul Alam and Nasimul Bari.

Organised by the university Khamar Management and Environment Research, the day-long workshop was participated by about 100 farmers from across the country.

Later the Vice-Chancellor distributed certificates among the participants.

BRAHMANBARIA

Two killed, 4 hurt in trolley-bus collision

May 8: Two people were killed and four others injured when a trolley collided with a Kutli-bound minibus near Dharkhara on Brahmanbaria-Comilla highway, police said today, reports UNB.

The driver of the trolley Jamal Miah, 24, and another pedestrian Sano Miah, 50, died on the spot.

Witnesses said the trolley loaded with wooden logs running towards Sutanpur met the accident on the night of April 27. The bus driver managed to flee with the vehicle.

The injured were rushed to Sadar Hospital. A case was lodged with the police.

Another report from Sathkha adds: A young man was run over and killed on the spot by a speeding truck near Laboni Cinema hall in the town on Tuesday.

According to witnesses, the victim Tarikul Islam of Setpur village in Assasuni thana while crossing the Sathkha-Kaliganj road met the tragic end of his life.

A case has been filed with the police.

RANGPUR

BCL, Shibir clash leaves 10 hurt

May 8: At least 10 students were wounded when supporters of Islami Chhatra Shibir and pro-Awami League Chhatra League clashed at the Carmichael College campus recently, reports UNB.

Troubles started as Chhatra Shibir members allegedly tried to prevent Chhatra League workers from entering the campus at about noon.

The campus soon turned into a battle field following the blasting of crackers and chase and counter chase with deadly weapons.

Chhatra League activists alleged that the shibirites became angry as Jamaat-e-Islami had failed to hold its scheduled meeting of April 28 at Public Library ground in the town due to resistance by the people.

MOULVIBAZAR

'Ensure use of appropriate technology'

May 8: State Minister for Science and Technology Professor M A Mannan has called upon the scientists to utilise appropriate technology for the benefit of the common people.

He was addressing as chief guest at a seminar on "extension and utilisation of indigenous appropriate technology", organised by the Minister of Science and Technology and local administration held at Moulvibazar Jana Milan Kendra recently.

The State minister also urged the scientists to help create awareness among educated sections people's representatives, to ensure the use of appropriate technology, among the people of rural areas.

The seminar was also addressed by Begum Khaleda Rabbani, MP and Azizur Rahman MP.

Later, the state minister went round different stalls of an exhibition on "appropriate technology" arranged on the occasion today.

CHUADANGA

5 outlawed party members held

May 8: Police arrested five alleged activists of the outlawed Purbabanga Communist Party from a village in Alamdanga thana on Wednesday and recovered some arms and ammunition from them, reports UNB.

They were identified as Shahin (32) of village Boroputinary, Muktar alias Jabbar (25) of village Ramchandrapur, Noor Islam alias Zafar (35) of village Bonardari, Arbi Khatun (30) of village Nagdah, Altaf Hossain alias Arif (26) of village Sharishadanga.

A contingent of police raided the residence of one Abdul Jallil of south Gavindapur village where the alleged members of the outlawed party were taking rest.

Police arrested all of them from the spot alongwith some arms and ammunition. A case has been started in this connection.

KISHOREGANJ

Fish fries being caught

May 8: Fish fries are being caught indiscriminately in different thanas of the district violating the government ban, reports UNB.

Local people said a section of fishermen in Sadar, Tarail, Karimganj, Bajitpur, Inna, Mitamain, Austagram, Bhairab, Hossainpur, Pakundia, Katiadi Nikli and Kularchar thanas are catching fish fry of *ruhi, katla, magur, mrigel, puti, singl, boal, kalibaush, shole* etc before the nose of the law enforcers.

They alleged that the dishonest fishermen are also using current nets for catching fish fry and if it goes unabated fish production will decline in the district drastically.

It may be mentioned that government has banned catching fish fry below nine inches to implement its open water fish production programme.

The source also alleged that law enforcing agencies are often playing a silent role to take any stringent action against the illegal catching of fish fry.

JHENAIDAH

3 youngmen commit suicide

May 8: Three youngmen in three thanas of the district allegedly committed suicide by taking poison following family feuds last week, police said Friday, reports UNB.

Shawpan Kumer (22) of Malmali village in Shalakkupa thana killed himself by taking poison at his residence, family sources said.

Nizamuddin (25) of Hamdaha village Sadar thana took his own life by taking pesticide following a quarrel with his wife.

Nazmul Islam (32) of Jalalpur village in Moheshpur thana also committed suicide by taking pesticide.

All the bodies have been brought to Jhenidah Hospital for autopsy.

Separate cases have been filed with the local police.

FARIDPUR

New BJA executive body elected

May 8: A 13-member executive body of Bangladesh Journalist Association (BJA), Faridpur unit, has been elected for the next three years term, reports UNB.

Munshi Harun-ar-Rashid (UNB) and Montu Das Gopi (Banglar Bani) were elected president and secretary of the new committee of the press club.

Another report adds: About a dozen motor-cycles were stolen from different parts of the district in the last few days, police said.

The owners of the vehicles said an organised gang of miscreants are active in the district for a long time. But no step has yet been taken to nab the miscreants.

NAOGAON

Three women commissioners take oath

May 8: Three nominated women commissioners have taken oath at a simple ceremony at the Deputy Commissioner's conference room recently, reports UNB.

Deputy Commissioner of the district Mahmud Hossain Alamgir administered the oath.

The commissioners are Shanaz Begum, Nazneen Akhter and Khandaker Ayesa Rahman.

Pourashava Chairman Akhter Ahmed Siddique and its other commissioners and government officials were present on the occasion.



Volunteers of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society helping repair a Rohingya camp damaged by the recent cyclonic storm in Chittagong. — Star photo

Draught damages standing IRRI-Boro in C'nawabganj

CHAPAINWABGANJ, May 8: Continuous draught prevailing here for about four months since January last, has adversely affected the standing IRRI-Boro and rabi crops, mango and sericulture on a massive scale, reports UNB.

Although there was slight rainfall in some areas of the district during the middle of the last March, about 40 per cent IRRI-Boro crops, pulses and onion were damaged in the worst-hit areas of the district.

According to the farmers, a vast tract of land has become rockhard and unploughable. As a result, sowing of Aus and Aman paddy, jute seeds and cultivation of summer vegetable are being delayed.

Most of the shallow and deep tubewells in different places of the district have been rendered unserviceable due to fall of ground water level. On the other hand, canals, ponds and ring wells have dried up and most of the hand driven tubewells have become ineffective causing dearth of drinking water in the district.

The sources informed that Bholahat thana is the worst affected where mulberry has been grown in 1000 acres of land. The big tank of Bholahat

necessary for sericulture has also dried up.

Besides, several chars have emerged in river Padma, Mahananda and Pagla due to unilateral withdrawal of the Ganges water at Farakka. Moreover, navigation in various rivers of the district came to a halt following the continued draught.

Two killed in Nagarbari accidents

MANIKGANJ, May 8: Two people were killed in accidents at Nagarbari and Aricha ferry ghats on the Jamuna river today, reports UNB.

A poultry trader, Sultan, 25, of Kurigram district, died on an Aricha-bound ferry from Nagarbari in mid-Jamuna after he had suffered head and leg injuries in a road accident early this morning.

Sultan, who boarded a night coach of Baishakhi Paribahan, fell from the roof of the bus near the Nagarbari terminal. He was rushed to a local clinic and given first aid.

He succumbed to his injuries at 6 am after he boarded the ferry soon after the accident to ensure sale of his commodity worth about Tk 70,000, police said.

In another accident, a truck helper, Azad Ali, 22, of Noakhali district, was run over by a truck near the Aricha ferry terminal this morning.

To escape the scorching heat, he was sleeping under the truck parked at the terminal.

Police arrested the driver of the killer truck, Shaheed, Shaheed, who hails from Narayanganj district, however, did not know that Azad was lying under the truck.

Two killed in road mishaps

FENI, May 8: Two people were killed in separate road accidents here on Feni bypass road last week, police said Friday, reports UNB.

The victims were identified as Motahar Hossain (20) of Rampur village in sadar thana and Nur Mohammad 15.

Motahar was knocked down by a truck from behind while he was on his way to Feni town riding his motor-bike at Dawudpur bridge and died on the spot on Saturday.

Nur Mohammad met the same fate when another truck hit him while he was crossing the road near Muhuriganj bridge on the same day.

Two separate cases was filed with the concerned police stations.