

News snaps

10 gamblers arrested

From Our Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, June 6: Phulpur police arrested 10 gamblers from different areas of the thana recently.

While conducting a drive to curb gambling, police arrested five persons from Danta Bazaar, four from village Sakalla and one from the thana sadar. Gambling activities is on sharp rise in many places of the district which is affecting the normal life style of people.

Youth commits suicide

From A Correspondent

MAGURA, June 6: A young man committed suicide on May 28 by drinking poison in Kullia village of the sadar thana.

The victim was identified as Rafiqul Islam, 25, son of Asad Biswas. The cause of suicide was family troubles.

UP chairman arrested

NETRAKONA, June 6: The chairman of Birshiri Union Parishad (UP) under Durgapur thana was arrested by Netrakona police from a guest house here on Monday.

Rafiqul Islam, the UP chairman was arrested in connection with a case. Police said, Islam physically assaulted one woman named Swarshyati Rani of Birshiri. A case was filed by Swarshyati with Durgapur Police Station. Police after receiving a secret information rushed to the guest house where he was hiding and arrested him.

Seminar on child trafficking

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, June 6: A seminar on organising social movement against Child and Woman Trafficking and repression on them was arranged at Keshabpur Thana Parishad auditorium under the auspices of Rights, Jessore recently.

Presided over by the Treasurer of Rights, Jessore, Taslim Ahmed, it was attended by woman MP Aleya Afroz as the chief guest. Ex-MNA Subodh Mitra was the main speaker. Binoy Krishna Mollick, acting General Secretary, Rights, Jessore read out the key-note paper.

Paddy loaded truck snatched

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, June 6: A paddy loaded truck was snatched away from near kola bazaar in Kaliganj thana on May 31 night.

Police said a gang of armed men took control of the truck at about 8pm which was loaded with 120 bags of paddy worth Taka 70 thousand. Later on the truck was recovered from Kushita town without goods.

Open sale of phensidyl

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, June 6: Indian phensidyl syrup, a contraband drug is being held openly in the sadar thana, Islampur thana and Sarisabari thana. A gang of smugglers with the connivance of some political leaders and some unscrupulous Narcotics officials are engaged in smuggling the spurious drug for a long time.

Uplift works progressing

TANGAIL, June 6: Tangail Zila Parishad is implementing 26 projects in the current fiscal year at a cost of Taka 57, 26,000, reports BSS.

Official sources said, under the projects, 10 union parishad buildings, boundary walls, three schools and three dakhungalows, four culverts and six roads are being constructed. The work is going on in full swing. It is expected to be completed by June.

Another youth commits suicide

MUNSHIGANJ, June 6: A young man identified as Md Ashabuddin, son of Abdur Rahman of South Islampur in the sadar thana committed suicide by taking insecticide recently, reports BSS.

According to his family sources, the young man was suffering from chronic disease and killed himself following unbearable pain.



RAJSHAHI: A new school of Santal language has been opened here for aboriginals recently. Photo shows some Santal students are seen standing with books in hand near the school.

Because of filing a false case

GAZIPUR, June 6: Five police personnel and another man were sent to jail on Sunday for filing a false arms case against a man of Chhoti Koir village, reports UNB.

Official sources said there had been an enmity between Mohammad Jakaria and Hedayet Mollah of the village since long. As a sequel to this enmity, police conducted a raid in 1982 and filed an arms case against Jakaria. But Jakaria was acquitted of the charge by the then martial law court. The court ordered to start departmental proceedings against the policemen for filing the false case. After being acquitted, Jakaria filed a case with the court against them and the court recently issued warrant of arrest against the accused persons. They were identified as Hemayet Mollah, Subedar Abdul Khaleq (retired), Habibar Mozammel Hossain (retired), Former CI Tofazzal Hossain, former OC of Kaliganj thana Yakub Ali and constables Jagadish Chandra, Suruj Miah and Dulal Miah.

Cattle lifting on rise

LALMONIRTHAT, June 6: Cattle lifting is on alarming rise in Altimari thana creating panic among the farmers, reports UNB.

Villagers said an organised gang of cattle lifters very often swoop on the villages at night and steal cattle from their cowshed. According to them 17 cattle were stolen from Saral Khan village within the span of three days recently. The gang had lifted 25 more cattle earlier from the same village. Most of the affected families are facing acute financial hardship as they used to maintain their livelihood by selling cow milk.

10 bridges under construction

PIROJPUR, June 6: The Local Government Engineering Department has taken up construction of 10 bridges in two thanas at a total cost of Tk 48,60,025, reports UNB.

Of these, nine bridges are being built at Mothbaria and one in sadar thana. Officials said the work was going on in full swing and 60 per cent of the construction work had already been done. On completion by next month, the bridges are expected to considerably improve road communication.

Rivals kill youth

SYLHET, June 6: A young man was killed by his rivals at Doulatpur village in Bishwanath thana on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Police said Selim Ahmed, 30, died on the spot when his rivals attacked him with sharp weapons over a minor dispute. Another report adds: A middle-aged man, Abdul Haq, of Satar South village in sadar thana was killed in a clash on Sunday.

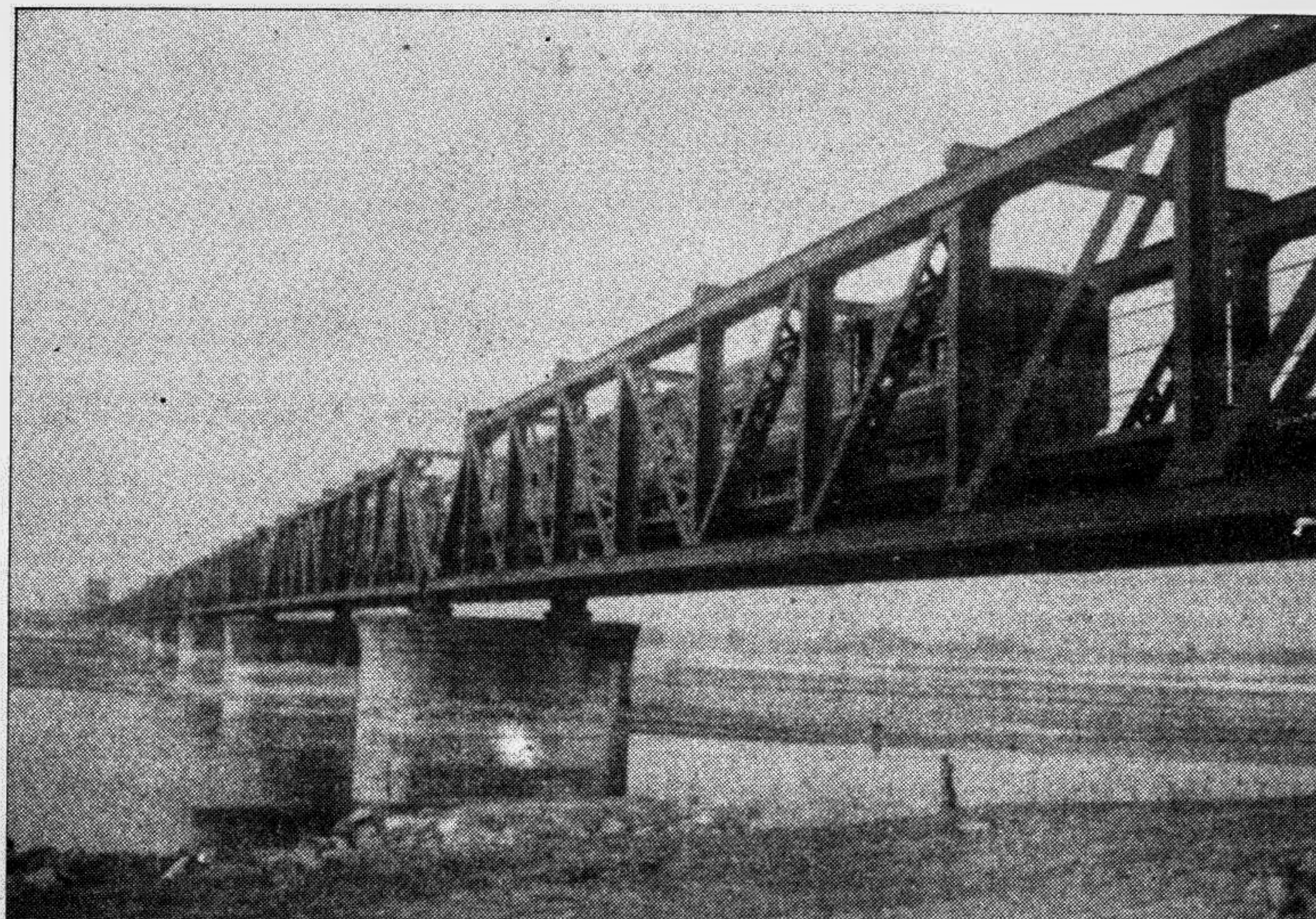
Aman farming on 37,500 hectares

MADARIPUR, June 6: A total of 37,500 hectares will be brought under broadcasting Aman cultivation in all the four thanas of the district in the current season, reports BSS.

According to an official source, 12,500 hectares will be brought under broadcasting Aman cultivation in Rajoir thana, 8,625 hectares in Kalkini, 8,300 hectares in sadar and 8,075 hectares in Shibchar thana. The cultivation of broadcasting Aman paddy has been delayed due to severe drought in the district.

Over 100-year-old Teesta Rly Bridge may collapse any moment

From Our Correspondent



A passenger train running over the bridge by shaking its total structure.

forces severely damaged the bridge in early December. Only trains ply over it before the damage done by the Pak occupation forces. However, it's repairing works were completed in 1978 and train communications were restored again.

Later on March 4, 1978, the then President Ziaur Rahman opened the bridge for vehicular traffic after slight modification of the deck by placing wooden slippers. Thus the two districts were connected by road with the rest of the country. At that time,

only some recommended size of vehicles with limited load were allowed to ply over the bridge. An agreement on the issue was also signed between Bangladesh Railway and Roads and Highways department then. Since then, the Roads and Highways department bears the responsibility for all sorts of repairing or maintenance works of the Bangladesh Railway owned bridge on the river Teesta situated 27 kilometers west of Kurigram town on Rangpur-Kurigram highway.

With the fund of the R&H de-

partment, Bangladesh Railway conducted the repairing work of the deck of the bridge in 1985, 1993, 1998 and 1999. But the condition of the bridge is deteriorating day by day. The main structure including piers and metallic frames remained untouched which have become vulnerable. The repairing work of the wooden slippers on the deck do not provide safety of the bridge.

According to local people and experts, the existing vulnerable condition of the bridge

has worsened due to some administrative complexities between the two concerned departments. Stealing of wooden slippers along with nuts and bolts and carrying of excessive loads by the trucks are common phenomena now. Experts have suggested to carry out a series of tests of the structure of the bridge.

They also opined for construction of a new bridge nearby to avoid any severe accident. "Replacement of wooden slippers on the deck is not the solution," they cautioned.

— Star photo

Fisheries Directorate officials embezzle FFW projects' money

PABNA, June 6: Large-scale corruption and irregularities have been reportedly detected in matters of digging canals in the district's seven thanas under Food For Work (FFW) programme of the Fisheries Directorate, reports APB.

Knowledgeable quarters also alleged that a section of officials and employees of the directorate had embezzled substantial amount of money from these FFW projects.

Fisheries Directorate had sanctioned 732.8 tonnes of wheat worth Tk 65 lakh for implementation of 16 projects in sadar, Sujannagar, Faridpur, Santhia, Afgharia, Ishwardi

and Bhangua thanas. The wheat used for these projects until May 22 was shown as 482.9 tonnes worth Tk 43 lakh, according to allegations.

Investigations, however, revealed that the entire amount had been misappropriated by the project chairman and some officials.

Locals complained that the allocated wheat had never reached the project sites in time. Most of this wheat had been sold away from the thana food godowns.

The sources said it was owing to manipulations by the office of the concerned engineer of the directorate that the wheat

had been misappropriated. During the pre-measurement, the depth of the canals and the ponds were shown to be greater than actual ones. As a result, informed sources said, a negligible quantity of wheat was used up under these projects.

When contacted, the district fisheries officer, Aminul Haq, denied any charge of corruption or irregularities, saying the projects had been implemented as per regulations.

He, however, said since a large number of written complaints had been received, proper inquiry would be undertaken in due course.

Tk 3.07 cr renovation works of education instts in Rajbari

RAJBARI, June 6: Renovation works of 23 educational institutions are progressing fast at a cost of Tk 3.07 crore, reports UNB.

Of the total, 11 are being renovated under the supervision of Facilities Department in sadar thana, four in Baliakandi, one in Goalando and seven in Pangsha thanas.

Official sources said with the completion of the work expected within the current fiscal year, about 4,000 more students of schools and madrasahs will be able to get education facilities.

On the other hand, development works of 37 educational institutions damaged in the last

year's flood is nearing completion at a cost of Tk one crore.

Another report from Magura says, some 316 uplift schemes under Food for Works Programme are being implemented with an allotment of 2,261 metric tons of wheat in the current fiscal year.

District's Relief and Rehabilitation Officer said construction of roads, embankment and culverts and earth filling works of educational and religious institutions is progressing fast.

Of the total wheat, 448 mts was allotted for 127 schemes in sadar, 267 mts for 68 schemes in Shripur, 298 mts for 64 schemes in Mohammadpur and 248 mts for 57 schemes in Shalika thanas.

Tk 200 cr Chalan Beel project stalled for 25 years

RAJSHAHI, June 6: Flood Control and Drainage Project in the Chalan Beel area stretching from Natore to Rajshahi could not be implemented even after last 25 years due to lack of necessary fund and bureaucratic bottlenecks, reports UNB.

Meanwhile, the donor agencies lost their interests regarding the proposed Tk 200 crore project launched by Water Development Board (WDB) with financial assistance from World Food Programme and International Monetary Fund (IMF), sources said.

Water Development Board launched the project in the fiscal 1973-74 to protect crops on 3.21 lakh acres land of eight thanas in the area from the onrush of floodwaters, sources added.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) also did not show any interest after examining the survey report of the project.

Water Development Board sources said the government had undertaken a plan to construct 298km dam, 24 regulators, 58 flashing inlet, 55

bridges, 132 culverts and big 187 canals with an estimated cost of about Tk 43.66 crore.

For implementing the project properly, the total area of the project had been divided into four polders, which included Bhangua and Chatmohor of Pabna district, Boriagram, Gurudaspur and Singra of Natore district, Atrai and Manda of Naogaon district and Tanor, Baghmara, Mohanpur of Rajshahi district.

After completion of the first phase work spending Tk 43 crore, the authorities concerned stopped further allocation of fund on the plea of constructing two sluice-gates by WDB in unplanned way at Charchat in Rajshahi and Nandakunja in Naogaon in 1984. As a result, the work of the project came to a halt in 1989.

Meanwhile, another project proposal was accepted in 1991 with the aim of constructing 57km water sewerage canal, 16 regulators, 57 flashing inlet, 171 km road, four bridges and 47 culverts. But that also could not see the light of the day.

Arsenic detected in tubewells' water of 2 more dists

KHULNA, June 6: Arsenic beyond permissible level has been detected in the waters of a good number of tubewells in 10 districts of Khulna division, reports UNB.

Department of Public Health Engineering found intolerable level of arsenic in 31 per cent tubewells of the division. It has sealed off 687 tubewells out of 2,205 in the region.

The district-wise breakup of arsenic detected tubewells is: 113 in Khulna district, 77 in Bagerhat, 135 in Satkhira, 147 in Jessore, 34 in Narail, 18 in Jhenidha, 31 in Magura, 54 in Kushtia, 56 in Chuadanga and 63 in Meherpur.

The tubewells which have arsenic within permissible limit, 51 are in Khulna, 27 in Bagerhat, 65 in Satkhira, 95 in Jessore, 16 in Narail, 15 in Jhenidha, 14 in Magura, 18 in Kushtia, 28 in Chuadanga and 22 in Meherpur districts.

DPHE sources said over 15,000 tubewells in the division

could not yet be tested for lack of manpower and necessary equipment in their laboratory.

"It's not possible for the people who are poor to volunteer for the test of their tubewell waters as it costs Tk 500 in the division's only one laboratory," said an official preferring anonymity.

Local people urged the authorities concerned to set up more laboratories to test tubewell waters.

Field Day for farmers

From Our Correspondent
FARIDPUR, June 6: Agriculture Extension Department (AED), Faridpur organised a 'field day' under Integrated Pest Management (IPM) at Kazem Matubbar Dangi recently.

A total of 200 farmer trainees attended the 'field day' programme to receive training as to how to get rid of the attack of harmful pests.

well waters and called on the NGOs to come forward to supplement the government efforts in this regard.

Another report from Jhenidah says: Arsenic contamination has been detected in 141 hand driven tubewells in five thanas here causing grave concern among the local people.

However, no arsenic contamination was found in sadar thana.

Of the affected tubewells, 48 were sealed. The worst hit areas are Mohehpur and Kaliganj.

According to officials, 13 in Kaliganj, five each in Shailakupa and Harinakunda and four in Kotchandpur thanas.

The contamination is so serious that it went beyond the accepted limit.

Of the 16,013 registered tubewells in the district, the concerned department examined only 184 and found the presence of arsenic.

Bus journey becomes hazardous

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, June 6: Bus journey along different routes of the district has become hazardous due to various reasons including overloading and deplorable condition of roads.

Passengers alleged that they had been facing in convenience due to overloading of passengers, reckless driving and lack of basic amenities.

Besides, most of the buses running in deplorable condition are engaged in a mad race to pick up passengers without considering the capacity of the vehicles.

Sometimes passengers are found traveling on the roof tops and even on the foot boards at the risk of their lives.

The overloaded buses ply at maximum speed and very often involve in road accidents. Sometimes, the buses go out of order on way causing untold suffering to passengers particularly women and children.

Passengers further alleged, the conductors often misbehave with them.



Rabindra Joyanti in Mymensingh

From Our Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, June 6: Various socio-cultural organisations and educational institutions celebrated the 138th birth anniversary of Biswa Kabi Rabindranath Tagore Rabindra Jayanti recently.

Bangla Department of Government Ananda Mohan College chalked out a befitting programme on the occasion at the seminar room of the department with Hasina Akhtar, Chairman of the department in the chair.

HM Moniruzzaman, principal of the college was present as the chief guest. The function was also addressed, among others, by Sumita Naha and Dr Sarder Abdus Sattar.

A musical soiree on Tagore songs followed the discussion meeting.

Bank officer killed by assailants

From Our Correspondent

MOULVI BAZAR, June 6: A bank officer was killed by some unknown assailants at Prithim Pasa in Kulara.

Family and police sources said, the victim, Syed Sadeque Hussain, son of late Syed Saghirul Hussain of village Prithim Pasa under Kulara thana was attacked by the miscreants while he was returning home from nearby Rabirbazar market. They beat him mercilessly and later beheaded him with a sharp weapon. The incidents occurred on the night of May 28.

The reason behind the murder could not be ascertained immediately. Local people, however, apprehended that past enmity over land might be the cause of the killing.

Ill-fated Sadeque, 55, was working at Juri branch of Janata Bank as a senior officer.

Indian goods flood markets in Faridpur

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, June 6: Almost all the markets in the district are flooded with Indian goods of different kinds.

Those are now being sold under the very nose of the law enforcing agency and other authorities concerned.

Indian cotton sarees, cosmetics, electronics, motor-cycles, bicycles, and their spare parts, threads, toys, Singer, salt, spices, utensils, hurricanes, pressure cookers, kerosene ovens and other necessary goods are being sold in the open markets.

Yusuf visits party workers in Khulna jail

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, June 6: Health Minister Salahuddin Yusuf met his party workers of Phulitla thana now in Khulna district jail on Saturday morning.

He went inside the jail at about 11 am with Police Super and jail officials and talked to his party activists, said a source of the district jail. His jail visit was not among his official programmes as learnt from PID source.

Quran distributed among 1,000 people

MADARIPUR, June 6: Joint Secretary of Bangladesh Sechchasevak League Alhaj A B M Bahaudin Nasim distributed one thousand copies of Al-Quran among 1000 people of Rajoir and Sadar thanas on Friday, reports BSS.

Earlier, a discussion meeting was held at Madaripur Circuit House on moral development in society.

District Awami League president Alhaj Ferdous Zamadar presided over the meeting.

Among others, Red Crescent District Secretary Rajol Krishna Dey, District Chhatra League President Khalid Hossain Erad, District Chhatra League Secretary Elias Ahmed and District Krikasak League Secretary Shakilur Rahman Shohag spoke in the meeting.

Blacksmiths need govt patronisation

KISHOREGANJ, June 6: The blacksmith community of the district is facing enormous problems due to lack of patronisation as well as price hike of necessary ingredients, reports UNB.

About 5,000 blacksmiths are passing their days in great hardship for quite a long time. They are not getting fair price of their products due to lack of marketing facilities.

Meanwhile, a large number of them have already left their age-old occupation and turned day labourers for their survival, said the local people.

Blacksmith community mostly populates the district with major concentration in Hossainpur, Katlad, sadar, Pakundia, Austagram, Nikli, Tarail, Kularchar, Bajitpur and many other areas. These people are struggling hard in maintaining their family.

Some blacksmiths told that prices of their products went down in the past few years while the prices of inputs increased manifold.

They make dao, axe, knife, kitchen knife and other essential agri-inputs, which are being sold, in the local market. But the situation has changed now for the price spiral of necessary ingredients.



Now is the season of fruits. (L) As elsewhere in the country in Mymensingh town jackfruits have flooded the local markets, though those are beyond the reach of low income group consumers. (R) Lichi, another delicious fruit has been arriving here from other parts of the country. But lichis are sour for common people as one hundred lichis are being sold between Taka 120 to 140 in different markets of this district town.

— Star photo by Aminul Islam