News snaps

Housewife beaten to death

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, June 11: One housewife was allegedly beaten to death by her husband on June 5 at village Lantara in Tala thana.

The victim was identified as Rehana Khatun, 25, wife of Ali Hossain of the same village . Police said Ali Hossain beatt his wife Rehana mercilessly and she died on the spot.

Many tubewells inoperative

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, June 11: About 1,000 tubewells in seven police stations have either been chocked up or gone out of order causing acute scarcity of drinking water in the rural areas.

The situation turned worse as the Public Health Engineering Department failed to achieve the target of sinking tubewells during the last financial year. The worst affected thanas are Islampur, Madarganj, Bakshigonj and sadar thana. Due to scarcity of pure water, the villagers have to use water from river, ponds and canals. As a result a large number of them are suffering from different water-borne and gastro-intestinal diseases.

Mechanised tilling gains popularity

From Our Correspondent

NETRAKONA, June 11: Mechanised tilling is gaining popularity among the farmers.

Affluent farmersare using power tillers for ploughing their lands due to acute shortage of bullock. Following them other farmers have also become interested in using power tillers. A block superverser of Agriculture Extension Department (AED) told this correspondent that about 45 per cent of the total cultivable lands were being ploughed by power tillers now-a-days. AED distributed 62 power tillers and 331 power pumps recently among the farmers.

Alleged killers arrested

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, June 11: Kumarkhali police have arrested two alleged killers on Saturday.

They are Montu and Zahurul who have allegedly been involved in the murder of Shariful Islam Kalom on May 31 night. Police said that the armed terrorists stormed into the house of Taheruddin Master of village Nandalalpur in Kumarkhali thana and hacked his son Shariful Islam to death. Police also said that the victim is a member of JSD Gonobahini. Another rival group committed the murder. Local people said that the murder was committed in connection with lease of Nandalalpur Bazaar.

Workshop on soil resources

COMILLA, June 11: A three-day workshop on thana land and soil resource manual and its utilisation concluded on Sunday at Bangladesh Rice Research Insititute (BRRI) here, reports BSS.

Soil Research and Development Institute (SRDI) organised the workshop. Director of SRDI Mustafizur Rahman was present at the inaugural sessin as the chief guest. Additional Director of Agriculture Extension Department Abdul Matin Talukdar presided over the workshop. Chief Scientific Officer Golam Mostafa, Project Coordinator, MA Mujib and Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Department Abul Hossain Mollah conducted the workshop as the resource persons. Thirty agriculture officers from Comilla, Chandpur and Brahmanbaria districts took part.

Tributes paid to Nazrul

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, June 11: People from all walks of life here paid rich tributes to national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam by observing his birth centenary in a befitting manner.

The district and thana administration, educational institutions, different socio-cultural organisations chalked out elaborate programmes to mark the occasion. The four-day programmes included discussion meetings, poetry recitation, painting competition for children and cultural function at the town hall and Shilpakola Academy premises.

Lightning kills another man

TANGAIL, June 11: A 45-year-old man of village Nathorchar in Gopalpur thana was killed by lightining last week, reports BSS.

Eye witnesses said while the victim Abdul Baset was returning home from the village bazaar he was hit by a thunderbolt. He died on the spot. Lutfar, 35, and his wife Zahra, 20, of the same village were killed by lightning in June last year, local people said.

Smuggled Indian goods seized

FENI, June 11: BDR jawans seized a lot of smuggled Indian [illegible] Taka 29 lakh from Modhugram area of the frontier Sonagazi thana on Wednesday, reports APB.

Acting on a tip-off, BDR personnel stopped a truck carrying Indian smuggled goods including 5,300 pieces of sarees, 105 pieces of bed-sheets and some bicycles valued at about Taka 29 lakh. They also held an Indian citizen aboard the truck. He was later handed over to police. The goods were deposited to the local Customs godown.

Teen commits suicide

JHALAKATI, June 11: A teenaged drug addict allegedly committed suicide by taking insecticide at a village in sadar thana on Thursday, reports APB.

Police said Shaheen, 18, son of rickshawpuller Tayab Ali of village Mahadipur, being failed to come back to a normal life committed suicide on the fateful night. Shaheen was addicted to hemp, phensidyl and other drugs. He was suffering from frustration as he could not afford to take drugs. The body was autopsied at the sadar hospital.

Smuggling on rise

ISHURDI, June 11: The incidence of smuggling at Ishurdi, known as the gateway of the northern districts, has been increasing much to the worry of the local people, reports APB.

They said organised gangs of smugglers have become quite active in Pabna district and they have been operating here quite openly. Allegations have it that the smugglers have been operating with the clandestine patronage of a section of officials. Local people also alleged that the influential ones in different sectors appeared to be the guiding spirit behind the gangs of smugglers. Nobody, including the local press, dares to unmask these organised gangs of smugglers.

Uplift works progressing

MADARIPUR, June 11: The government sanctioned 4,370 tonnes of wheat for the implementation of 112 development schemes in four thanas under post-flood rehabilitation programme (PFRP) in the current dry season, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the projects include repair and reconstruction of roads, educational and religious institutions and construction of bamboo bridges. About 60 per cent work has already been completed.

Installation of tubewells

KISHOREGANJ, June 11: The installation of 376 shallow tubewells and 684 tara deep tubewells is in full swing, reports BSS.

According to the Public Health and Engineering Department (PHED) sources, the government allotted these tubewells in the 1998-1999 fiscal year. The work order of 206 shallow tubewells and 506 tara deep tubewells has been given. About 90 per cent of the work has already been completed. The installation programme has been taken under the rural sanitation programme of PHED.

4 wanted criminals surrender

MAGURA, June 11: Four wanted criminals of Sripur thana surrendered to the Police Super (SP) here on Wednesday, reports UNB.

They were identified as Kader, son of Kanchon Mandal, Khail Sarder and Jamrul, sons of Jaliluddin and Harun, son of Mahatab Ali of village Bilnathpur. Police said they were wanted in connection with a number of criminal cases including toll collection, abduction for money and killing. Local people heaved a sigh of relief with their surrender to the police.

Shop looted

GAZIPUR, June 11: Muggers looted an amount of Taka 43,000 from a shop at Tongi Bazaar here, police said, reports UNB.

They said the miscreants stormed into the shop of Lever Brothers Bangladesh Limited overpowering the manger and salesman at gunpoint on May 23. Another report says police recovered the body of an unidentified young man from Bhawal Badre Alam University College area on May 23. They said the assailants left the body of a pant and a check shirt worn young man behind the Science Building of the college.

Palm trees vanishing fast from rural areas

From Delwar Kabir

JHENIDAH, June 11: Palm trees are the sources of natural beauty in rural Bangladesh while juice of its young fruit is a delicious drink all over the country in this dry season.

Social festivals seem to be incomplete if cakes made of juice of ripe palm are not served to the guests in scores of villages.

But it is unfortunate to observe fast declinning of palm trees from the villages gradually. Such trend is also threatening the environment.Everyday palm trees are being destroyed indiscriminately for use in the brickfields.

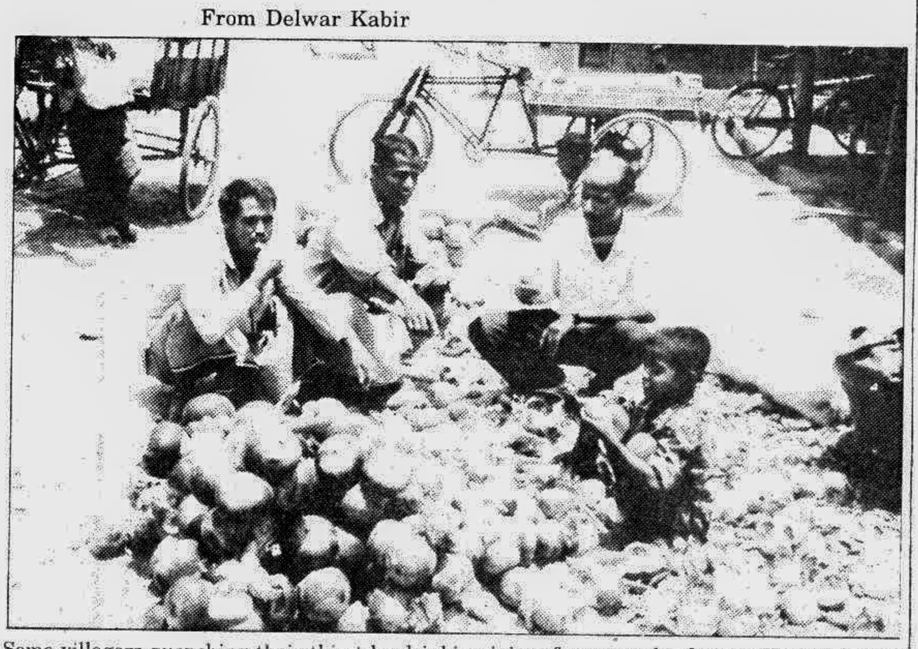
About 5,000 maunds of fuelwood are being used in these brickfields.

Ebadat Mollah, 82, of village Solomanpur in Kotchandpur thana said that previously at least two palm trees were observed in each and every house here. The trees also enriched the beauty of rural Bangladesh. Furthermore, the house owners could extract palatable and tasty juice of palm. Well-to-do families prepared molasses or attractive cakes from palms . Moreover, the rural people quenched their thirst by drinking sweet juice of tender palms in the summer season,' he said.

Recently palm trees are beingcut indiscriminately to use as piller or other house building materials.

When contacted Abdur Rezzaque Bhuiyan, Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) of Jhenidah said that they had no exact figure about the total number of palm trees in the district. He informed previously the house owners planted saplings of palm when establishing new houses. They did so because the palm trees enriched the beauty of their houses. But the trend of plantation of palm saplings is no longer seen now. As a result the trees are declining sharply.

Eminent poets including Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore wrote many poems with palm trees. But the days are no longer.



Some villagers quenching their thirst by drinking juice of young palm fruit at Kachua bazaar in Sailkupa thana of Jhenidah district. — Star photo

Bright prospect of high yielding BRRI-29 paddy

From Our Correspondent

NETRAKONA, June 11: The prospect of BRRI-29, a High Yielding Variety (HYV) of paddy is bright in the district.

Sources in the Agriculture Extension Department (AED) said the Agriculture scientists of the country after an assiduous research have introduced this variety of paddy.

In the past this variety attained little success, but gradually it gained ground.

Some contract growers of Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) have cultivated this variety of paddy.

This year BADC supplied seeds of this variety among the growers.

A bumper production of BRRI-29 paddy has been achieved in the district. Many farmers harvested 112 maunds of paddy from each acre of land.

It is learn that about 25,000 acres of land were brought under cultivation of this variety in the district in the current season.

Nurul Islam of village Ukala of Atpara thana and Kanchan Sheik of village Gobindapur in Kalmakanda thana had cultivated this variety of paddy and achieved a bumper harvest. The bumper harvest helped the farmers recoup the losses caused by the last year's deluge.

This variety is less vlunerable to pest-attack. The cost of cultivation of this variety is less than that of other hybrid varieties, agri- sources added.

Acute scarcity of Aman seeds in Greater Rangpur

KURIGRAM, June 11: Acute scarcity of Aman seeds has been prevailing in five districts of greater Rangpur zone, reports UNB.

Farmers are moving here and there and rushing to the BADC sales centres for the seed but the crisis is everywhere.

Taking advantage of the situation a section of dishonest dealers are selling the seeds in the black market at a high price to earn windfall profit.

Rangpur Agricultural Extension Department sources said some 8.5 lakh hectares of lands in Kurigram, Rangpur, Lalmonirhat, Gaibandha and Nilphamari districts have been earmarked for the cultivation of Aman crop this season which will need about 8,500 metric tons of seeds.

The farmers could not stock the seeds due to the massive damage of the crop in the last year's prolonged deluge.

Besides a huge quantity of paddy sees has been damaged due to lack of mechanism for proper preservation.

Meanwhile, Rangpur BADC demanded allocation of 1,500 mts of seeds to their higher authority instead they got allotment of 592 mts only.

Of the total, 60 mts of seeds have been allocated for Kurigram district while 230 mts for Rangpur 110 mts for Gaibandha, 90 mts for Nilphamari, 40 mts for Lalmonirhat and 62 mts have been kept reserved.

The farmers alleged that a section of BADC dealers are selling per kg seeds between Tk 20 and Tk 22 against Tk 15.

There is a rush everywhere for seeds as time for seedbed is going out.

Deputy Director of Rangpur Seeds Marketing Centre Abdus Samad admitting the crisis told that they have requested BADC head office to allot further consignment to meet the huge demand.

Menace of pye dogs in Jamalpur

From Our Corespondent

JAMALPUR, June 11: Acute crisis of Anti Rabies Vaccine (ARV) has been prevailing for a long time hindering treatment of hydrophobia, patients.

At present there is no stock of such vaccines in the district council. It is also not available in the local markets.

Low standard of treatment

Hundreds of private hospitals spring up in S-W dists

BHERAMARA, June 11: Owners of private medical clinics and hospitals have of late been driving a roaring business in the southwestern districts including Kushtia, sufferers and local sources said, reports APB.

These clinics and pathological laboratories have been operating in many a district towns as in Kushtia, Narail, Jessore, Khulna, Jnenidah, Magura, Bagerhat and Sathkhira.

Even naive observation reveals hundreds of such private hospitals, clinics and diagnostic centres have sprung up without maintaining standard of running such medical institutions.

The private pathological laboratories had been dishing out faulty test results, often causing dangers to the live of under treatment patients, it was widely alleged.

Patients complained that they were being literally fleeced by the men running these centres and hospitals. They have to pay exorbitantly high fees for treatment, pathological tests and operations.

Doctors and management of these private clinics and hospitals were charging excessive fees in violation of the government rules and rates, knowledgeable sources said.

The district administration and the police authorities have so far preferred to keep their eyes off these clinics.

Locals said while the affluent ones could go abroad for proper treatment, the poorer segment of people had no alternate to falling victims to those who were move interested in making quick money then anything else.

Most of the "senior" physicians working at the government hospitals tended to advise their patients to obtain treatment from private clinics, with which they were connected.

Not merely that they, more often than not, advised patients to have their pathological test done at private pathological laboratories.

Most of the patients visiting these private clinics end with spending thousands of take and then proceed to the neighbouring country, if and when possible, for "better treatment."

Locals said nobody appears to care for observing the Ordinance of 1982 in matters of opening up new private hospitals and clinics. Any such clinic needs to have at least 80-square-foot space and a minimum of one full time doctor.

Man killed by miscreants in B'baria

From Our Correspondent

BRAMANBARIA, June 11: A 35-year-old man was killed by miscreants on June 5 at Islamabad (Gugad) in Sarail thana here.

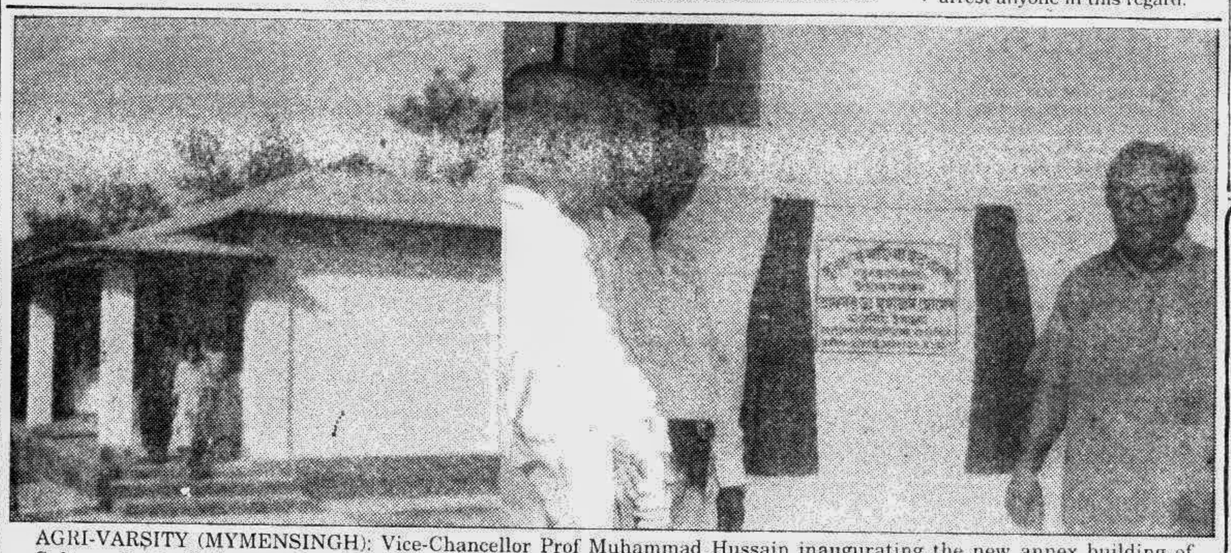
According to police sources, Mona Mia, father of three sons and son of Awlad Ali Khandaker of the same village was called out from his house by some miscreants at around 11:30 pm on the same night.

After killing Mona they dropped it at a near by place of the home and escaped the scene. Receiving the information from Mona Mia's family, Sarail police sent the body at Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital where the body's autopsy was done on the next day.

Wife of the victim namely Lolita Begum filed a case, with Sarail thana on June 6.

The cause of the murder could not be known immediately. Police could not be able to arrest anyone in this regard.

NARAYANGANJ: Mahbubur Rahman, Managing Director of Sonali Bank addressing the local Branch Managers' Conference '99 which was held recently at the local principal office. General Manager Yusuf Ali Howlader, Deputy General Managers Md Saiful Islam and Mainul Hossain are also seen in the picture. Thirty-seven branch managers of Munshiganj and Narayanganj districts participated there. — Star photo



AGRI-VARSITY (MYMENSINGH): Vice-Chancellor Prof Muhammad Hussain inaugurating the new annex building of Sultana Razia Hall recently which was built at a cost of Taka 25 lakh with accommodation facilities of 60 female students of the university. — Star photo

In Sylhet, Khagrachhari

Telephone service on verge of collapse

SYLHET, June 11: Telephone subscribers in different thanas of the division have been facing serious problem mainly due to lack of necessary repair works leaving almost all the 32 Operator Trunk Dialing (OTD) stations on the verge of collapse, reports UNB.

The problems include faulty and old machinery, lack of manpower and necessary vehicles and absence of maintenance for long.

Official sources said there were 10 such stations in Sylhet district, another 10 in Sunamganj, seven in Habiganj and five in Maulvibazar district.

The telephone stations were brought under OTD system in 1984 at a cost of about Tk 40 crore.

The sources said only three Sub-Assistant Engineers and nine mechanics are looking after these stations.

Batter-driven stations remain inoperative when power supply goes off. During the stormy weather, telephone boards of some of the stations go out of order.

The authorities sometimes are forced to keep close some of the OTD stations due to shortage of manpower.

There is also the problem of full capacity connection at these stations. The authorities were compelled to give connections to the subscribers causing serious problem to the service.

Besides, many buildings housing the stations became dilapidated due to lack of maintenance for long. The employees at these stations face acute accommodation problem.

Another report from Khagrachhari said: The telephone service in the hill district is on the verge of collapse.

The container system telephone exchange here has 300-line capacity, but the authorities were forced to give connection to almost 290 subscribers which is one of the causes of poor service to them.

Most of the seven outgoing and six incoming channels remain inoperative most of the time causing immense sufferings to the people who need to communicate to the other parts of the country.

All the three card phone booths, set up in the district, went out of order.

The subscribers complained that the concerned authorities were not taking any initiative to mitigate their sufferings.

NETRAKONA: Local unit of Jatiyatabadi Mohila Dal arranged a protest meeting at the BNP office here recently condemning the attack on a Mohila Dal activist by police in the capital city during hartal hours. — Star photo

Rapist gets life term in Gaibandha

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, June 11: One person was sentenced to suffer life term imprisonment on charge of raping a girl.

The prosecution case was that the victim of village Ishabpur in Sadullapur thana on the night of April 13 in 1998 while came out of her room at the call of nature, the accused Masud Mia caught her and tied up her mouth with a napkin. The accused later on took her to nearby abandoned shallow pump house and raped her.

Then the accused fled away leaving the victim unconscious. The inmates of the house recovered her later on after vigorous searching.

Gaibandha District and Sessions Judge Sirajuddin Ahmed on June 3 read out the judgement.

Man killed by brother-in-law

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, June 11: One person was killed recently his brother-in-law.

According to local people, the victim, Shaheb Ali of village Tamer Hagi in Boalmari thana was chopped with a sharp weapon by his brother-in-law over a tripling matter.

In a critical condition Shaheb Ali was rushed to Boalmari Hospital from where he was shifted to Faridpur Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injures.

Tale of a rickshawpuller who has one leg

From A Correspondent

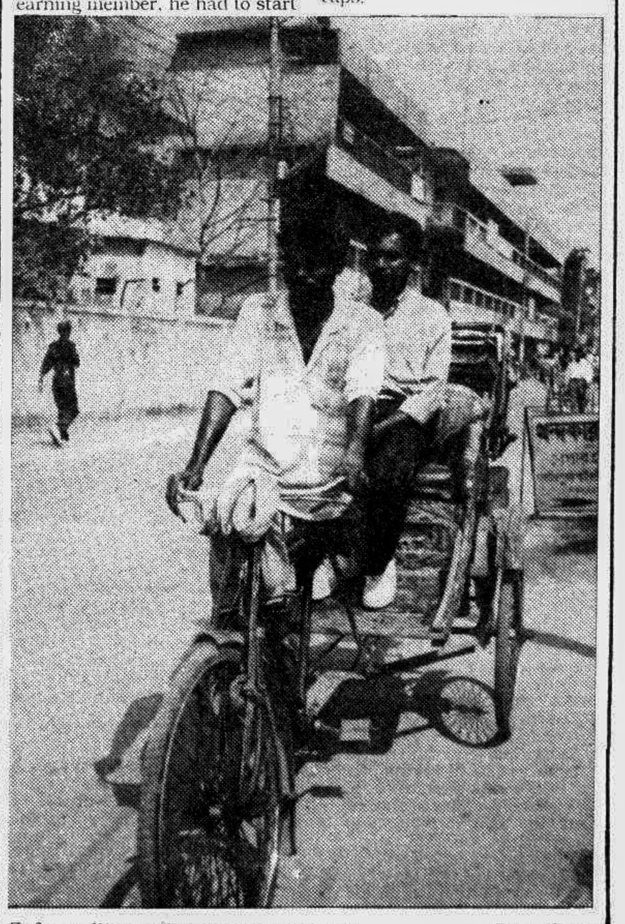
MAGURA, June 11: Here is the tale of a struggling rickshawpuller.

The rickshawpuller who whirls the wheels of his rickshaw smoothly with only one leg but cannot move the wheel of his fortune properly.

Only three years ago the 33-year-old rickshawpuller Zafar had two legs. But for an accident the doctors had cut off his other leg through an operation.

As he comes of a very poor family where there is no other earning member, he had to start pulling a rickshaw to maintain his family. By pulling rickshaw for a whole day Zafar earns only Taka 80 to 85 from which the owner takes away Taka 40 for hiring his rickshaw. With the rest he maintains his family of four members and lives from hand to mouth.

Zafar will have to earn his livelihood this way for the whole life. He has become a symbol of struggle who wants to win in life despite his handicaps.



Zafar pulling rickshaw with one leg. — Star photo