

One killed in Kushtia clash

From Our Correspondent
KUSHTIA, July 9: One person was killed and sixty others have been injured in a clash between two feuding groups in the examination center at Mathurapur Peoples College at Daulatpur on Saturday.
 Reports say, the clash originated over supplying of copies in the examination center between BCL (S-P) and JCD.
 Najir Mondal 65, was killed on the spot while condition of two others were stated to be critical.
 Meanwhile, the UP chairman of Adabari union has been kidnapped by one of the feuding parties family sources said. Police could not trace him till writing of this report.

An initiative worth praising

From Our Correspondent
GAIBANDHA, July 9: Kanakrey Non-formal Primary School has been functioning since December 1992 with only 30 students. Of them 25 girls and 5 boys.
 Students of this school most of whom are from destitute families. They never attended earlier in any school even their parents did not pay attention for their education.
 A local NGO Gano Unnayan Kendra undertook a programme on non-formal child education. Accordingly they set up a school at Kanakroy village under Gaibandha sadar Thana in 1992.
 It is a three years continuous course from infant class. Only a single teacher conducted classes from 9 am to 12 noon. The school is housed in a rented thatched hut where there is no bench, or table or chair. The students and teacher sit on mats. All the educational inputs for the students are being supplied by the organisation free of cost.
 On completion of three years course students will be fit for the admission in class IV in any primary school. Not only academic education the teacher also gives lessons on recitation, song, dance and drama. The students are to sit for a test just after completion of two academic chapters. Besides, the teacher conduct weekly rating test just for evaluation of the standard.
 Monowara Begum, teacher of the school having educational qualification of IA has been serving since 1992 with a remuneration of Tk 400 per month. She said, we are here like members of a single family.

REB projects in Kushtia satisfactory

From Our Correspondent
KUSHTIA, July 9: Rural Electrification Board continues its gradual extension programme over six thanas of Kushtia district covering 1626 square kilometre area in 886 villages under 62 unions for giving electric connections to 20,522 families. Meanwhile, 43,693 connections are ready for connections.
 Meanwhile, the board has been able to give 22944 residential connections, 2171 commercial connections, 426 industrial connections, connections to 75 deep tube well, 307 shallow tube wells, 60 power pumps, 371 charitable institutions and 66 street lights so far. REB has erected 1486 kilometres long power line including 236 kilometre PDB line has already been subscribed by REB.
 It may be mentioned that occasional theft of transformers has been hampering in smooth functioning of the system. So far 60 transformers have been stolen mostly in sadar thana. Electric connections for irrigation purpose has opened created development in food production giving immense benefit for the poor farmers in their effort to boost grain output. On the other hand revenue collection in the form of electricity bill in REB sector are also very satisfactory and encouraging. Tk 40 lakh revenue collection of electricity bill is being realised every month on average and system loss in REB is stated to be 15 per cent.

NGOs helping distressed people to change their lives

From Delwar Kabir
JHENIDAH, July 9: Sudha Rani, Aruna Rani and few other colleagues can run their families smoothly as poverty had been driven out from their families. Now they can easily manage meals for their family members regularly. "Grameen Samaj Kendra" a Dhaka-based Non-Government Organisation changed their life, said Sudha Rani Das.
 According to Sudha Rani in her mid thirties, a mother of four children of Saikupa Rishipara (cobblers village) said that her husband Anil Das who was earlier a leather trader was not in a position to run his small trade for want of money and they had to pass their days in hardship. Even they were compelled to stop sending their children to school for financial crisis.
 A few months back she started savings with Grameen Samaj Kendra (GSK) in Saikupa branch and drew a sum of Taka two thousand as loan to run her husband's fore fathers occupation. Now her husband earns Taka 70 to 75 every day excluding her weekly installment of Taka fifty, Sudha Rani informed.
 Aruna Rani, 57, another housewife of village Chamtaipara said that she was a distressed woman as her husband Ratan Kumar could not run any business due to financial crisis. In the meantime, GSK extended a loan for Taka two thousand a few months back for preparing 'chira' and 'muri'. Aruna now earns Taka at least five hundred per week, she said. This income excludes her weekly installment of loan recovery, Aruna added.
 Talking to Dilip Kumar Kundu, Manager of GSK, Saikupa it was learnt that they had established 180 centres with five to seven members in 101 villages out of total 284 villages of this thana. Their activities have been extended in nine Union Parishads (UP) including Saikupa Poursabha out of total of 15 UPs. Number of total members is 4,400 and number of loanes is 1,849, the manager said. All the loanes repay their loans regularly and the loanes are most cordial to GSK field workers, he added.
 Regarding marriage without dowry, the Manager informed that they had furnished five marriage cer-

Continuous rain for 3 days Gaibandha town, surrounding areas under knee-deep water

From K M Rezaul Hoque
GAIBANDHA, July 9: With incessant rainfall for the last three days and onrush of water from the over flowing Brahmaputra, Teesta and Ghagot more areas of the district were engulfed.
 Total 55 unions of five thanas are in the grip of flood. According to Water Development Board, since Wednesday morning to Friday evening total rainfall was recorded at 600 mm. Water level of river Brahmaputra recorded till Friday was 63 centimetre above the danger level, while Ghagot was flowing 1,060 metre above danger mark, official sources say.
 About eight lakh people are directly affected by the flood in the district. The seriously affected thanas are Sunderganj, Gaibandha sadar, Fulchhari, Shaghata and Sadullapur. Of these Gaibanda sadar, Fulchhari and Shaghata are in worst condition. About two lakh people still remain marooned at different chars since Wednesday. It is quite



GAIBANDHA: Flood affected people have taken shelter in Uttarpara Primary School. — Star photo



GAIBANDHA: Kalibari Government Primary School in Gaibandha town went under three feet water in the recent downpour. — Star photo

Satkhira Pourashava: A town languishes in manifold problems

From Our Correspondent
SATKHIRA, July 9: The inhabitants of Satkhira Pourashava have been facing host of problems like, dilapidated roads, inadequate street lights, absence of proper drainage system, lack of proper sanitary system, mosquito menace, frequent loadsheddings and lack of recreational facilities.
 The pourashava was established in 1869 with an area of 32 square kilometres. The population then was ten thousand. The area of the town is expanding with the increasing in the population of about one lakh. But the pourashava authority had failed to provide the minimum civic amenities to the town dwellers.
 Most of the roads in the pourashava are narrow and uneven. Cracks and potholes have developed at many points of these roads.
 Rainwater remain stagnant on the roads causing difficulties to the pedestrians and vehicular traffic alike.
 Moreover, the roadside ditches filled with garbage are not cleaned regularly and these have gradually turned into breeding grounds of mosquitoes.
 Mosquito menace has made the life of the town dwellers miserable.
 Students are the worst sufferers. Absence of proper drainage system is another problem for the people of the pourashava. Most of the time in the rainy season, rain water cause serious health hazard to the inhabitants of the town.
 Most of the electric poles in the streets are without bulbs or with fuse bulbs. As a result, the area plunges into darkness just after sunset giving the anti-social elements an upper-hand.
 The markets of Satkhira town are in bad condition. The shops are not setup systematically in Sultanpur, Hagachha, Old Satkhira, Katia, Kadamtala and mill area markets of the town. The shopkeepers of these markets have been facing problems for want of space and inadequate number of sheds. The sellers carry on their business on the approach roads of the markets causing much inconveniences to the buyers.
 Housing facility poses a great problem to the town dwellers as construction of new houses is not in proportion to the increasing number of people.
 Adulterated foodstuffs are freely sold in open places of the pourashava area without any check by the pourashava authority. The conservancy service of the town are not satisfactory.
 There is no public latrines or urinals in the town area. Most of the roads in the town are dirty.
 Apart from this, there are some places inside the pourashava area which remain full of hyacinth for months together. The drains of the pourashava fish market is in poor state. Filth and garbage remain dumped all over as there is no system of regular cleaning. As such the whole market has turned into a store house of garbage threatening the sanitation of the area.
 In the absence of recreational facilities, the youths crowd at the street corners in the evening much to the annoyance of pedestrians.
 Satkhira is also lagging behind in sports. Most of the sports clubs are languishing. Absence of children park is also another problem. Only some parts of the town are provided with drinking water while the rests are deprived of the water supply. The pourashava has sunk only 135 tube-wells among which 65 per cent remain out of order.
 The overall development work in the district headquarters is greatly hampered for want of adequate funds.

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difficult to rescue the marooned people for want of adequate water transport, said Fulchhari TNO. Moreover, heavy current in the Brahmaputra river has created hindrance to the movement of country boats. Affected people are suffering for want of food, shelter and drinking water. On the other hand, relief materials supplied by the district administration is too inadequate to meet the requirement.
 Flood control embankment in Gaibandha sadar, Sunderganj, Fulchhari and Shaghata breached at 13 points. Many parts of the embankment may collapse at any time due to the breaches and continuous rise in water level inside the embankment for the incessant rain.
 Gaibandha Pourashava is badly affected by flood water. Flood waters has already passed the mark of the devastating flood of 1988, unofficial sources say. All the road link with thana specially Sunderganj, Sadullapur and Fulchhari remain disrupted as the link roads are flooded by around one kilometre from Gaibandha town.
 Since Saturday Gaibandha Pourashava remained submerged under two feet water. Beside, Bridge Road, David Co. Para, Shandherpara, Sarkerpara, Munshipara went under waist deep water. Water entered almost all the dwelling houses. Many affected families shifted to nearby educational institutes for shelter.
 HSC examinees of the flood affected areas as well as in Gaibandha Pourashava are suffering much as they could not attend examinations duly. Many of the students are found in wet clothes in the examination halls. Fulchhari College centre was completed to shift elsewhere as the centre went under three feet water. HSC examination in Gaibandha may be postponed, it is learnt.

JAMALPUR, July 9: Our Jamalpur correspondent says, waterlevel of Jamuna at Bahadurabadghat has risen by 88 cm in last 24 hrs and the river is now flowing well above the danger level.
 Old Brahmaputra has recorded a rise of 62 cm Saturday evening and the river is now flowing above danger level.
 Over 10 lakh people have been affected by the rise in water level of the rivers.

At present, the condition of all industrial units under BSCIC in this region is miserable. Out of 150 units in Rajshahi, only 66 units are running facing risks and the rest 84 units remained closed since 1985.
 Apart from Rajshahi, only 84 units out of 141 units are in operation in Pabna, 18 of which are inactive and 39 of them are completely shut down. Out of 22 units in Rangpur, only 11 units are in operation, 9 units are inactive and two are closed.
 In Dinajpur, 40 units out of 56 units are in operation, 9 units are inactive and 7 units are closed. In Saidpur, there are a total of 36 industrial units under BSCIC. Of them, 17 units are in operation, 17 units are under construction and the rest two are

closed.
 In Lalmonirhat, only two units are in operation while the rest of the nine units are awaiting construction.
 Except these, six industrial units in Natore, five units in Thakurgaon, 14 units in Kurigram, seven units in Gaibandha, 15 units in Chapainawabganj, six units in Joypurhat, seven units in Sirajganj are yet to be constructed.
 For each new district of this region, the BSCIC authority has allocated 71 to 81 plots of four categories. But most of these plots remained empty due to lack of initiative shown by the industrial entrepreneurs.
 The fact behind the sick industries is that lack of proper knowledge and training of the entrepreneurs. Most of the entrepreneurs of this region seem to little idea on how to run an industry. Though the BSCIC authority arranges training from time to time, that has proved ineffective and meaningless. As a result, the new entrepreneurs are not encouraged to set up industries and the owners of the industries are losing their interests to run their business any more or to reinvest in their sick industries.
 Secondly, the unabated smuggling of all kinds of commodities from various points of border areas of this region is causing a great setback and threat to local industrial products. The smuggled goods are comparatively cheaper than the lo-

caly produced goods. Although the smuggled goods are lower in quality, consumers prefer them more because of their low cost.
 Thirdly, shortage of raw materials causes a great trouble to the industries. The raw materials and chemicals are usually carried from Dhaka or Chittagong. As a result, the production cost of the furnished goods result at a very high cost.
 Fourthly, high price of fuel and insufficient fuel-supply hamper the production. The natural gas-line has not yet been supplied to this region. They industries use furnace oil as fuel which is costly and the supply of the oil is also very poor.
 Finally, frequent power failure has greatly contributed to the low production from the industries. About one tenth of production in BSCIC industrial units in this region are hampered due to frequent power failure.
 When contacted, an official of BSCIC, Rajshahi informed The Daily Star that most of the closed industries under Rajshahi BSCIC are owned by influential political leaders.
 Md. Ali Ashraf Khan, Manager of Natore BSCIC told The Daily Star that entrepreneurs of this region feel discourage setting up of industry because of the inconvenient loan-receiving system, poor marketing system, transport problem and frequent strike programme of various political parties.

According to reports, price of atta and flour have gone up in the markets. One kilogram of 'atta' is selling between Taka 8.60 and 9.00 and flour between Taka 12.50 and 13.00. But 'atta' was selling at Taka 7.50 to Taka 8 and flour at Taka 11.50 to 12.00 per kilogram, it is reported.
 Prices of all types of pulses and grains increased abnormally. One kilogram of mung pulse is selling at Taka 36, maskalai pulse at Taka 28.00 and khesari at Taka 13.00 instead of Taka 27.00, Taka 24.00 and Taka 10.00 respectively only a few days back. But price of rice remained unchanged in most of the markets, it is learnt.
 In different markets one kilogram of mutton and beef are selling at Taka 120 and Taka 65 instead of Taka 90.00 to 100.00 and Taka 45 to 50 two weeks ago.
 All types of fish is deer in the market now. Ruhit, katla, mrigal, boal, chital, baush, aar and other big size fish is quite unnoticed now. Small size of fish like tengra, eel, telapia and others are selling between Taka 100 and 140 per kilogram.
 Price of eggs also rose in the markets. Now a bunch of four pieces of eggs are selling at Taka between 14 and 16 instead of Taka 9 and 10 two weeks ago.
 Meanwhile, price of milk has sharply fallen. One litre of milk is selling between Taka seven and ten and in rural areas it has fallen to Taka five to six per litre, it is learnt. In those rural areas marketing facilities for milk is not reportedly available.

War memorial to be set up in IU campus

From Our Correspondent
ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY (Kushtia) July 9: The Islamic University authorities decided to build a sculpture commemorating the liberation war at the varsity campus recently. IUCV, Prof Enamul Hoque announced the decision of building a sculpture at the varsity campus in a meeting with the teachers of the varsity on Tuesday in this connection.
 A three member implementation committee headed by Chairman of the Department of Economics Dr Muhammad Mamun has been formed.
 Two other members of the committee are, ABB Kulkhesur Rahman, Chairman of the Department of Arabic language and literature and Foize Muhammad Sirazul Islam, a student adviser.
 The students, have welcomed this decision of the authorities while Islamic Chhatra Shibir said that they had no objection to the decision of the proposed sculpture. It would not be in contradiction with the characteristics of the Islamic University.
 NOAKHALI: This monument has been erected to commemorate those who sacrificed their lives for the liberation of their motherland. On June 15, 1971 Pakistani army went on a rampage in Sonapur town. More than 100 people were shot to death while many others were roasted alive as the occupation forces set fire to numerous houses and shops. — Star photo by S Faruk

Statue seized: Three arrested

KHULNA, July 9: Police recovered a statue of touchstone from Khalishpur New Colony and arrested three people in this connection, reports UNB.
 Acting on a secret information, police raided the area and recovered the valuable statue weighing five kg while it was being taken to border area to smuggle out of the country recently.
 Meanwhile, different brands of cigarette including Benson and Hedges, London 555, American General and Perilite are also being smuggled into from Myanmar through Teknaf border.

Divorce cases in Natore increasing every year

From Our Correspondent
NATORE, July 9: Thousands of divorce cases have been registered in different courts of the district during the last five years, it is learnt from reliable source.
 Non-payment of dowry has been identified as the main reason of separation now a days. Other reasons of separation are early marriage, love marriage, non-registration of marriage and immoral activities.
 Several women were found to be tortured by their husbands for dowry. In case of love marriages, many couples can not make their understanding better than early times.
 In a spot survey made by this correspondent in some rural areas of Kurigram and Gurudaspur thanas of the district, it was found that the marriages of many poor families were not registered systematically. As a result, victims could not take legal action against the unscrupulous husbands.
 Smuggled Myanmar salt has flooded the local markets which is cheaper than the locally produced one. Local people said adding per annum smuggled salt is being sold between Tk 80 and Tk 100. As a result, the buyers are not interested to purchase the locally produced salt.
 According to local BSCIC officials, the country produced a bumper salt this year. But local entrepreneurs are being deprived of fair prices due to the influx of the smuggled salt.
 "This is a conspiracy to destroy the local salt industries," said Dr Salahuddin Ahmad Chowdhury, an official of BSCIC Salt Project in Cox's Bazar.
 Local sources said it is easy and cheaper to market salt produced in West Arakan province in Bangladesh. It takes only 30 minutes to bring Arakani salt in Teknaf by boat. Smugglers are carrying Arakani salt, every night into the area.
 It is alleged that the smugglers have already built godowns and excavated ditches in the locality to stock the salt. Later, they send the salt in other parts of the country through roads and river transports.

BSCIC in Rajshahi Division Incurs loss of Tk 1.72 crore

From Our Correspondent
NATORE, July 9: The industrial units under Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) in Rajshahi division including Natore has incurred a loss of Taka 1.72 crore during 1993-94 fiscal year and the amount is increasing every year.
 According to official sources, about 440 acres of land have been allocated for 2200 BSCIC industrial units in 16 northern districts. Out of the total, only 535 units have so far been set up. Among the 535 units, only 280 units are in operation and the rest 255 units remained closed. But construction of 157 more new units are nearing completion, it was learnt.
 At present, the condition of all industrial units under BSCIC in this region is miserable. Out of 150 units in Rajshahi, only 66 units are running facing risks and the rest 84 units remained closed since 1985.
 Apart from Rajshahi, only 84 units out of 141 units are in operation in Pabna, 18 of which are inactive and 39 of them are completely shut down. Out of 22 units in Rangpur, only 11 units are in operation, 9 units are inactive and two are closed.
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 Secondly, the unabated smuggling of all kinds of commodities from various points of border areas of this region is causing a great setback and threat to local industrial products. The smuggled goods are comparatively cheaper than the lo-

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 Thirdly, shortage of raw materials causes a great trouble to the industries. The raw materials and chemicals are usually carried from Dhaka or Chittagong. As a result, the production cost of the furnished goods result at a very high cost.
 Fourthly, high price of fuel and insufficient fuel-supply hamper the production. The natural gas-line has not yet been supplied to this region. They industries use furnace oil as fuel which is costly and the supply of the oil is also very poor.
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Price of rice unchanged Sharp rise in prices of essentials in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent
JHENIDAH, July 9: Prices of essential commodities have gone up sharply while rice price remained unchanged in different markets of Jhenidah district during last two weeks causing much inconveniences to low income people.
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Plan to cultivate 47,434 hectares in Kushtia

From Our Correspondent
KUSHTIA, July 9: District Agricultural Extension Department has taken up an ambitious scheme to cultivate High Yielding Variety (HYV) of transplanted aman on 47,434 hectares of land in the district with the aim of producing one lakh twenty thousand metric tons of paddy.
 Official sources said, another 2,000 hectares of land have been brought under local variety as cultivation of High Yielding Variety was not possible in these lands.
 In order to implement the scheme all efforts were being made to provide maximum facilities to the farmers. BADC have been requested to provide better quality of seeds to the farmers. But the farmers alleged that severe scarcity of HYV aman seeds have been prevailing and they are not in a position to procure them easily.
 Low quality of Indian seeds were being smuggled into the country and their cost was very high, farmers alleged. They said that similar crisis occurred in the past. The government failed to take adequate measures in procuring seeds in time.

Smuggled goods worth Tk 21 cr seized in Khulna

KHULNA, July 9: Bangladesh Rifles seized smuggled goods worth Tk 21.48 crore from different border areas during 1994-95 fiscal year, reports UNB.
 The jwans seized goods worth Tk 20.19 crore while being smuggled into the country from India and contraband worth Tk 1.29 crore while being smuggled out to India.
 The goods included sazes, cows, sugar, onion, salt, spare parts and cosmetics.

Flood damages crops worth Tk1.5 cr in Manikganj

SAVAR, July 9: Standing crops worth about Tk 1.56 crore in three thanas of Manikganj district were damaged due to flash flood caused by continued rise in water level of the rivers Padma and Jamuna, reports UNB.
 According to an official estimate, crops worth Tk 93 lakh were damaged in Daulatpur thana while Tk 35 lakh in Shibhalaya and Tk 28 lakh in Hariampur thana.
 It is estimated that standing crops including aas, jute, sesame and ground nut on 2100 hectares of land in the three thanas have been damaged in the last 15 days.