

News snaps

Rivals clashes leave 20 hurt
SIRAJGANJ, Apr 6: More than 20 people were injured, five critically, in a series of clashes between rival groups of boatmen at Andanga in Ullahpara thana today (Sunday), reports UNB.
Of the injured Adhir, 30, Bindaban, 50, Miranjan, 25, Madhab, 10, and Dulal, 32, were admitted to Sadar Hospital with severe wounds. Police said the two groups of boatmen led by Adhir and Miranjan engaged in clash at about 11:30 am over the ownership of a spell. Later, both of them being organised attacked each other with lethal weapons and stick, which left 26 people injured. Of them, five critically wounded were chopped.

Electric tower collapsed
CHANDPUR, Apr 6: A 33-KV electric tower at Gunrajdi village in the outskirts of the town collapsed by the erosion of river Dakatia on Sunday disconnecting power in six thanas, reports UNB.
Entire areas of Hajiganj, Kochua and Shahrasti thana and some portions of Sadar, Matlab and Faridganj thanas plunged into darkness after the incident. Villagers said the tower went into the riverbed with a big bang at 4:05 pm. Bangladesh Power Development Board handed over the 20-km electric line to Hajiganj Palli Biddut Samity on October 7. But river erosion affected the tower on the line much ago. Although the matter was brought to the notice of the authorities, they remained silent mysteriously. Officials and engineers of the PBS visited the spot but the line has yet to be restored.

Sick animals being slaughtered
KURIGRAM, Apr 6: Meat dealers of nine thanas including Kurigram pourasava, are slaughtering sick animals at different hat-bazars defying the government ban, reports UNB.
Local people said the meat dealers are slaughtering animals without any test by the vets as the authorities concerned have been showing indifference to the matter since long. It is learnt that animals, including cows, goats and buffaloes are indiscriminately slaughtered here and there by meat-dealers every day instead of a four-day per week fixed by the government. Meats are being sold even in unhygienic places as there is no slaughtering place in the poura area. Local people also complained that meat dealers are slaughtering sick animals in absence of the routine check by the officials concerned.

Drug trafficking increases
SIRAJGANJ, Apr 6: Drug trafficking in northern region, including Sirajganj district, has increased alarmingly causing concern among the peace-loving people, reports UNB.
Local people alleged that the drug traffickers have developed a strong network with the collaboration of some dishonest men of the law-enforcing agencies in the border areas. Thousands of youths of the region are addicted to various drugs, including wine, hashish, pathedrin and phensidyl. The traffickers under the patronisation of some influential people are engaged in smuggling the drugs into the country through different routes.

Law & order reviewed
BHERAMARA, Apr 6: The monthly review meeting of the Kushtia district administration for the month of March was held at the conference room of Deputy Commissioner recently, reports BSS.
The meeting was presided over by Deputy Commissioner Md Abdus Salam. Matters relating to law and order in the district were discussed in the meeting.

Sanction for road construction
MEHERPUR, Apr 6: The Roads and Highways Department has sanctioned Tk 55 lakh for reconstruction of three roads in the district, reports BSS.
According to the Executive Engineer, Roads and Highways the funds will be spent for reconstruction of Meherpur-Chuadanga Road, Meherpur-Kushtia Road and Meherpur-Gangri Road. The work will be completed by June, he added.

Production target of sugar
CHUADANGA, Apr 6: Darsana Sugar Mills under Chuadanga district has produced 10,800 tonnes of sugar till March 15 in 130 days by crushing 1,46,000 tonnes of sugarcane, reports BSS.
According to mills management sources, the mills fixed up a target to produce 14,400 tonnes of sugar by crushing 1,60,000 tonnes of sugarcane in the current cane crushing season. The sources further said that the production in the mills of the current season will be continued till first week of the current month.

Oath taking ceremony
HABIGANJ, Apr 6: The oath taking ceremony of newly-elected chairman and commissioners of Nabinagar pourashabha was held at Nabinagar thana parishad auditorium recently, reports BSS.
Dewan Farid Gazi, MP, and chairman of the national committee for industrial affairs attended the ceremony as the chief guest, while Ahmed Fazlur Rashid, Deputy Commissioner, Habiganj and Musfique Hussain Chowdhury, Secretary district Awami League were the special guests. Presided over by Nazrul Islam, TNO Nabinagar the ceremony was addressed, among others, by Abdul Matin Chowdhury, president Nabinagar thana Awami League and Sayed Matur Rahman president thana BNP.

College teacher killed
THAKURGAON, Apr 6: A college teacher was killed and another person was injured seriously in an accident on Dinajpur-Thakurgaon highway recently, reports BSS.
According to local sources, Azizul Islam, 35, a lecturer of Dhukurghat College in Birol thana of Dinajpur district and his companion Enamul Haque, 35, were coming from Dinajpur to Thakurgaon on a motorcycle. Suddenly an unlicensed tractor hit the motorcycle in front of Pali Biddut Office near Thakurgaon town causing instantaneous death of Azizul Islam and injuring Enamul Haque seriously who was sent to Rangpur Medical College Hospital for treatment.

341 schemes under TR programme
CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Apr 6: District relief and disaster management department has taken up 341 schemes with an allocation of 5,575 tonnes of wheat under Test Relief (TR) programmes in the current dry season, reports BSS.
According to an official source, the schemes included development of different educational institutions, repairing of roads and earth work on playgrounds. The schemes will generate employment opportunities to a large number of male and female workers especially of the rural areas.

All-party public meeting held
FENI, Apr 6: An all-party public meeting was held here on April 3 at Dharnapur High School maidan in Phulgazi thana here, reports BSS.
The meeting was arranged to resist terrorist activities, extortion and mugging. Joyal Abedin Hazari, MP, and member of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Youth and Sports, was the chief guest at the meeting, presided over by Dr Abbas Ahmed. The chief guest said his efforts to resist terrorist activities, extortion and mugging will continue. He sought cooperation of all in this respect.

Meeting of Dashmina BCE
PATUAKHALI, Apr 6: State Minister for Textiles A K M Jahangir Hussain has said the present government is determined to implement the ideals and spirit of the Liberation War to build the country as 'Sonar Bangla' as dreamt by Bangabandhu, reports BSS.
Addressing as chief guest a meeting of Dashmina Chhatra League and Jubo League at the local college field on April 3 the state minister called upon the youths to learn the real history of Liberation War to make Bangladesh an exploitation-free and prosperous state. The state minister said the government has taken all-out measures to curb terrorism and ensure overall welfare of the people. He urged the AL leaders and workers to work for strengthening the party base at grassroots level.

Clash leaves girl child dead
SHERPUR, Apr 6: A girl child was killed and three other members of a family were injured in a clash over demarcation of land at Beparipara in the town here on Wednesday, reports UNB.
Police and witnesses said Anwar and his men attacked neighbour Afzal following an altercation over the demarcation and injured him, his wife and two daughters seriously. They were rushed to the Sadar Hospital where one year old Asa succumbed at midnight.

Farmer's daughter trafficked to India
RAJSHAHI, Apr 6: A poor farmer of Natore district alleged that women traffickers took away his teenage daughter to India in the name of giving her a lucrative job in the town, reports UNB.
Speaking to the journalists at the press club here, Babar Ali of Bagatpara thana also demanded trial of the accused. He said Taslimuddin of Paka village of the same thana along with Hayat Ali of Kandaguchha village in Puthia thana allured his 15-year-old daughter Khodeja Khatun in the name of providing work at a residential house in Rajshahi town on March 17, 1998.



JHENIDAH: Boro cultivation is threatened here due to ongoing drought. Photo shows a Boro field with many cracks near Jhenidah Cadet College. The cracks have been developed due to lack of water. — Star photo by Delwar Kabir

Reign of terror prevails in Kushtia, Jessore

By Staff Correspondent

A reign of terror has been prevailing in Kushtia and Jessore now.

Our Kushtia Correspondent says: Incidents of snatching, hijacking, dacoity, stabbing and killing are day to day affairs here.

People have lost faith in police force as they failed to curb the criminal activities and failed to arrest the notorious killers, miscreants and extortionists. Some killers and terrorists are allegedly moving freely, but police do not arrest them on time. Resentment and discontent against the police force have been sown in the minds of the people.

Several murders were committed in the town during the last couple of weeks, but police were not active to nab the accused, especially the killers for reasons best known to them.

Three persons were killed in three separate incidents in the last few days. Abul Kalam, 23, a degree examinee, son of Hossain Ali of village Gopalpur in Sadar thana was hacked to death by his rivals on April 1.

Ziaul Islam, 23, son of Sirajul Islam of village Boruchara in Khoksa thana was seriously injured in a clash by his rivals. He was admitted in Kushtia General Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries on April 1.

Amjad alias Dhepa, 35, a terrorist of Daulatpur thana was killed when his own bomb blasted in his hand at his village home Andaha on March 31. The victim abducted Mahbub of village Shahapur. He was rescued by police. Police also recovered one pistol from the house where Mahbub was kept confined.

All the bodies were sent to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy.

In another incident, a gang of armed terrorists forced their entry into the house of Nur Islam of village Jhenidah in Bheramara thana on the night of March 23. On gun point they raped a mother of two children and wife of Nur Islam and looted Taka 10 thousand cash and gold ornaments. Nur Islam has been working as a labourer in Dhaka and his wife lives there with her two deaf and dumb sons.

On getting information Nur Islam returned and wanted a salary from the village headmen. But it was not held.

On March 30 Nur Islam filed a case in Bheramara police station accusing Jodi, Rajan, Montu and Mabun of the area.

None has yet been arrested in this connection till filing of this report.

In another incident a decomposed body of a young man was recovered from Chandra-pada field of Alampur union in Sadar thana on April 2. Police source said that Khosru, 25, son of Kafiluddin of village Paschim Abdapur in Sadar thana had been missing for the last eight days. The recovered body has been identified by the local people as Khosru. Police sent the body to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy. Police said that he had been strangled to death.

A case has been filed with Kushtia Police Station. Reason of the murder could not be known. None has been arrested in this connection.

In another incident body of Rani, 16, daughter of Rabul of Hatas Haripur union of Sadar thana was recovered. She was kidnapped a few days back.

Her body was recovered from the river Gorai on March 26.

Police source said that the victim had an affair with Montu, 22, son of Muktar Pramanik of the same village. But the family members did not like this. On March 24 Montu

along with his friends kidnapped Rani from her house. Within 48 hours her body was seen floating in the river.

A murder case has been filed with Kotwali Police Station in this connection.

None has been arrested in this connection. On April 3, there occurred a severe gun fight and looting in Kushtia Housing Estate area between two rival groups for teasing a girl. The groups of Mullah Teghoria and Housing Estate exchanged hundred rounds of fire in the battle in presence of police force. It is alleged.

Chase and counter chase between two groups continued for hours together and four shops belonging to Mollah Tegoria group and several houses of Housing Estate areas have been looted and ransacked.

About 40 persons have been injured in the clash.

In another incident Selim was attacked by his rivals at Battail on April 3 due to past enmity, it is alleged.

The victim was coming from his home to join at his work place at Rumargora when he was attacked and received stab injuries. He has been admitted in Kushtia General Hospital in a critical condition.

UNB from Jessore reports: Law and order situation in the district has deteriorated further due to the failure of the authorities to arrest the criminals.

Local sources said police could not even arrest those responsible for the bombing and killing at Udichi conference though many days have passed since the incident.

They alleged that law enforcing agency men remain silent about the increasing crimes and terrorist acts including rape. The crimes intensified further following submission of resignation letter by a Sub-Inspector over deterioration of law and order and violation of human rights situation.

Four people were murdered just after 10 days of bomb explosion at the Udichi conference.

The victims were: BNP leader Litu of Chowgachha thana, Monirul Islam of Bagdanga, Jahon Ali of Narengali village in Sadar thana and Sahmsur Rahman of Jhikargachha thana.

Aminur Rahman, 22, and Hasanur Rahman, 20, were killed while they were allegedly making bomb on March 12. Four people were also injured in the incident.

In another incident, snatchers robbed off Tk 2.72 lakh from one Asaduzzaman at gunpoint in broad daylight.

Armed assailants also abducted SSC examinee Ishrat Jahon from in front of the Muslim Academy when she came out of the examination hall.

In Jhikargachha thana, a girl was deflowered by a miscreant recently.

Four people received wounds while making bombs in the town on March 16. Police arrested them from hospital beds where they were undergoing treatment.

Local people said they heard the sound of bomb explosions in different parts here in every night.

The known criminals are roaming around in front of the police, but they are not being arrested due to mysterious reasons. As a result terrorist activities are on alarming rise.

Local people expressed concern over the deteriorating law and order and urged the authorities to take proper measures to ensure security of their life and property.

Drought becomes Boro growers' bane

By Staff Correspondent

The persisting drought has become Boro growers' bane in the districts of Natore and Jhenidah.

Our Natore correspondent says: Uncertainty looms over the prospect of Boro cultivation this year in Natore and its neighboring areas due to the ongoing drought.

"We are now anxiously waiting for rain which is the need of the hour for our Boro paddy," said a number of Boro growers of Borovita village in sadar thana. Gopalpur village in Lalpur, Nishchintapur village in Boraigram and Gurudaspur thana.

According to experts and field supervisors in Agriculture Extension Department, more than 65 per cent of Boro crop fields in the district have already been affected by the onslaught of drought. Most of the croplands have dried up and developed cracks for want of water. In many areas, Boro plants are turning yellowish and dying.

Agri-experts and farmers said drought may leave a negative impact on our crops if it does not rain within the Bangla month of 'Chaitra'. The Boro fields in this region have not received a single drop of rain over the last five months. As a result, Boro plants on vast tracts of land are drying up causing grave concern among the farmers. The farmers have feared the crops would also dry up in the fields as it has become almost impossible for them to irrigate their lands. The farmers are facing tremendous problems in keeping their plants alive due to drought and lack of electricity for running their irrigation pumps.

Power Development Board (PDB) sources said that only three to five megawatt of power are being supplied from the national grid against the daily demand of 15 megawatts. The worst sufferers of lopsidedness are perhaps the pally Biddut Samity officials who are passing their days in threats of agitated farmers.

Natore Pally Biddut Samity (NPBS-1) is now getting 1.5 to two megawatts of power against their demand of eight megawatts. The condition is same for NPBS-2.

The underground water levels have gone down by 30 to 40 feet. As a result, about three thousand shallow tubewells in six thanas of the district have to resink by seven to 10 feet down.

About 60,000 hectares of land have been brought under Boro cultivation this season though AED fixed the cultivation target on 51,038 hectares.

Our Jhenidah Correspondent says: The farmers here are passing their days in tension apprehending heavy loss of Boro paddy.

According to the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), there was a target to bring 50,300 hectares of land under Boro farming in Jhenidah sadar thana, Sailkupa, Harinakundul, Kaliganj, Kotchandpur and Mohespur thanas. But the farmers have cultivated Boro on over 65,000 hacters of land to make up the deficiency caused by the deluge last year. But the dream of the farmers is not likely to come into reality as there is no rainfall for the last four months.

When this correspondent visited some Boro farming areas of Jhenidah, Sailkupa and Harinakundul thanas he saw cracks on Boro fields almost everywhere. The plants have started to become yellowish for want of rainfall.

Ganges Kobadak (GK) Project authorities supplied water in a vast area of Sailkupa and Harinakundul thanas and a portion of Jhenidah thana. But they have failed to supply sufficient water for their limitations, alleged some farmers.

When contacted GK authorities under Water Development Board (WDB) said that they had been trying their best in this regard.

Maximum shallow tubewells (STW) in the district have failed to provide sufficient water supply in Boro fields as the water levels have fallen sharply in the district and adjoining areas this season.

Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) Jhenidah said, they have been suggesting the farmers to draw down STWs so that the farmer could be provided with irrigation water for their fields.

The farmers installed their STWs at a minimum distance which threw them in troubles as STWs could not provide sufficient water for the fields, DAE officials said.

A highly placed official of DAE in Dhaka said, the water level of Jhenidah and surrounding districts has fallen sharply which is alarming. He said the water level is falling every week in the areas and if the trend continues for five to six weeks more, no water will flow through STWs.

When this correspondent visited some Boro farming areas of Jhenidah, Sailkupa and Harinakundul thanas he saw cracks on Boro fields almost everywhere. The plants have started to become yellowish for want of rainfall.

A dejected teacher seeks justice

by Staff Correspondent

A teacher at the Bilchappara Dakhili Madrasa at Govindadashi village under Bhuapur thana was sacked two months after he joined the post because the Tangail District Education Officer (DEO) for regularising his salary. The DEO, in his refusal note, said Rahman could not continue in his post as he did not secure higher grades in his national level examinations. The TNO admitted when the post was advertised in the national newspapers there was no requirement for higher grades. "The entire thing depends on the DEO," Bhuapur TNO said.

The DEO of Tangail, Abul Kashem denied the grade factor in sacking Mofizul and said he was not convinced that the recruitment was fair at all. He said in his note to the madrasa recruitment committee, he had asked them to 'do the recruitment according to procedure'. Kashem alleged that the marks given to Mofizul by 'some members of the recruitment panel' were not proportionate with other members in the panel. "I became suspicious and acted accordingly," he said.

The recruitment committee did not contest my allegations and they replaced Mofizul with the second man in line," he said.

"Now Mofizul has gone to the court of justice in Tangail and we will wait for the verdict," the DEO of Tangail said.

The clash took place at about 7 pm as a sequel to an exchange of hot words between two boys in the morning.

The deceased Abdul Khaliq, 45, is the secretary of Kalaruka Union BNP. Of the injured six persons with bullet wounds had been admitted into Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital while others were given first aid.

A police party had been deployed in the village. Post-mortem of the body was done after filing of a case with Chhatrak thana. The village had been deserted apprehending major police action, local sources said.

Tense situation has been prevailing in the area.

Rivals' clash leaves one dead
From Staff Correspondent
SYLHET, Apr 6: One person was shot dead while 20 others sustained injuries, six with bullet injuries in an armed clash between rival groups of villagers at Nurullapur of Kalaruka union in Chhatrak thana of Sunamganj district on Sunday night.

The clash took place at about 7 pm as a sequel to an exchange of hot words between two boys in the morning.

The deceased Abdul Khaliq, 45, is the secretary of Kalaruka Union BNP. Of the injured six persons with bullet wounds had been admitted into Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital while others were given first aid.

A police party had been deployed in the village. Post-mortem of the body was done after filing of a case with Chhatrak thana. The village had been deserted apprehending major police action, local sources said.

Tense situation has been prevailing in the area.

4 girls rescued from traffickers at Ctg airport
From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Apr 6: Four minor girls were rescued at Chittagong M A Hannan International Airport today while being trafficked to Dubai, police said.

The girls were identified as Kohinor, 10, Sakina, 11, Shahena, 11, and Rawshan, 14.

Police arrested one Shajahan and Salma Begum in this connection.

The victims were brought from Lalkhan Bazar area by the traffickers promising them jobs to Dubai, police said.

Immigration police at the airport unveiled the racket when challenged the traffickers at 9 am today.

Woman gets 14 years' RI for smuggling
SIRAJGANJ, Apr 6: A woman was sentenced to 14 years' rigorous imprisonment in absentia in a smuggling case, court sources here said today, reports UNB.

She was also fined Tk 2000, in default, to suffer more two months simple imprisonment.

According to the prosecution, the accused Achia Begum, 37, wife of Khorsheed Alam of village Char Mirerbagh in Keraniganj thana, Dhaka, was arrested by BDR patrol team from a Dhaka-bound bus at Sirajganj crossing in Ullahpara thana on September 13, 1994.

BDR jawans seized smuggled Indian saree worth about Tk 28,400 from her possession during the operation.

'Impact Zone' around Sundarbans
KHULNA, Apr 6: An 'Impact Zone' is being created covering 20 kilometres around the Sundarbans to protect the biodiversity of the world's largest mangrove forest, reports APB.

The Zone will cover 17 thanas. These are: Batiaghata, Dakop, Boira, Paikgacha, Ashasuni, Kaliganj, Shaymnagar, Moraleganj, Sharankhola, Mongla, Bhandaria, Rampal, Mothbaria, Nesarabad, Barguna, Patharghata and Bamna.

It is being created under the Sundarbans Bio Diversity Protection Project, financed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), official sources said.



JHENIDAH: One young man trying in vain to pump out water from a tubewell at village Hatfaziapur in Sailkupa thana. — Star photo