Newssnaps

Maize farming gains popularity From Our Correspondent

MAGURA, Apr 13: Maize cultivation is gaining popularity gradually in the district and its adjoining areas. According to the Agriculture Extension Department (AED). maize is one of 'kharif' crops which is cultivated in the sandy soil of the shoal areas. Bhoja, Makai, and Binne are the main varieties. High Yeilding Variety (HYV) of maize is also introduced recently. Usually it is harvested in August and September.

Firewood being used in brickfields

From Our Correspondent GOPALGANJ, Apr 13: Despite government ban on firewood it is extensively used in the brick fields.

There are over 40 brickfields in five thanas here. Most of those have no licence or VAT registration. The government has fixed Taka 60,000 as VAT for very brickfield since 1992. When contacted some brickfield owners said that they did not need any valid licence in carrying out the business as they are engaged in underhand deals with the concerned officials.

Bumper output of Boro expected

From Our Correspondent KURIGRAM, Apr 13: A bumper production of Boro crop is ex-

pected this year in the district. According to the Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Department (DAE), a target of producing 1,24,094 metric tons of Boro has been fixed from 50,692 hectares of land during this season. Of them, 48,056 hectares of land were brought under

Property gutted

From Our Correspondent

cultivation of Hybrid variety of Boro.

MOULVIBAZAR, Apr 13: Property worth about Taka 5 lakh were gutted in Chowmuhana area of Shamsernagar under Kamalgoni thana recently.

The fire originated from a tea stall engulfing three shops of Muhit Mia, Md Wahid Mia and Md Musabbir Mia. The fire which lingered for about an hour. The local people after frantic efforts brought it under control. Fire Brigade had reached the spot after the fire was brought under control, witnesses said. However, there was no human casualty.

76 shops gutted in Bhandaria

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Apr 13: A total of 76 business establishments including six dwelling houses were burnt to the ashes incurring a loss of nearly ten crore taka in a devastating fire at the Bhandaria Bander area of Pirojpur district recently.

According to witnesses, fire originated form a shop at the eastern side of the bazar at about 2 a.m engulfed nearby shops within a short time. Fire gutted 11 goldsmith shops, four drug stores and stationary and grocery shops.

Clash over land

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA. Apr 13: Twenty-five persons including three women were injured when a bloody clash ensued between two rival groups recently at Amla Ghoshpara in Mirpur thana over possession of a disputed land.

The seriously injured include Manzira Khatun, 25, wife of Razzak, Rozina Khatun, 25, wife of Azizul Huq, Amina Khatun, 70 wife of Erfan, Azizul Haq, 35, Nasir, 27 Saidul, 25, Badsha, 15, Asadul, 18, Jahan, 32, Salam, 24, Akkas, 29, Jamal, 37, Rafiq, 18, Mokles 36 and Happy. 8. They have been admitted in Mirpur Health Complex.

Police rushed there and brought the situation under control. Both the parties have filed cases against each other.

New branch post office opens

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Apr 13: A new branch post office was opened at Moulvir Char hat in Char Bhadrasan thana on Wednesday. Local member of parliament (MP) advocate Mosarraf Hossain formally inaugurated the branch post office at a function attended by local elite there. Advocate Mosarraf Hossain emphasised on the need of postal service and urged the people to co-operate with the postal department to uphold its service.

Two dacoities in a week

From Our Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, Apr 13: Two dacoities were committed in two houses here in a week recently.

A gang of armed dacoits raided the house of Haridas Mandal of village Nayanpur in Bhaluka thana at dead of night and looted away cash and gold ornaments amounting to Taka 1.5 lakh. Another dacoity was committed at the house of Azmat Ali of village Jashara in Gafargaon thana. The dacoits entered into the house by breaking open the door and looted away cash and goods worth about Tk 30,000.

Storm lashes 5 Rangpur thanas

From Our Correspondent RANGPUR. Apr 13: A cyclonic storm lashed parts of Sadar, Mithapukur, Badargonj, Kaunia and Pirgacha thanas on April 7, causing a colossal damage to houses, standing crops and

Evewitness said, the storm had caused a great devastations to 10,000 dwelling houses and standing crops on about 15 thousand acres of land. The storm hit hundreds of families who are now living in an untold misery in absence of government help, it has been alleged.

Massive jute farming

MEHERPUR, Apr 13: A total of 10,000 hectares will be brought under jute cultivation in Meherpur district in the

current season, reports BSS.

Meherpur Agriculture Extension Department sources said, of the total land some 8,500 hectares will be brought under High Yielding Variety cultivation, while 1,500 hectares under local variety. The production target has been fixed at 1,15,000 bales of raw jute in Meherpur district.

10 houses, 18 shops gutted

SIRAJGANJ, Apr 13: At least 10 dwelling houses and 18 shops were gutted when a devastating fire broke out recently at Enayetpur bazaar in Belkuchi thana, 30-kilometre from here, local fire service sources said, reports BSS.

According to Fire Service sources, electric short circuit was attributed to be the origin of fire. Member of Parliament of Sirajgonj 6 Abdul Latif Biswas visited the partially burnt Enayetpur bazaar and assured the victim of possible assistance.

Uplift schemes undertaken

KISHOREGANJ, Apr 13: District Relief and Disaster Management Department has taken up 707 schemes with an allocation of 1,200 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. The schemes will generate employment opportunities for a large number of male and female workers. specially of the rural areas.

Enough groundwater for irrigation

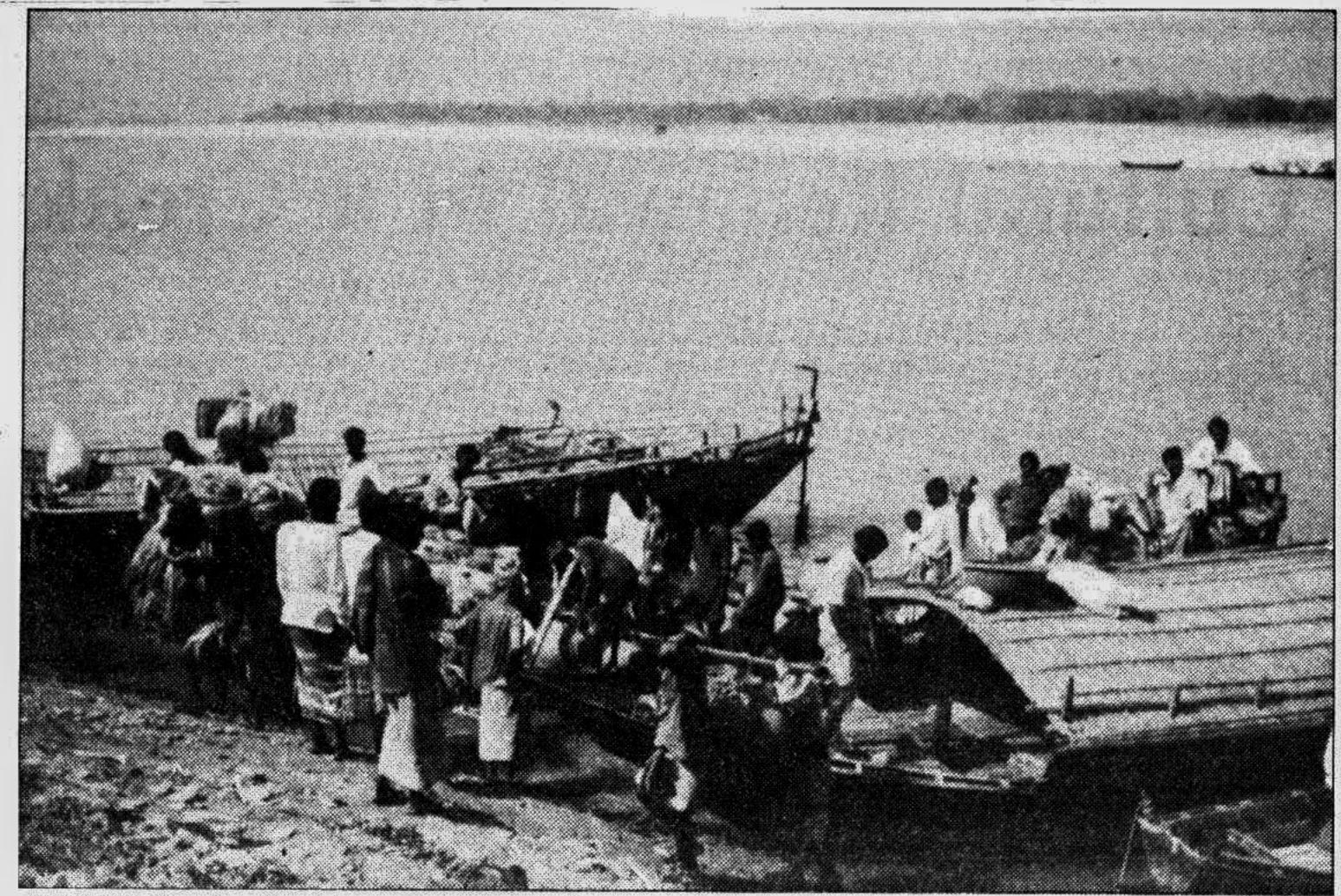
THAKURGAON, Apr 13: A geologist of Water Development Board says there is enough groundwater for irrigation in Panchagarh and Thakurgaon districts, reports APB.

Farmers in the two districts often say, their shallow tubewells fail to lift water at places as water levels have gone down. But Mizanur Rahman says, the quantity of groundwater in the two districts is so great that more than one thousand deep tubewells can be sunk in Thakurgaon district alone. The groundwater is 'easily accessible" he says. The two districts, situated at the foothills of the Himalayas, have such favourable geological condition that whatever quantity of groundwater is lifted, it is replenished in the rainy season.

Peace meeting at Dagonbhuiyan

FENI, Apr 13: A peace meeting with the participation of all political parties was held at Dagonbhuiyan Thana Council Auditorium on Saturday to stop political violence and terrorism in the areas, reports APB.

The meeting was held at the initiative of Obaidul Quader, State Minister for Sports and Cultural Affairs, and chaired by him. Thana unit President Mohammad Hossain and General Secretary Kamal Uddin Master of the ruling Awami League, Vice President Mahmudul Haque of BNP, JSD President Ahsan Ullah Bhuiyan, Jamaat Ameer Nurnabi Dulal and BSD leader Faruoue attended the meeting. ADC Mujibur Rahman, ASP Abdul Momen and seven UP chairmen of the thana were also present at the peace meeting.



MAGURA: The river Gorai is now flowing normally as its water level has gone up in this dry season. This picture was taken recently from the river ghat at Langalbandh bazaar in Sripur thana here. Commodities like jute and molasses are being loaded in a boat for marketting to some other places. The river dried up in the last season. Engine boats could not ply at that time. - Star photo by Monojit Kumar Das

11,000 cases pending in Khulna CIMI's court

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA. Apr 13: Over 11,000 out of 30,000 cases filed with the five police stations during last five years are still pending in the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM).

They are yet to be disposed of due to shortage of necessary

According to a reliable source of CMM's court, a total of 45,423 GR and CR cases were filed in three courts during last five years. A total of 4,283 out of 6,879

cases were disposed of in 1994. while 4,014 out of 6,069 were disposed of in 1995 in the courts. The source further said that 3,423 out of 5,753 cases were

were disposed of. A total of 30,217 cases were put up in the CMM's court for trial during last five years, of which 18,826 were disposed of. Of the cases disposed, accused of 11,199 cases were awarded punishments of different nature, while accuseds of the remaining

7,627 cases were acquitted.

Legal complications, lack of evidences and stay orders by higher courts are the causes for delaying the process of trial. A total of 15,217 cases were sent to higher courts in last five years, while deposition of 13.812 cases were accepted.

A total of 27,445 warrants of arrest issued from the five police stations of the metropolitried in 1996 and 3,459 out of tan city are yet to be executed. 5,860, cases were tried in 1997. It is quite impossible for the In 1998, 3,647 out of 5,659 cases court to dispose of these huge

number of cases with only three magistrates as they do not get enough time due to manifold reasons including frequent hartals and VIP duties.

APB from Chuadanga says: About 600 cases are pending with courts here.

According to court sources, a total of 895 cases were registered with courts in the last two vears.

These include 214 sessions cases, 337 special tribunal cases, 16 special cases, 105 foujdari appeal cases, 131 foujdari revision cases and 92 women and children oppression cases. Out of these, only 299 cases have been disposed of.

The main reasons for the large number of pending cases are unwillingness of witnesses to appear in court, incomplete

police investigation and delay in getting autopsy reports. This creates prolonged suffering to both plaintiffs and defendants. In many cases it has been seen that the defendant, after suffering two years of hajat, has been given only six months' imprisonment.

Criminals accused in cases, come out on bail and are moving freely and doing crimes because of delay in disposal of Because of intimidation.

witnesses are most reluctant to give evidence in the foujdari cases which deal with violence. Witnesses are often given death threats.

Witnesses often retract their statements. It is also alleged that police extract false statements from the witnesses under duress.

Diarrhoea in 3 dists

By Staff Correspondent

Diarrhoea has broken out in three districts recently due to acute crisis of drinking water. Our Staff Correspondent

from Barisal reports: Diarrhoea claimed 14 lives attacking nearly one thosuand people in two thana areas of Patuakhali district during last

two months. According to Civil Surgeon Office in Patuakhali, due to shortage of pure drinking water diarrhoeal diseases have been broken out in the areas. Besides, salinity has increased in water of the shoal areas of Galachipa and Baufal thanas of

the district. Twenty medical teams have been formed to control the diarrhoeal situation, official sources said . The Civil Surgeon Office admitted death of 13 persons and attack of 931 people during that time. Dead victims were identified as Rina. 14, Fatema, 4, Nazrul, 28, Khokan, 26. Reshma, 2, Fulbanu, 40, Pianka, 2, Hamela, 34, Bina, 4., Hasan, 3, in Galachipa and Hanif, 7, Rashida, 9, Rabeya, 14, and another unidentified old woman of Baufal thana area.

UNB from Kishoreganj reports: A large number of people here have been suffering from various ailments after taking adulterated food being openly sold in the rural markets.

According to a survey conducted by an NGO, some 115 people died of diarrhea and dysentery during the last six

months and many more are suffering from various diseases

after taking the adulterated A section of unscrupulous traders are selling adulterated sugar, salt, rice and powder

spices for a long time with a view to earning a windfall profit, it said. It said that local people have been affected with various dis-

eases due to the unabated adulteration of the food items. A physician said unless proper steps are taken to resist the illegal sale of impure foodstuff immediately, situation

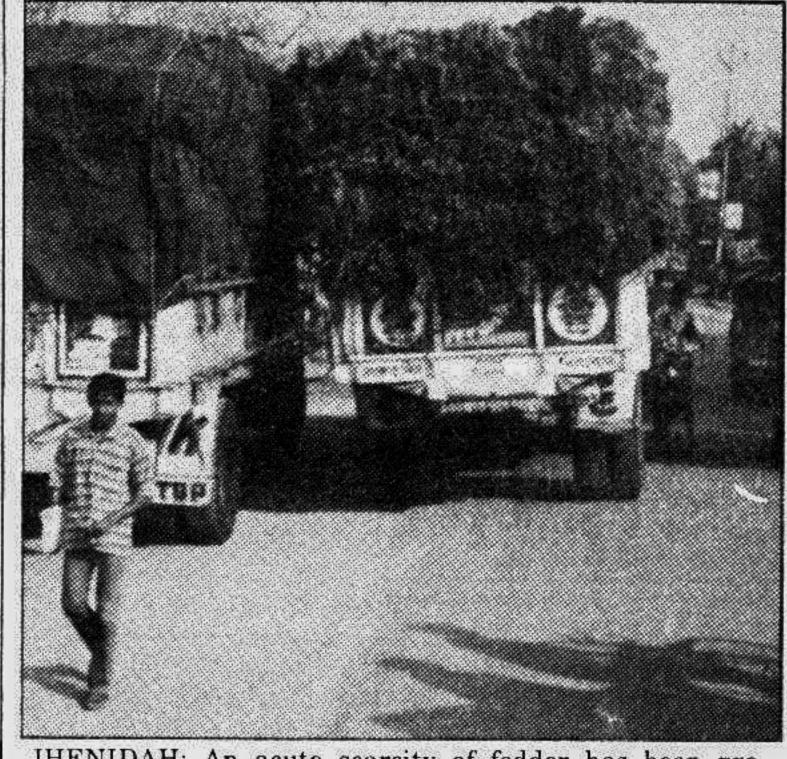
might turn grave in near future. Local leaders urged the authorities concerned to take necessary steps against the persons responsible for the malpractice at the cost of public health.

APB from Pabna says: About 90 per cent tubewells here reportedly has gone out of order with the drastic fall of underground water level due to drought and prolonged hot

Shortage of drinking water also has posed a threat in different areas, causing health hazards and diseases including diarrhoea.

Local Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) sources said about 20,000 tubewells run by the department out of 23,390 have gone out of order. There are some 90,000 tube-

wells in nine thanas of the district, they added.



JHENIDAH: An acute scarcity of fodder has been prevailing throughout the district following the last year's worst ever flood. The prevailing drought has aggravated the situation now. Photo shows fodder is being carried by trucks to the local bazaars from far flung areas as it has become very costly. - Star photo

Political, business leaders meet

Pledge to make Natore town terrorism-free

From Anwar Ali

NATORE, Apr 13: The arch rivals of politics here have assembled on the same platform on April 10 in an anti-terrorism meeting.

Leaders of local units of Awami League (AL), Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Jatiyo Party (JPO along with the local business leaders and the general people attended the big public meeting at old bus stand area in the town on Saturday afternoon.

Speakers from Awami League told the anti-terrorism meeting, they want to build a terrorism-free Natore in the coming days. So they would no longer support terrorists in their party and also would not

influence the local administration. Their counterparts in BNP declared that they would fight for peace in the town.

The BNP leaders said they would not even hesitate to find out terrorists into their party and handover them to police for the sake of peace. The JP leader also pleaded

for driving out terrorism from

The political rivals also committed from the same platform that they would never utter unnecessary provocative languages against each in processions and meetings. Leaders of the business

business in the town was at stake due to extortions and terrorism.

that only honest motive of political leaders would help keep Natore free from terrorism Earlier, a large anti-terrorism peace procession paraded

The elite of the town said

the town streets. The slogans of the procession were "Terrorism or peace? Peace and peace. Drive out terrorism and make Natore a golden town". The business community

here showed respect to the political leaders' move by keeping the shutters of all kinds of stores and shops off for two community said that their hours from 4pm to 6pm.

Among others, the meeting was addressed by BNP MP Prof Quazi Golam Morshed, AL Presidium member Maintazuddin, the district AL president Advocate Sajedur Rahman, the disrtict AL secretary advocate Hanif Ali Sheikh, BNP Secretary Shahidul Islam Bachhu, BNP Organising Secretary Abdul Mannaf, JP leader Shirajul Islam Majnu, Natore Pourasabha Chairman advocate Quamrul Islam,

Natore Chamber of Commerce and Industries President Aminul Haq. Natore Bar leaders advocate Ruhul Amin Talukhdar and advocate Shakhawat Hossain.

Repression on women up in 2 districts KUSHTIA, Apr 13: A girl, for collecting grass on Friday aged six, of Chewria village in noon, but did not return. Kumarkhali thana was raped Later police recovered her

Chewria Mudhipara village, police said, reports UNB. According to a delayed report, the miscreant Halim forcibly took her to a nearby place of her house on March 28 and raped her. When the victim raised a hue and cry the hoodlum left the place. The girl was later rescued by her family

members and treated by local

by a miscreant of the adjacent

The father of the victim lodged a case with the police in this connection, but the accused could not be arrested as yet.

teen-age girl was recovered by the police from Ghona Beel area in Sadar thana of the district on Saturday with signs of rape.

In Satkhira, the body of a The victims was identified as Maina Begum, 17, daughter

of Jafar Ali Sheikh of Ghona

village. Police and family

sources said she went to the beel

she came out of her house to respond to the call of nature. The girl cried out when she was taken to Bhomra, Local people rescued her from the miscreants and handed over Shahanara to her father.

against them.

No case was filed with the police in this connection as the miscreants threatened the father of the girl of dire consequences if any case is filed

body and sent to the hospital

for autopsy. A case was filed

Satkhira said: a teen-age girl

was rescued from the hands of

kidnappers on Thursday.

Another report from

The victim, identified as

Shahanara Begum, 15, daughter

of Abdul Mazed Sardar of Andia

village of the Sadar thana, was

forcibly taken away by five

miscreants on the night when

with the police.

Boundary pillars worth Tk 15 cr stolen in 3 years in greater Pabna

PABNA, Apr 13: Some 50,000 boundary demarcation pillars worth about Tk 15 crore were stolen in the last three years from 52,000 moujas of 18 thanas in Greater Pabna dis-

trict, reports UNB. According to official sources, following the theft the demarcation of the boundary has become a great problem in the district.

The British government, to avoid clashes among the landlords, set up the boundary determining pillars in between 1850 and 1855 AD after surveying the boundaries of the mou-



RAJBARI: French Ambassador in Bangladesh Renee Veyret speaking at the foundation laying function of a new Science and Library building at Belgachi Girls' High School near here on March 20 under a special grant of Taka 400,000 from the Ministry of Manpower. The Ambassador, whose country donated nearly Taka 12 lakh in 1996 for construction of the two storied main school building, later distributed prizes among the winners of the annual sports competition. Seen in the picture are Deputy Commissioner of Rajbari Amirul Karim, President of the School Managing Committee Golam Tahaboor, ADC (Gen) Abdul Mannan Hawlader and the district Police Super. The school founded by the local people in 1994 as a junior girls' school is the only school of its kind in the locality aimed at spreading education among young women from rural and poor families.

They set up three triangle pillars in three ends of each mouja. Some 1.56 lakh pillars were set up in 52,000 moujas of Pabna and Sirajganj districts.

About 75 per cent of the pillars were constructed with onekg valuable magnet for each pillar costing the then Tk 30-40. Rest 25 per cent pillars were built without any magnet, said an old land surveyor. The magnets set in the pillars were pre-

The muggers sensing its present price value of one kg magnet Tk 3 lakh started lifting the pillars since the last three

The 70-year old land surveyor Aftabuddin Bishwas told that about 25 per cent (38,000 approximately) boundary pillars were lost due to urbanisation, river erosion and accumulation of silt.

But, in early 90's existence of some 80,000 magnet-set pillars was visible. Existence of more than 50,000 pillars are not visible now that are assumed to be taken away by the muggers.

Market price of the lost

crore, magnet experts said. Different sources of the area told that muggers first collected the maps of each mouja, containing the point where the pillars were set up.

At present determination of boundaries of the disputed lands has become a difficult job and disputes over lands have increased alarmingly in the district with the disappearance The department pays only of the pillars, the district setthe salary of the man, but has tlement officer told.

Jamalpur Hospital morgue beset with problems

JAMALPUR, Apr 13: The morgue of the district hospital is beset with many problems hampering autopsy of the bodies of unnatural deaths, reports

The only morgue here is burdened with heavy pressure where the necessary appliances are lacking causing untold sufferings to the relatives of the victims. The number of unnatural

deaths due to various reasons including suicide, road accident, burning and murder is increasing in eight thanas here. Everyday one or two bodies are being brought to the morgue

for autopsy The relatives of the victims face serious problem in bringing the bodies from remote villages and have to spend a big amount of money for the pur-

Hospital sources said the morgue performed autopsy of 126 bodies in 1998 while from January to the first week of April it was 26.

There is no fixed doctor in the hospital for performing autopsy. The number of doctor is quite inadequate for the general wards and departments includboundary pillars is about Tk 15 ing emergency.

So the hospital authorities can not spare a doctor for only this purpose, said a source. He said the salary of 'Dome'

or the man responsible for handling the dead body at the morgue was earlier paid by the district administration. But they were placed under the Health Department.

no budgetary allocation for

Antiseptic, soap, bucket, spirit, sharp knife, towel, spade and water are not being sup-

other necessary materials and

facilities in order to ensure

smooth performance of au-

plied by the hospital. So the doctors and other people related to the autopsy process face serious problem.

Tension in Comilla Race Course area

COMILLA, Apr 13: Tension has been prevailing in Race Course area of the town centering the dispute over the ownership of a piece of land of a kindergarten school, reports

Local people said Peara Begum of the neighourhood has been trying for long to grab the land of Udayan Kindergarten. The woman, who live in a

rented house beside the school premises, allegedly invited some terrorists on Friday night to forcibly take the possession of the land.

caught red handed five young men with one pipe gun. They were identified as Delwar Hossain alias Delu, Shahidul Islam, Zahirul Huq, Farhad and Faruq Ahmed while another youth Mizanur Rahman managed to flee the scene.

On information, local people

laid siege to her house and

Police rescued the miscreants from the hands of the local people and arrested them.