

## News snaps

## 15 hurt in separate incidents

From Our Correspondent

**KUSHIA, July 8:** Fifteen persons were injured in separate incidents in three days. Ten persons were injured in a bus accident at Bheramara ferry ghat recently.

Of them Masum, 28, a mango businessman was seriously injured. He has been shifted in Kushia General Hospital. Others were admitted in Bheramara Health Complex. In another accident Kalu, 28, and his son Zakir, 9, were hit by a minibus on Kushia-Paradaha road while two rickshaw riders, Atiar Rahman, 60, and his wife Nurjahan, 28, were hit by a running truck Kushia-Ishurdi Road. They were rushed to Kushia General Hospital.

## Aus farming programme in Sunamganj

**SUNAMGANJ, July 8:** Sunamganj District Agriculture Extension Department has taken up an aus crop cultivation programme in all 10 thanas of the district in the current season, reports BSS.

An official source said, under this programme, a total of 12,000 hectares of land have been brought under aus cultivation scheme. Of the total land, around 3000 and 9000 hectares have been brought under cultivation of High Yielding Variety (HYV) and local variety of aus respectively. The target of production of paddy has been set at 15,000 tonnes this year.

## Faridpur Shishu Hospital executives

**FARIDPUR, July 8:** A new executive committee of Dr Zahed Memorial Shishu Hospital, Faridpur was elected recently, reports BSS.

Rakibuddin Ahmed, an eminent social worker and chairman of Faridpur Pourashava was elected president while all other office-bearers were elected unopposed. The other office-bearers are vice-presidents — Alhaj Zahurul Haque, Alhaj Ferozer Rahman and Fatema Zahid, secretary — Shahjahan Mollah, joint secretaries — Atiar Rahman and Aowad Hossain, treasurer — Rabindra Nath Saha. Twelve executive committee members were also elected unopposed.

## 18 hurt in road mishap

**MANIKGANJ, July 8:** At least 18 people were injured, two seriously, in separate road mishaps in different parts of the district recently, reports UNB.

Police said Amzad, 35, of Noyakandi village in Shibhalaya was critically injured when a Dhaka-bound coach hit him on Dhaka-Artcha highway in Utholi area at 9:15 am. He was admitted to Utholi Health Complex. An on-duty traffic police was wounded when a coach knocked him down near Boali Bridge in Shibhalaya thana on the highway at 11 am. He was rushed to Dhaka in a critical condition.

## Diabetic hospital to be built in Narsingdi

**NARSINGDI, July 8:** A preparatory meeting for the construction and supervision works of 25-bed Diabetic Hospital was held at the Deputy Commissioner's conference room here recently, reports UNB.

Presided over by Rafiqul Islam, the meeting of the Diabetic Society was attended, among others, by its secretary Dr Sirajul Islam, Abul Hasim Miah, Engineer Azizur Rahman, Jobed Ali Bhuiyan and banker Manik Miah. The hospital will be constructed at a cost of Tk 10 crore on a land donated by a local social worker Montaz Miah.

## Stomach ailment breaks out in Kurigram

**KURIGRAM, July 8:** Hotels and restaurants were found to be responsible for the present upsurge in intestinal disorder and other ailments in this and the adjacent districts, reports UNB.

A large number of people have been suffering from diseases like gastroenteritis, throat sore, gastric ulcer and severe breathing difficulties. According to a survey, hotel and restaurants have been using sulphuric acid to clean utensils and dishes before serving food to the customers. Hotel and restaurant owners said they use acid to remove the red stain in the dishes left by high iron contains in water. They pleaded ignorance of the bad effects of sulphuric acid.

## Eye camp in Tangail

**TANGAIL, July 8:** A weeklong eye camp was inaugurated in Huga union of Sedar thana on Thursday, reports UNB.

Local Union Parishad in collaboration with Bangladesh Blind Foundation arranged the camp at Habi Kabir High School ground to provide treatment to poor patients. Awami League presidium member Abdul Mannan, MP inaugurated the programme as the chief guest. Some registered 200 patients out of 1200 will be operated upon, camp sources said.

## College building works progressing

**MEHERPUR, July 8:** The construction of academic building of two colleges in Meherpur district at an allocation of Taka 50.75 lakh will be completed soon under the Non-Government Educational Institution Development Project, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the colleges are Dariapur Shimanta College and Kazipur College. The project being implemented by the Facilities Department of the Ministry of Education is financed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

## Budget hailed

**NETRAKONA, July 8:** A big procession was brought out here by Netrakona district unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) recently hailing the national budget for the 1997-98 fiscal year, reports BSS.

Later they held a rally in front of district Awami League office. Prasanta Roy, President of Netrakona district Chhatra League presided over the rally which was addressed by district level leaders including Gazi Muzammel Haque Tuku.

## Smuggling on rise along Sylhet border

**SYLHET, July 8:** Smuggling has increased alarmingly in border areas of Kalairag, Kaladdek, Uthma of Comapaniganj thana of the district, reports UNB.

Local people said Indian contraband items including saree, bidi, sugar, cosmetics, wine, penstidyl, firearms are being smuggled into the country in huge quantity. These goods are being sent to different parts of the country which have also flooded the local markets. A gang of smugglers with the help of local influential people are engaged in the heinous act.

## 2556 vie for 70 posts of primary school teachers

**FENI, July 8:** A total of 2,556 applicants have appeared in the written tests for 70 posts of government primary school teachers to be appointed in different thanas of the district, reports BSS.

The written test was held on June 27 at Feni Government College and Feni Government Pilot High School centres. Seventy posts of government primary school teachers are now vacant in Feni district, an official source said.

## 20 houses gutted in Jamalpur

**JAMALPUR, July 8:** Some 20 houses of 13 families at a village in Sarishabari thana were burnt to ashes on Sunday, reports UNB.

Originating from the house of Hossain Ali of the village, the fire burnt the adjacent houses including valuables worth about Tk 4 lakh. Fire fighters from nearby station brought the fire under control after one and a half hours frantic efforts. TNO of Sarishabari thana visited the spot.

## New holiday schedule hailed

**FARIDPUR, July 8:** Bangladesh Ministerial Karmachari Union, Faridpur branch Friday hailed the recent decision of the government making two-day weekly holiday, reports BSS.

Amal Datta and Adhir Podder in a statement here said that the newly introduced weekly holiday schedule and office timing would definitely increase efficiency, productivity and dynamism in office work. They said that two-day holiday system will bring down public expenditure for telephone, electricity and incidental heads. They said the new system will enable them to give more attention to family affairs and help in social engagements.

## PIB training course concludes

**COMILLA, July 8:** A 5-day basic training course for reporters, organised by Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB), concluded here on June 29 at Comilla Diabetic Association auditorium, reports BSS.

Twenty reporters of local and national dailies and news medias participated in the course. Zahurul Huq Dulal, President, Comilla Press Club presided over the inaugural session.

## Minor girl killed in road mishap

**JHENIDAH, July 8:** A minor girl was killed in a road mishap near here recently, police said, reports BSS.

Yasmin, 8, of village Laodia under the sadar thana was run over by a Jessore-bound truck at Laodia on Jhenidah-Khulna highway. A case was filed in Jhenidah Police Station but none was arrested in this connection.



CHANDPUR: The river Meghna has devoured a large area of Haimchar thana in the district recently. — Star photo

## Meghna erosion threatens Chandpur Irrigation Project

From Shirin Akhter

**CHANDPUR, July 8:** Chandpur Irrigation Project, one of the biggest irrigation projects of Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB), has been threatened by erosion of the river Meghna.

The irrigation project is situated at Haimchar, eight kilometres south of Chandpur town. According to BWDB sources, Chandpur Irrigation Project was constructed in 1978 at a cost of about Tk one hundred crore with an embankment of 220 square miles and covering an area of 1,20,000 acres of land. The project covers the land of Chandpur, Haimchar, Faridganj of Chandpur district and Laxmipur, Raipur of Laxmipur district.

Accordingly about 75,000 acres of land are brought every

year under cultivation of High Yielding Variety (HYV) of crops. WDB officials told this correspondent that Chandpur Irrigation Project embankment now stands on 60 metres from the river Meghna at Haimchar thana. At the advent of rainy season erosion of the river Meghna has taken a serious turn threatening the entire Haimchar bazar. About two

third areas of Haimchar bazar have already been eroded. All six unions are under serious threat of erosion of the Meghna. The unions are Gazipur, Ulgidurgapur (north), Haimchar, Nilkamal, Charbhairabi and South Ugi.

Erosion in the area is continuing alarmingly for a month. The turbulent Meghna has so far eroded about 2,000

square feet of land. As a result about 300 families have been badly affected. About one hundred families have taken shelter on the embankment of Chandpur Irrigation Project.

Erosion has been continuing on the bank of the river Meghna from Charbhairabi to Haimchar, about three kilometre area.

WDB constructed an embankment at a cost of Tk 40 lakh along the bank of Haimchar bazar last year. Within a year the aforementioned protection embankment has been eroded. If the erosion continues, Chandpur Irrigation Project will shortly be eroded. As a result the entire project area and crops will be damaged.

Syed Moazzem Hossain, Chairman, BWDB, recently vis-

ited the affected areas of Haimchar.

He expressed his great concern about the situation. It may be mentioned that in 1990 BWDB suggested a protection embankment at Haimchar bazar at a cost of Tk 3 crore 45 lakh. The embankment could not be implemented due to fund constraint. Fazlul Haque Sarker, General Secretary, Bangladesh Awami League, Chandpur unit told in a press conference at Chandpur Press Club that erosion at Haimchar was very alarming. The Tk 100 crore Chandpur Irrigation Project may collapse any moment. So he urged the govt to save Haimchar thana and the irrigation project from the erosion of the river Meghna as early as possible.

## 8 shops of Kashipur bazar looted

From Our Correspondent

**JESSORE, July 8:** A number of dacoities were committed at Kashipur bazar under Jhinkargacha thana in the district on Saturday night and valuables worth Taka six lakh were looted.

According to witnesses, a gang of armed dacoits numbering about 25 raided the bazar and looted away a total number of eight shops one by one and decamped with booty by blasting several hand bombs.

The owners of looted shops are: Shadhan, Azizur Abu Taher, Meher Ali, Mohammad Ali, Abbas Ali, Ayub Munshi and Abdul Gafor.

Earlier, the gang of dacoits caught hold eight members of a local club, while they were playing cards there. They tied three night guards of the bazar and threatened them not to shout.

According to reports, police reached the place of occurrence the next day. None was arrested till filing of this report.

When contacted the local people also informed that a group of outlawed party activists were extorting money from people keeping them hostage for a long time. The law and order situation has also deteriorated in the thana recently, they informed further.

## JP workers' agitation

**Kazi Zafar fails to appear in court**

From Our Correspondent

**KHULNA, July 8:** Former prime minister Kazi Zafar Ahmed could not appear before the Special Judge's court here on Sunday due to agitation by the supporters of Jatija Party (JP).

Kazi Zafar is facing trial in a case filed against him in Digholia thana accusing him of misappropriating 600 metric tons of wheat given for the construction of a hospital on his land in 1989.

## SKOP barricades road in Ctg

**CHITTAGONG, July 8:** Traffic to and from the port city of Chittagong was disrupted partially as the Chittagong unit of SKOP enforced a three-hour road barricade programme from 9 am Monday reports UNB.

The Samik Karmachari Oikya Parishad put up barricades at three points — the approach of Kaptai Road, and Oxygen and Cement crossing in Bandar thana — to realise its eight-point demand.

Their demands include withdrawal of the government decision to privatise the public sector industries and declaration of a national minimum wage.



KUSHIA: Artists of local Lalon Academy and local Shilpakala Academy enthralled the audience of Calcutta and Nadia districts in West Bengal recently. They performed there at the invitation of West Bengal Government. — Star photo

## Reexcavation of derelict ponds to help solve fish scarcity

From Fakhru Nessa

**KUSHIA, July 8:** Acute scarcity of fish has been prevailing throughout the district for the last one month.

The pisciculture in the district has been badly affected due to massive siltation in the rivers Ganges and Gori and in different canals and water bodies.

Meanwhile, unplanned use to chemical fertilizer and insecticide in crop fields has also affected the growth of different kinds of fish. On the other hand, hundreds of fishermen in the district have been facing numerous problems including shortage of funds and price hike of fishing materials.

Earlier, different kinds of fish were available in abundance in rivers, ponds and other water bodies of the district. But now the situation has become quite opposite due to indiscriminate fishing by non-professionals.

According to some fishermen, the existence of professional fishermen is at stake now. Some of them have already left their profession while others migrated to other places for their survival.

Another reason for scarcity of fish is indiscriminate catching of fish fry in different parts of the district defying the government ban. The government has banned catching of fish fry below nine inches all over the country with a view to increasing fish production. According to witnesses, a huge quantity of different types of fish fries are being sold in the markets of sadar thana, Bheramara, Mirpur, Kumarkhali, Khoksa and Daulat-

pur thanas before the nose of the members of law enforcing agencies.

The matter had been brought to the notice of Fisheries Department on several occasions, but no measures have yet been taken.

Fish was once available abundantly in the bar and beel areas of Bheramara, Kumarkhali, Mirpur and the sadar thanas, but due to lack of initiative fish production has decreased in the district alarmingly. The local elite have urged the concerned authorities to take up a massive scheme to make the district self-sufficient in fish production.

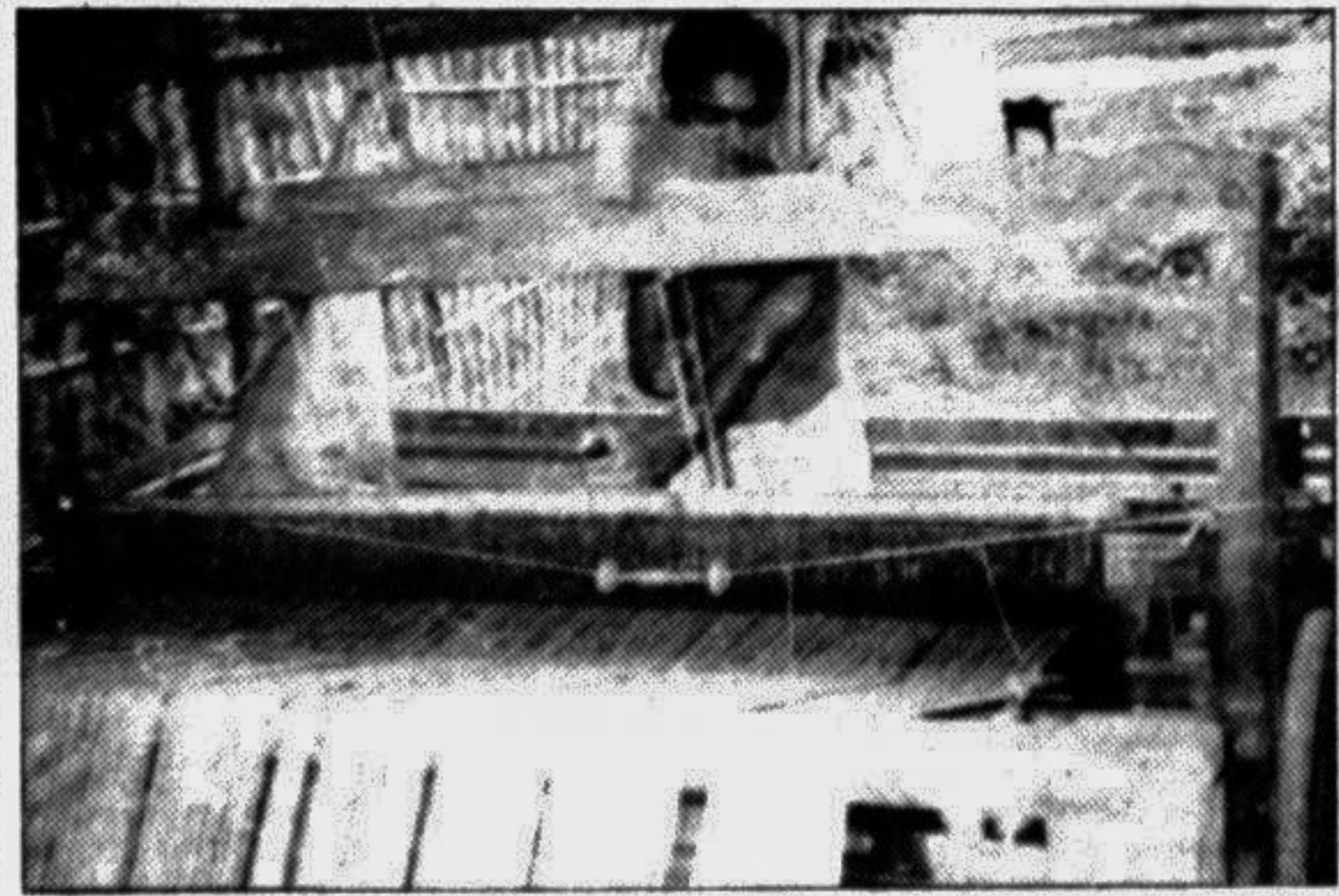
It has been learnt that about 6,000 ponds in different parts of the district have been lying uncultivated. Local people said

that about 50 per cent of the ponds in the area have been silted and dried up due to lack of maintenance. A large number of ponds are also covered with water hyacinths hampering fish cultivation.

Experts say, 7,000 metric tons of fish can be produced annually if these ponds were cultivated in a proper way.

The authorities should take schemes for reexcavation of silted ponds and introduce scientific methods of fish production in the district, they added.

The local people have urged the concerned authorities to come forward with short term loan for reexcavation of derelict ponds for fish cultivation. Arrangement should also be made to impart training on pisciculture as well.



PABNA: A weaver working in a handloom factory of Shahzadpur in the district. — Star photo

## ICS, Bar Assoc's assurance

## Help restore campus peace: RU VC

**RAJSHAH, July 8:** The leaders of Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) on Monday assured the Rajshahi University Vice-Chancellor Prof Abdul Khaleque that it would extend whole-hearted cooperation to the authorities for completion of admission procedures of the first year honours classes of the university, reports BSS.

This was expressed when a delegation of ICS led by vice president of its central committee Motiur Rahman Akhand called on RU Vice Chancellor, according to a university press release.

A delegation of Rajshahi Bar Association led by its President Advocate Abul Kashem and General Secretary Advocate Ekramul Rasul also called on the VC and discussed with him the prevailing situation on the campus. The bar association leaders expressed their support and whole-hearted cooperation for the peaceful completion of admission procedures of the first year honours classes.

Earlier, the VC sought cooperation of all concerned including ICS and the bar association to help restore peaceful academic atmosphere on the cam-

pus. Meanwhile, a meeting of the admission committee of Rajshahi University was held with the VC in the chair. The meeting decided that the authorities would receive the primary admission applications on department basis of first year honours classes for the session 1996-97 from July 13 to July 31, 1997.

The admission tests would start from August 9 next, the press release added.

## Anniversary of death

By Staff Correspondent

The fourth anniversary of death of Khandaker Azizur Rahman, a former Member of Parliament (MP) and chairman of Gaibandha Pourashava, will be observed in Gaibandha today (Wednesday).

On the occasion a *millad mehful* will be held at the deceased's Gaibandha residence.

## Chudanga Newsletter

From Our Correspondent

**CHUDANGA, July 8:** Illegal arms trade has become rampant along south western part of the country including greater Kushtia district recently.

Alleged negligence on the part of border security personnel, easy availability of Indian arms at a cheap rate and easy communication from Calcutta to different parts of Bangladesh border area have attributed to flourishing of this illegal business. Smugglers of both India and Bangladesh have been engaged in this trade due to high profit and prompt sale of the goods.

The arms which are usually seized by police and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) in Bangladesh territory in abandoned condition are all made in Calcutta. These are pistol revolver and shutter guns. Even sten guns and SLRs have also been seized recently in Daulatpur thana during a gun fight between police and armed terrorists.

All the arms are reported to be Calcutta made. It has been alleged that some persons of law enforcing agencies and border security forces are helping those arms traders in exchange of huge monetary gain.

## Prices of essentials up

Prices of essential commodities at Alamdanga have increased manifold.

Mutton is being sold at Taka 110 to 120 per kg, but its price was below one hundred a month back. Beef per kg is being sold at Tk 65 whereas it was being sold at Tk. 40 to Tk 45 per kg, several months back.

Similarly poultry birds are being sold at Tk 100 per kg, instead of Tk 75 per kg.

Prices of vegetables have also increased due to frequent rainfalls.

Fish has also become scarce in the markets. Scarcity of fish has been persisting as a result of drying up of rivers, ponds and other water bodies.

## Best educational instt awarded

Prizes were distributed among the best educational institutions, best teacher and best students under the auspices of "Female Education Awareness Programme", one of the component of Female Secondary School Assistant Project, in a function held at Alamdanga thana parishad auditorium recently.

Presided over by Serajul Huq Khan Thana Nirbahi Officer (TNO) Alamdanga the function was attended by Hashimuddin, Programme Officer from Dhaka

## Savar Mirza Golam Hafiz College principal held

**SAVAR, July 8:** Police Monday arrested Principal of Savar Mirza Golam Hafiz College Haroon-ur Rashid on charges of misappropriation of money and forging signature of the local thana nirbahi officer (TNO) who is also the chairman of the college, reports BSS.

Police said the principal allegedly withdrew Tk 3,36,500 from the local Janata Bank for forging the signature of the TNO.

The source said the TNO detected the forgery after he had examined the books of accounts of the bank in presence of the principal. The TNO immediately informed the Savar police who arrested the principal and seized the forged cheques and seals.

Police quoted the TNO as saying that the principal had misappropriated Tk 3,15,000 which were deposited by 324 HSC candidates as examination fees. The principal misappropriated rest of the money of the college fund.

The sources said the principal had misappropriated the amount by forging signature in 16 cheques from March 1 to May 10 this year.

## More card phone needed

Only one Card Phone installed in Darsona Poura area has become inoperative during last several months causing immense difficulties to the people.

Darsona is a bordering industrial town. The biggest Sugar Milling, Carew and Company Sugar Mills Ltd is situated here.

Darsona is also the second land port after Benapole. About one hundred and fifty Clearing and Forwarding (C&F) Agents are working here. In view of this several number of card phones are needed for the benefit of the people as well as business community.

## Veterinary hospital in bad shape

The only veterinary hospital at Damurhuda thana has been plagued with multifarious problems.

Scarcity of medicine, lack of modern equipments and shortage of doctors have frustrated the farmers.

The veterinary hospital was established in 1965 at Darsona adjacent to the local government college over one acre of land. After three decades the hospital remains in a dilapidated condition. It has not been repaired for long. As a result, the roof of the building may collapse at any time. Besides, cattleowners are being harassed when they come here with their cattle, it has been alleged. Health Assistants in absence of doctor charge an exorbitant rate from the farmers, it is alleged. All these have multiplied the miseries of cattle owners.

## 5 commit suicide in Rangpur

**RANGPUR, July 8:** Five people including two housewives allegedly committed suicide in the district recently, police said, reports UNB.

Housewife Maleka Khatoun, 30, mother of two children, allegedly committed suicide by taking poison at village Faridabad in Taraganj thana on Friday following a family feud.

Samad, 25, of Nazirdhaha village in Kaunia thana allegedly committed suicide by taking pesticides following a quarrel with his family inmates.

Another housewife Halima Khatoun, 32, of village Faridabad in Taraganj thana allegedly committed suicide by taking poison. The reason behind the suicide could not be known.

Jafurul Islam, 40, allegedly committed suicide by taking endrine on Saturday in Kalighat village in Kaunia thana. Poverty is said to be the reason behind the suicide.

Subjadul Islam, 18, of Bahadur Shing village in Kotwali thana allegedly committed suicide by taking insecticide on Friday. He became angry with his mother as she abused him over the stolen money of his elder brother.