

## National

## Railway lines in W Zone in poor shape: Frequent mishaps reported

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Apr 24: The Railway tracks of Bangladesh Railway (B.R.) Western zone are in deplorable condition as most of the wooden sleepers have been damaged.

It is learnt that out of 985 miles Railway track, 685 miles are broad gauge, shortage of railway sleepers and pebbles on the lines has turned the route risky. Every day 124 trains including 24 inter-city, 24 mails and 76 local trains run in the Western zone which consists of Paksey and Lalmonirhat zones.

The condition of rail lines in Sirajganj-Ishurdi route has turned most risky. Major portion of wooden sleepers in this route have been damaged. Acute shortage of stone pebbles causes frequent accidents in this route.

During last 15 days, the Dhaka-bound mail train from

Chapainawabganj derailed at Rajapur near Muladuli station under Pabna district disrupting railway communication for two days.

On April 5, two compartments of stone carrying goods trains were derailed near Jamtoil station under Kamarkanda thana in Sirajganj district disrupting rail communication for the second time within a fortnight.

Due to deplorable condition of rail line in Sirajganj-Ishurdi route, journey by train has turned much risky. Following introduction of long route coach services, passengers of B.R. have comparatively decreased. Risky journey due to deplorable rail line continue to affect the number of passengers travelling by train in the Western zone. It is urgently needed to repair the lines to ensure safe journey by train.

## Embankment construction demanded in Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Apr 24: Leaders of Chaudhuni Haor Unnayan Sangstha at a press conference on Saturday demanded construction of protection embankments at Samirsar canal and Kabarkhali canal and sluices at different points to save the huge crops from flash floods and other calamities which take place almost every year.

They called upon the Water Development Board to take effective measures in this regard. Otherwise, they said, people of the said areas will be at great risk.

They also alleged that, though some small embankments were constructed in the different canals of the haor, these were not at all effective to face the calamities. Most part of these embankments were washed away by the flash floods that hit the area March 29 last.

They said IRRI-boro paddy on about thirty thousand acres of land of Chaudhuni haor in between the Daulatpur and Dashghar unions under Biswanath thana of Sylhet face inundation due to the early flood and onrush of waters from the upstream almost every year. It is caused due to the absence of any mean to save the paddy crops worth about several crores of Taka annually.

Thousands of farmers of about 40 villages have been

passing hard days. But no steps have yet been taken. The situation had gone more serious in the recent years, they said.

They also said, if immediate measures are not taken, a strong movement will be launched by the people of the area soon. Mahbubur Rahman, secretary, Chaudhuni Haor Unnayan Sangstha, read out a written statement in the press conference while President of the body Md Abdur Rahim and others were present.

### Rangpur pursava takes up 102 dev schemes

RANGPUR, Apr 24: The local purashava has taken up some 102 schemes at a cost of Tk 76,68,825 under medium town infrastructure development project in the current fiscal year, reports UNB.

According to official sources, the schemes to be implemented are: construction of 40.49 km drains, 20.993 km roads, one bridge, 22 culverts, three box culverts, one slaughter-house and planting of some 2,000 saplings.

After the completion of the schemes, communication facilities for the people will be improved to a great extent, said an official handout.

## Property worth Tk one lakh gutted

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Apr 24: Property worth Taka about one lakh was gutted in a devastating fire at village Dogachhia in sadar thana of the district recently.

According to reports, the fire took place at the house of Iman Ali Master and four tinshed houses, kitchen, power tiller and other valuables were gutted. The reason of fire incident could not be known so far.

## College sports competition

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Apr 24: The annual sports competition '96 of Govt. Saroda Sundari Mahila College was held here in the College ground on April 16, with much enthusiasm.

A F M Abdul Haque Chowdhury, DC and Md Abdus Sattar, SP, were the chief and special guests respectively at the function presided over by Professor Md Asfaruddin Sheikh, Principal of the College.

## Violence on rise in Patuakhali

PATUAKHALI, Apr 24: Terrorism and anti-social activities have alarmingly increased in the township recently, causing concern among the town dwellers. reports UNB.

Local people alleged that some influential quarters are patronising the terrorists to achieve their evil design. The hoodlums are engaged in extorting tolls openly. Nobody dares to protest their heinous activities for fear of life. The mastans often resort to violent clashes at the behest of the influential leading to bloodshed in the locality.

People of the town have become hostages at the hands of the terrorists as they created a reign of terror in several areas of the town, particularly at PTI area, Munshipura and Sher-e-Bangla road.

At least 50 housewives of the Hospital road area of the town submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner recently to take necessary action against the terrorists.

The terrorists injured a shopkeeper of PTI road and a youth Jashimuddin (22) of Sher-e-Bangla road. They picked up Jashimuddin from BNP office area, beat him mercilessly and left him with cutting his middle finger at Munshi park recently.

Town dwellers urged the authority to take immediate steps to nab the terrorists to restore law and order in the town.

## CORPS COMDS CONFERENCE-1996



President Abdur Rahman Biswas addressing the EME Corps Commanders' Conference at Syedpur Cantonment on Tuesday.

— PID photo

## Law & order deteriorates

## Organised gangs terrorising villagers in Rangpur

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Apr 24: The law and order situation in the district has deteriorated causing a grave concern among the peace-loving citizens.

According to the allegations, three persons were killed and many others injured and 85 houses with all belongings completely gutted when a clash broke out between the villagers and a group of cowlifters at Khalighat. Paglihat and Chinatuli villages under Kaunia and Lalmonirhat thanas recently.

Eye-witnesses said the villagers being angered over repeated cow lifting incidents caught two lifters and slaughtered them. At this the follows of the deceased organised a strong group and equipped with fire arms and deadly weapons raided the villagers to take revenge of the killings of their mates.

During the organised armed attacks by criminals one villager was shot dead and many others injured. The miscreants, moreover, set at least 85 houses on fire rendering 50 families homeless. They also looted away valuables from the houses.

A local Mahigof area, another group of terrorists in-

jured 11 persons firing gun shots and blasting bombs and looted away huge goods recently.

Recently a group of miscreants at dagger-point looted away 17 bicycles along with all belongings from a number of small traders near Mahigonj Satmatha in the Rangpur-Haragach road. The traders said they lost goods worth Taka one lakh in the incident.

At Balatari village a group of armed miscreants suddenly raided the villagers' residences and opened fire injuring 15 persons and set six houses on fire looting away 5 shallow machines, 13 cattle and other valuables.

Further nine incidents of looting and hijackings were committed around the town areas in one day recently.

According to the allegations, some groups of armed miscreants cracked down on the pedestrians and looted away cash money, valuable belongings and bicycles.

All these occurrences were committed at Rangpur-Mahigonj Road, C O Bazar, Bothila, Panderghat, Medical College Hospital Road, Cotton Farm, Asratpur and Darsana

areas recently.

Specific cases were lodged with the Kotwali thana, but none so far were arrested in these incidents, alleged the victims.

In the market areas of villages, similar occurrences of the looting, snatching, robberies and other crimes like dacoities, and thefts were being committed almost everyday.

In the town areas the extorionists had become active and during the last one month a number of incidences of extortions and other crimes took place at Central Bus Terminal Road, Lalbagh, Nawabgonj Bazar, Dhap, Shapla Chhatar and Jummapara areas.

The leaders of the Rangpur

traders' samity at different occasions held protest meetings and issued statements demanding arrest of the criminals.

Police sources said that during the current month about one hundred persons were arrested on charges of various offences in the district.

A number of fire arms and ammunition were also recovered by the police during the anti-terrorism drive across the district.

## Drought hits aus, jute cultivation in Chuadanga

From Our Correspondent

CHUADANGA, Apr 24: Continuous drought in all the four thanas of Chuadanga district has affected the sowing of aus aman paddy and jute.

It is reported from the different corners of the district that due to no rainfall and lack of irrigation facilities, farmers of the district have not yet been able to sow the seeds of aus-aman paddy and jute till the end of the first week of Baisakh.

Most of the water bodies including the irrigation canals are almost dried up. Besides, most of the deep and shallow tubewells are not functioning smoothly as the ground water level has gone down.

According to the officials, the layer of underground water in the district has fallen by two feet and the river water has fallen by 2 to 3 feet.

The farmers also said they are to keep security their respective dwelling houses, cattleshed, gold or gold ornaments against the borrowed money.

On the other hand, the normal life in the district has also become miserable due to hot spell and stuffy climate. Moreover, irregular power supply in the district causing much suffering to the people.

The average humidity of air during the same period was between 75 and 80 per cent.

An official of the district Agriculture Extension Department said they expected good harvest of boro but continuous drought may affect production.

It is reported that many boro fields are going to be dried up and cracks have appeared in many fields threatening the growing paddy plants.

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## Milk output declines in Kushtia

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Apr 24: Milk production has been decreasing in Kushtia district as milk cows have rapidly decreased in the district due to epidemic which took a heavy toll in recent times.

District Livestock department source said that many milk cows died due to shortage of medicines and lack of consciousness among the farmers to inform them in time about the diseases.

Besides cows are being stolen very frequently and farmers are spending their sleepless nights in cow sheds to save them from the hands of thieves.

Apart from that fresh grass needed for milk cows is not grown as before because of the pattern of crops grown with the introduction of mechanised system of cultivation. A

major portion of grass land has

been brought under IRRI-boro

cultivation. Earlier khesart, mashkhalat and orhar were

abundantly grown in these lands. These crops were pro-

fusely used as fodder for the

cows.

All section of people con-

sumed locally produced milk

to provide them with neces-

sary nutrition.

Farmers have demanded

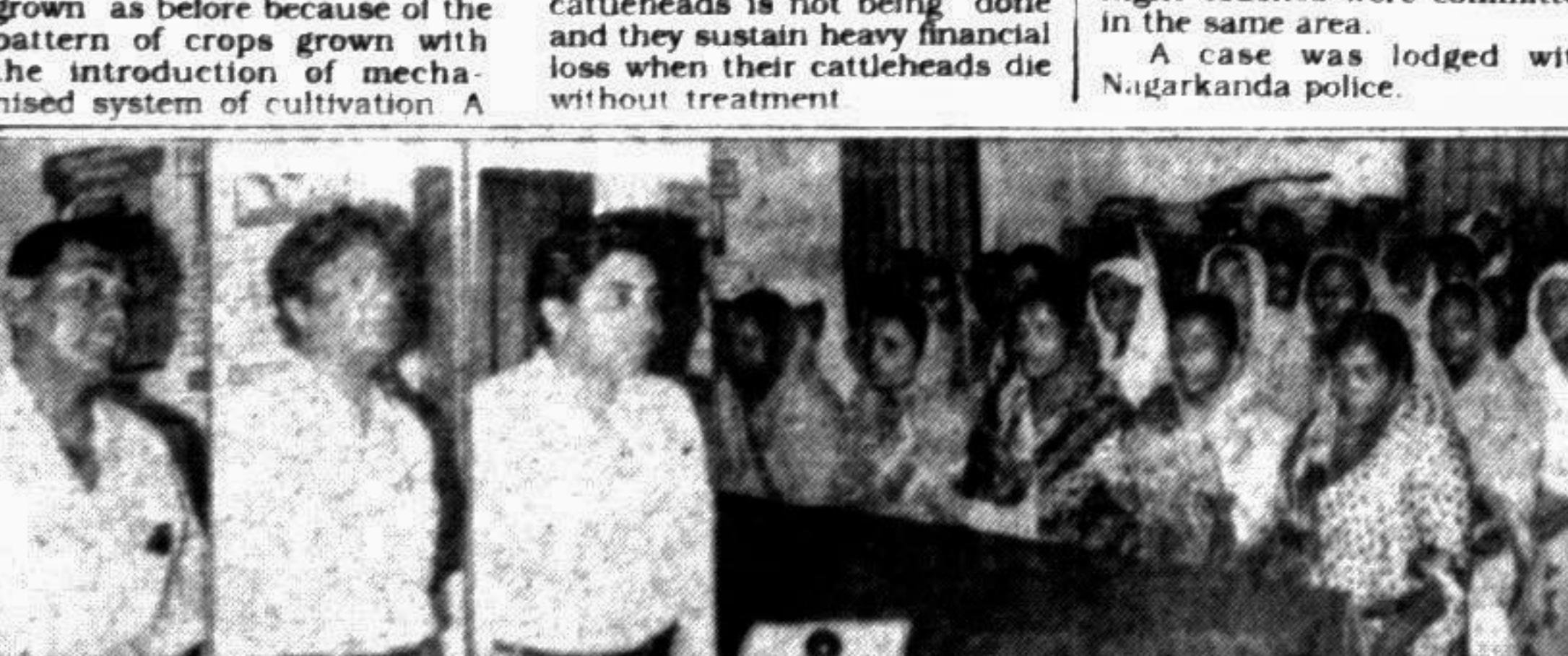
that they should be provided

with cattle feed at subsidised

price and free treatment of

their cattleheads from the

livestock department.



JHENIDAH: (From left) Dr Pulin Chandra Bhowmik, Assistant Director, Animal Product, Jhenidah, Mokhlesur Rahman, District Livestock Officer, Jhenidah, and Nalinee Ranjan Basak, TNO, Sylhet. Speaking at a ten-day long training course on "Animal Health management and Extension Project" held at Sylhet thana livestock office training centre on April 25.

— Star photo

JCD-BCL clash in Jessor

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE: Apr 24: At least three people were injured, two of them seriously, in armed clash between JCD activists and BCL workers at Jhinkergacha Degree College in the district yesterday.