

National

3 killed in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent
JHENIDAH, Apr 20: Three persons including a boy were killed in separate incidents in Jhenidah.

Nazrul Islam, 25, of village Mingram in Saitukupur thana was chopped to death Friday morning.

Police sources said, a group of men numbering 14 to 15 attacked Nazrul at his house and hit with sharp weapons at about 7 am today. He succumbed to his injuries in the way to hospital at about 9 am.

According to another report, Jhenidah police arrested a young girl Sheuli, 12, from village Ganna in Sadar thana on Wednesday last on charge of killing Wares Ali, 55, of the same village.

Police referring her confessional statement said that she chopped Wares Ali as she was forcibly raped by him in her house at about 11 am on the same day.

Another report says, a 11-year-old boy was killed when he was crushed under the wheels of a speeding bus of Sohan Paribahan, near Sheikhpara bazaar in Saitukupur thana of the district Thursday at about 9 am.

Local people seized the bus while the driver and helper managed to flee.

Separate cases were lodged with respective thanas and the bodies were sent to morgue for autopsy.

4 firearms recovered, 317 arrested in Comilla

COMILLA, Apr 20: Police, during the first 15 days hunt for illegal arms, recovered four firearms, four bullets and some bombs from 12 thanas of the district, reports UNB.

They also arrested 317 people from different parts of the district during the drive that began from April 1 to ensure free and fair elections.

During the period, police recovered one revolver and three pipe guns, 5,616 Indian made chocolate bombs, two cocktails and rifle and revolver bullets.

Of the arrested, 161 people were rounded up under GR cases and 161 under CR cases, six convicted and 72 on other cases till April 15.

Besides, police also recovered 46 bottles of phenylsulphide, wine and 400 gram ganja during the period.

Meanwhile, police, acting on a tip-off, seized a pistol and three pipe guns from a pond at Burirchang thana Ananda Pilot High School on Tuesday.

SSC examinee drowns in Patuakhali

PATUAHKHALI, Apr 20: An SSC examinee drowned in a pond at village Rahmatpur in Kalapara thana in the district last week, reports UNB.

The victim Mumu, 16, hailed from Dholswar Shailapara in the thana, was staying at Rahmatpur to appear at the ongoing SSC examinations.

The girl who did not know how to swim, went to the nearby pond to wash her hands and face. Her body was found floating one hour after her disappearance from the house.

Another report says, A housewife allegedly committed suicide at village Andua in Mirzaganj thana recently.

The victim, Amina Begum, 28, mother of two children, hanged herself from a tree near her house.

Family feud was the reason behind the suicide.

Police arrested five people including her husband.

4 criminals arrested

From CHT Correspondent
KHAGRACHHARI, Apr 20: The Khagrachhari Kotwali police has recently rounded up four persons in separate raids, who were wanted in connection with different cases, police sources said.

The arrested absconders are: Abul Kashem, 40, Mubarak Hussain, 45, Rafique Ahmed, 30 and Shawkat Anam Razu, 22.

CER working on environment in Barind region

From Tareq Chowdhury

RAJSHAHI, Apr 20: Centre for Environmental Research (CER) of Rajshahi University, an interdisciplinary research center for study of physio-biotic and socio-economic aspects of environment, has been playing an important role in the field of research in northern part of the country, especially in the Barind region since its inception.

The CER has already made a considerable progress in contacting national and international agencies and persons in the fields. The CER is run by high level professionals mostly University teachers and researchers with research/academic experience in the western universities. The CER, a non profit-making, multi-disciplinary academic concern to deal with the contemporary issues of environment and sustainable development started its activities in 1990 with the approval of Rajshahi University.

The main objectives of the centre are to provide research facilities at postgraduate levels, undertake research projects aimed at scientific contribution, create data base and de-

velop appropriate scientific methodologies to address the relevant issues, offer short-term in-service training, provide consultancy services, organise seminar, workshop, conferences and eco-camps for better understanding of the problems and creating awareness among the common people, undertake collaborative programme with concerned national and international organizations/institutions/centres and to publish journals, monographs and occasional papers etc.

The CER started its activities in the Barind area around Rajshahi, Chapai Nawabganj and Naogaon districts for collection of environmental related data and information which is still going on. The mentionable activities of the CER are ODA (Overseas Development Administration)-British Council funded link project with New castle Upon Tyne University to conduct research on environmental degradation of the Barind Tract.

Under this project, six British scientists have visited

the project area and five Bangladeshi scientists visited the UK within the period of last three years (1993-95).

Another project is UK-ODA natural Resources Programme under Land Water Interface through BAIFRU (Bangladesh Aquaculture and Fisheries Research Unit) for two months' duration. One of the on-going project of CER is environment friendly cropping system with drought tolerant varieties of wheat and barley for the Barind Region.

The CER also working on 'Linkage between environment and poverty' with special emphasis on seasonal fluctuation of agricultural production.

The CER's current programme also includes land degradation and management of sustainable agriculture in Barind region. Land cover/use changes and erosion of bio-diversity in the north-western region; the conservation of medicinal plants, state of environment of Rajshahi city etc. Besides independent and collaborative projects on national issues, the centre is actively associated with other international programmes. The CER

also organises seminar and group meetings with local farmers for creating awareness about environment protection, conservation of natural resources and management for sustainable livelihood in the villages of the region.

A five member executive board headed by a Director coordinates the activities of the CER. Professor M Iqbal Zubir, ex-chairman of RU Botany Department and an environmentalist, has been running the CER since its inception.

Talking to The Daily Star correspondent, Professor Zubir expressed his regrets on fund shortage, space constraint as well as undue interference from various corners in realizing various objectives of the CER. The Director of the CER hoped that the long term aim of the CER, i.e., to establish multi-disciplinary, adequately equipped and internationally recognized organization utilizing existing resource persons of the university to carry out Environmental Impact Assessment and natural resource management in the region.

Under a special TR programme, a total of 115 metric tons of wheat were sanctioned. Of them, 41 tons were sanctioned for 26 schemes in Sadar, 23 tons for seven schemes in Betagi and 51 tons for 28 schemes in Amtai thanas.

Some 297 metric tons of wheat were sanctioned under the TR programme. Area-wise breakup of the sanctioned wheat and schemes are: 69 metric tons of wheat for the implementation of 35 schemes in Sadar, 79 tons for 42 schemes in Betagi, 39 tons for 22 schemes in Bamma, 52 tons for 27 schemes in Patharghat, five tons for two schemes in Barguna pourashava and three metric tons of wheat for two schemes in Patharghat pourashava.

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SYLHET: Rotary Club of Sylhet Surma brought out a procession in the town on the occasion of National Immunization Day on April 16.

— Star photo

Drought affects aus, jute cultivation in Magura

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA, Apr 20: Drought, scorching heat, fertilizer crisis, inoperative irrigation pumps and set-backs of Ganges Kobodak Project (GKP) are severely affecting the cultivation of aus and jute in four thanas including Sripur, Shalikha, Muhimadpur and Magura sadar of Magura district.

According to the reports, aus and jute cultivation in Magura district has been adversely affected due to the draught situation during the last one and half months.

Agriculture Extension Department has taken up a programme to cultivate aus including high yielding varieties (HYV) in 18,000 hectares of land in 10 southwestern districts including Magura during the current season. Aus sowing season has already been started from March and will continue till end of April. But due to no rainfalls since March, cracks have developed in most of the agricultural

lands.

Some farmers told this correspondent they are not preparing soil for aus and jute cultivation as the soil is not fit for ploughing due to lack of rainfall. They also said the production of aus paddy may fall short of target.

Government has prohibited publication of note books up to class seven a few years ago.

Teachers and guardians alleged that these note books with numerous errors and distorted facts are being sold to the students.

Local people said due to lack of proper attention of the teachers in the classrooms and standard note books, the guardians are forced to appoint private tutors for their children while the poor students are compelled to depend on sub-standard note books.

Meanwhile, guardians and the local educationists have urged the concerned authority to take steps against publication of such note books.

Sub-standard note books being sold in Kushtia

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA Apr 20: A section of unscrupulous traders are publishing and selling sub-standard note books here despite government ban.

According to informed sources, a section of traders are doing brisk business at different markets, where note books are being sold at high prices.

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Sramik Dal worker killed in Feni

FENI, Apr 20: A Sramik Dal worker who was wounded seriously by armed miscreants at Fazirghat in Daganbhuiyan thana on Tuesday died on the following day, reports UNB.

Mohammad Selim, 25, was seriously hurt when the armed miscreants attacked him at a restaurant.

He was admitted to Majidee Hospital but died at 11 pm on Wednesday while he was being shifted to Dhaka for treatment.

Meanwhile, angry local Sramik Dal workers put barricade on Feni-Majidee road for five hours from 9 am protest the killing on Thursday.

BNP, JCD and Sramik Dal also held a protest meeting a local school premises blaming Awami League for the killing. They also demanded immediate arrest and punishment of the killers.

Failure to lift water both by water-supply machines and hand tube-wells has deepened crisis.

Reports say that underground water level has gone beyond 26 feet. As such tube-wells have become inoperative. Previously water was available below 5 to 6 feet ground level and its supply was abundant. Besides, all overhead

BARD training course begins

COMILLA, Apr 20: A 10-day training course on Socio-economic Research Methodology began at Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) here on Monday.

Government and non-government officials are taking part in the workshop aimed at improving skill on socio-economic research works.

Bard Director General Muhammad Abdul Kuddus inaugurated the workshop being conducted by Joint Director Muhammad Kamaluddin Ahmed and Assistant Director Abul Kalam Azad.

3 arrested in Jhalakathi

JHALAKATHI Apr 20: Police on Wednesday arrested three people including an alleged member of outlawed Sarbabora Party from Piplita bazar at Sadar thana, reports UNB.

The Sarbabora member Raju Howlader, 24, hailed from Sonardanga in Khulna district was held with a toy pistol and two home-made bombs.

The other arrested are: Zahurul Islam Badal, 26 and Palash Parvez, 18.

On the fateful day, he beat her up for a television set. Police later recovered the body hanging from a branch of a tree near his house and sent it to sadar hospital morgue for more details.

The girl who did not know how to swim, went to the nearby pond to wash her hands and face. Her body was found floating one hour after her disappearance from the house.

Another report says, A housewife allegedly committed suicide at village Andua in Mirzaganj thana recently.

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Load-shedding in N dists causing huge losses

From Our Correspondent

Rangpur, Apr 20: The continuous loadshedding had shattered the economic prosperity across the 16 northern districts under Rajshahi division.

According to the reports, the electricity supply goes off for hours together almost regularly, causing a great sufferings to the lakhs of consumers in the region.

Particularly during the peak hours of shoppings, just after sun-set the electricity supply goes off to the utter inconveniences of both traders and the buyers. The domestic consumers and the students had been similarly experiencing immense difficulties due to loadshedding.

There were many areas where the people had dug well for irrigations in their crop field, but it hardly covered one per cent area, it was gathered.

The demand of electricity supply in these northern districts were around 135 megawatt, but at present only about 50 per cent of the total requirements of energy supply could be met.

At least 14 thousand deep and five thousand shallow tube-wells remain idle for

about 12 to 15 hours in a day due to inadequate electricity supply.

The target of irri-boro farming in the region was 21 lakh acres, but ultimately it was exceeded by about four lakh acres bringing around 25 lakh acres of land under its cultivation.

But due to loadshedding, the electrical pumps were not functioning well. On the other hand, the diesel pumps had been facing same fate due to high prices and scarcity of fuel.

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