

## Kurigram farmers accuse

## News snaps

## Lightning claims life of young man

From Our Correspondent  
 MOULVI BAZAR, June 19: One young man was killed by lightning at village Shyamir Kuna in the sadar thana recently. The tragic incident occurred when he was returning home from his father-in-law's house. Suddenly a lightning struck him in front of the house of Rakesh member of the village at about 6.35 pm on June 9. The victim is identified as Shaifur Rahman, 25. He left behind his young wife and a baby.

## Historic June 7 observed

MADARIPUR, June 19: An elaborate programme was chalked out in observance of the historic June 7 here, reports BSS. The programme included hoisting of national and party flags, palcing wreaths at Bangbandhu's portrait and discussion meeting. Madaripur District Awami League arranged a discussion meeting in the party office. The district Awami League (AL) President Alhaj Ferdous Zamadar presided over the meeting. The meeting was addressed, among others, by district AL secretary Khalid Krishna Dey, Chhatra League district unit President Khalid Hossain Erad, Secretary Elias Ahmed and Krishak League district unit Secretary Shaklur Rahman.

## Workshop on health

THAKURGAON, June 19: A two-day workshop on Health and Population Control was held in the seminar room of the Deputy Commissioner here recently, reports BSS. Organized by the Population Control department the workshop was inaugurated by Ramesh Chandra Sen MP. The inaugural function was presided over by Alhaj Gulzar Hossain, Deputy Director, Health and Population Control, Assistant Director, Population Control M Babar Ali and Civil Surgeon, Thakurgaon Dr Shahabuddin, among others, spoke on the occasion. The concluding session of the workshop was presided over by Mohammad Asadur Rahman, Director, Health and Population Control, Rajshahi division.

## AL worker slaughtered

MEHERPUR, June 19: Armed assailants slaughtered a businessman and ruling party activist at his Shyamir residence in the sadar thana in the early hours of Monday, reports UNB. Police said a group of 15 assailants in a pre-dawn attack entered into the house of Awami League activist Enamul Haq, 40, by breaking open the window after failing to get into through the iron-gate. They first slaughtered him and then fired on the body. Earlier, the attackers exploded crackers indiscriminately creating panic in the area. A few days back, the assailants took away Enamul's seven-year-old son Tawhid Hassan from his house and demanded Taka One lakh as ransom. But police rescued Tawhid, family sources said.

## BCL sweeps college union poll

TANGAIL, June 19: The election of the students' union of Mirzapur Degree College was held on Thursday, reports BSS. Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) swept the polls. Abu Sayeed and Biplob Kumar of Chhatra League have been elected vice-president and general secretary respectively of the students union.

## Shortage of one taka coin, note

From Our Correspondent  
 JAMALPUR, June 19: Shortage of one taka coins and notes have been intensified here causing inconvenience in transaction. According to local people, the note of one taka which is more or less available has become unusable while the coins are not visible in the local markets. Local businessmen alleged that a section of people had been keeping the newly introduced coins in their collection adding to the crisis of currency. The rickshaw pullers and shopkeepers now-a-days do not pay back Taka one in their transactions taking the advantage of the scarcity.



PABNA: The marketing ceremony of a cassette of Nazrul songs through the tunes of Eliza Parveen's guitar was held here recently on the occasion of the centenary celebration of national poet Kazi Nazrul's birth. — Star photo

## Acid thrown on housewife

From Our Correspondent  
 SATKHIRA, June 19: One housewife sustained acid burn injuries while she was sleeping in her house here at village Hadipur in Debhata thana at dead of night on June 8. The victim was identified as Debora Rani Sarkar, 34, wife of Panu Sarkar of the aforementioned village. Police sources said that the victim was sleeping on the verandah of her house when a group of miscreants threw acid on her. She sustained serious acid burn injuries on various parts of her person. Its cause is yet to be known.

## 5 BCL workers hurt in clash

From A Correspondent  
 MACURA, June 19: Five activists of the ruling party backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) including the president of its Sreepur thana committee sustained serious injuries recently in a violent clash between its two groups. They were admitted to Magura Sadar Hospital. Three of them were in a critical condition and shifted to Dhaka for better treatment. The injured were identified as Sangram, 25, Panna, 28, Belal, 28, Hamman, 30, and Tipul, 25. The two groups were locked in the bloody clash over establishing supremacy regarding a tender of thana parishad.

## Scarcity of 'Aman' seeds

From Our Correspondent  
 NETRAKONA, June 19: Acute scarcity of Aman seeds has been prevailing here. The farmers are moving here and there or rushing to the BADC sales centres for seeds, but the crisis remains everywhere. Taking advantage of the situation some dishonest dealers are selling seeds in the black market at a high price to earn windfall profit. Netrakona Agricultural Extension Department sources said some 2.5 lakh hectares of land here have been earmarked for cultivation of Aman crop in this season which will need about 2,500 metric tons of seeds.

## Accommodation problem in jail

From Our Correspondent  
 KUSHIA, June 19: The district jail here has been facing serious accommodation problem. The jail authorities said they have also been facing serious problem due to erratic power supply. The security of the prison is being threatened seriously. Construction of the jail was completed before the Liberation War. It has got the capacity to provide 450 prisoners. A large number of prisoners are being accommodated daily. Now the number of prisoners have been doubled, but there is no arrangement for their proper accommodation.

## Separate incidents kill three

From A Correspondent  
 FENI, June 19: Three people were killed in separate incidents in different parts here from May 31 to June 3, police said. Police recovered the body of a young girl named Aasha Khatun, 16, who was the daughter of Abul Keshem of village Mamanipur in Daganbhuiyan thana. Police suspected that it was a case of suicide. Another body was recovered on Feni-Daganbhuiyan road which was identified as Maloti day, a school mistress of Sudaram thana in Noakhali district. Police suspected that Maloti died by jumping under a speeding bus. Police also recovered the body of an unidentified person aged in between 20/25 years from Boshurhat road in Daganbhuiyan thana.

## Govt fails to ensure fair price of foodgrains

KURIGRAM, June 19: It's a situation fraught with irony. When the Food Department looks unable to accommodate grains in its godowns due to massive procurement, farmers are accusing the government of failure to ensure fair price of their produce with due support, reports UNB. Local farmers said they could not make up their production costs this season as the prices of wheat, paddy and rice fell far below their expectations.

They also alleged that a section of Food Department officials were procuring gains from a vested quarter depriving the genuine growers. Amidst massive allegations of corruption and irregularities, Food Controller (Rajshahi division) Mohafiz Ali visited the district on Thursday. According to a competent source, the Food Controller was also scheduled to visit the food godowns in Sadar, Ulipur and Rajarhat thanas. But he cut short his visit for reason unknown. Talking to local newsmen, he said it was his routine tour and parried a question about the sudden postponement of his planned visit to the thanas. He told the newsmen that 2,000 metric tons of foodgrains

would be shifted to other districts to resolve the accommodation crisis of the local food godowns. According to officials, some 4,300 MT of paddy, 5,348 MT of rice and 9,361 MT of wheat have so far been procured against the target of 8,000 MT, 7,000 MT and 10,100 MT respectively. While visiting the areas, a section of farmers told that no foodgrains have so far been procured from them. They alleged that it's not possible for them to supply foodgrains to the government foodgodowns without the help of middlemen. There have been reports that

low quality rice imported from India and wheat of various development programmes have been stored in the godowns with the help of "dishonest UP chairmen and businessmen." A visit by this correspondent to Rajarhat food godown showed that paddy has been stockpiled outside the godowns by the middlemen for sale, but the genuine farmers have been kept at bay. The middlemen can sell paddy several times in different names in collaboration with the dishonest officials, depriving the farmers. When contacted the officer-in-charge of the godown confirmed the irregularities.

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## Hill widows welfare body seeks fulfilment of demands

From Shuvra Jyoti Chakma

KHAGRACHHARI, June 19: She is very worried about her two sons. "How do I teach my sons?" she grumbled. Manoshi Chakma, 35, has become widow about nine years back. Her husband, Amar Bikash Chakma was a member of Village Defence Party (VDP), in Babuchhara of Dighinala thana. Former Shantibahini guerrillas thought that Amar Bikash Chakma was a spy of the Bangladesh government. "So one night the Shantibahini men rounded up our house and called out my husband. Later on, the guerrillas shot dead my husband resulting in spot death of my husband." Manoshi said this to The Daily Star correspondent.

The incident occurred in 1997. Since then I am living in misery," she added. Manoshi Chakma disclosed that since then she had no source of income. "Nobody came to help me. I have no homestead. Now I am staying with my sons and passing an inhuman life. I earn some money by selling local wine," she informed. Like Manoshi Chakma there are so many widows here who lost their husbands during the time of CHT crisis. Many of them are staying with the mother's relatives. While visiting to Dighinala thana, one widow named Chikonya Chakma, 45, said to this correspondent that her husband Bindu Chakma had worked at a house of Bibekanda Chakma, former member of Local Government Council, Khagrachhari. "One night the Shantibahini men came near Bibekanda's house to kill him and opened fire. But Bibekanda Chakma escaped the fire while my husband was killed on the spot," Chikonya Chakma said. She said that she had been passing a sub-human life for a long time with my four daughters. "I have no source of income, even a homestead. Now, I am staying at a place of a Boud-dhar Bihar (Pagoda) at Baradama of Dighinala."

Another widow Kalarani Chakma, 36, said, after the attempt of killing of Bibekanda Chakma, my husband Pagana Chakma, was beaten to death allegedly by the army personnel. This is because the army personnel thought that my husband was a spy of Shantibahini men. Later on, the army personnel



Fate of such widows of CHT hill districts, whose husbands were killed by the cadres of Shanti Bahini, which does not exist now, is uncertain as they do not know whether they will be rehabilitated at all or not. — Star photo

gave her Taka Six thousand for cremation of her dead husband. They also assured me that they would give backing for my sons' teaching up to Secondary School Certificate (SSC) level. But they did not keep their assurance," she added. Her husband was killed in 1989. Maya Rani's husband was a member of Shantibahini. Her husband died in a gunbattle of two rival groups of Shantibahini in 1982. At that time Shantibahini was divided into two groups, Lamba (Lamba) and Bettya (Bettya). Maya Rani Chakma said to this correspondent that her husband was a supporter of Larma group. "I met Shiantu Larma about three months back. He only gave me an assurance of help," she said. Shashi Rani Chakma, 40, one more widow said her husband, Batya Chakma was killed by the settlers in 1986 when escaping from India. She said to this correspondent showing her one blind eye which the settlers had destroyed. She said that she could not

teach her sons due to lack of fund. "I also handed over one of my sons to another person to become a cowboy". There is no accurate number of widows who lost their husbands during the time of CHT crisis. But it is true that a large number of widows had been passing very hard days. Women from both the communities including tribals and non-tribals lost their husbands during CHT crisis. The association is now collecting the names of all such widows who lost their husbands during CHT crisis. According to the association source, the present number of widows of tribals and non-tribals is 506. The leaders of the association recently handed over four memorandums to the Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad, Minister for the CHT affairs, and Chairman of the Regional Council (RC) where they demanded implementation of six demands of widows. The six-point demands include: Granting of 50 lakh taka for setting up to a handloom industry, donation of 50 thousand taka for each affected family, one year free ration for each family, employment opportunity for widows' children, grant for education of widows' children and settlement of five acres of khas land for each member. When talking to this correspondent the president of the association appealed for help for widows.

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## UP member, others arrested in Sylhet

SYLHET, June 19: Two people, including a UP member, were arrested from Golapganj thana of the district recently on charges of grabbing land by false documents, report agencies.

The arrested UP member Junu Mia and clerk of a court Manik were sent to jail here. Besides, a mother and her son were arrested from village Nayabanda in Balaganj thana on June 6 for murder.

Police said Sohel Mia beat his wife to death on June 5 with the help of his mother. They were nabbed following a case filed with the police.

Another report from Kushiha adds: Alleged arms trader Ibrahim Hossain (32) was nabbed from Daulatpur thana health complex on June 2. Ibrahim was admitted to hospital after sustaining injury in a dispute over sharing of the sale proceeds of unauthorised arms with his co-partners.

On information, police raided the hospital and arrested him. Report from Sirajganj says: Police arrested a young man with a pistol from BSCIC area in Sadar thana recently. Police said employees of a cement factory caught Russel (21) red handed while he along with two accomplices demanded toll from them and handed him over to the police. The two others, however, managed to escape. A case was filed with police.

Another report from Faridpur adds: Police arrested three people and recovered firearms in separate raids in the town recently.

Shahidul Islam alias Jewel and Zahid Hossain were nabbed from West Alipura area. One pipe gun and two bullets were also recovered from their possession. Labiu Sheikh was arrested from his house at Alipur in the town for possessing illegal arms. Police seized one pipe gun and two rounds of ammunition from his residence.

Another report from Sherpur says: Police arrested two youths along with firearms from a field adjacent to the Government College in Sadar thana. Police said the arrested-Sohag (19) and Ashis (20)-were engaged in committing highway robbery. One pipe gun and two sharp weapons were also seized from them.

Report from Comilla adds: Detective police in separate drives in the district from May 16 recovered huge quantity of drugs and arrested three people. Acting on a tip-off, a police team halted a baby taxi at Baz-tadda in the town on May 16 and arrested a young man Liton with nine bottles of phensidyl.

On May 26, police searched a Dhaka-bound passenger bus from Comilla at Paduar Bazar in Sadar thana and recovered 27 bottles phensidyl. On secret information, a special police team raided the resident of Matin Mia in the town's Bagchagaon on May 29 and arrested him for drug trading.

Later, on the basis on his confessional statement police recovered 13 packets of ganja, 44 ganja-mixed cigarette and 10 grams raw ganja. On the same day police intercepted a rickshaw at Paduar Bazar in Sadar thana and recovered 16 bottles of liquor. Acting on a tip-off, police raided a group of heroin addicts at Mia Bazar in Chowdagram thana on June 2 and arrested a young man Alamgir. Other members of the group managed to escape.

Meanwhile, Kotwali police recovered Indian sarees worth Tk 5 lakh from a truck at Paduar Bazar in Sadar thana on June 5. On secret information police tried to halt the truck at Paduar Bazar on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway, but defying the signal the truck sped away. Later, under wireless message highway patrol police halted the truck and recovered 2,000 pieces of Indian saree worth about Tk 5 lakh. The driver of the truck and the owners of the saree managed to flee.

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## ARSENIC

## UK team will examine tubewell water

JOYPURHAT, June 19: A British survey team will arrive here next month in a mission to examine the extent of arsenic contamination in the tubewell water, reports UNB. Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) sources said the foreign expert team will conduct their survey in various areas of the five thanas. Recently PHED conducted tests in the frontier areas and found arsenic in tolerable limit. Earlier, arsenic was detected beyond the tolerable limit in tubewell waters in Kaloy thana.

## 4 outlaws surrender in Satkhira

From Our Correspondent  
 SATKHIRA, June 19: Four activists of outlawed Biplobi Communist Party surrendered recently at Tala police station. They were identified as Jamal Hossain, 30, of village Ziala Nalta, Syed Maniruzzaman, 24, and Mahubur Rahman, 24, both of Atrai and Sajjad Hossain, 32, of Mehendi in Tala thana. Police sources said, that they had been wanted in connection with a number of criminal cases including toll collection, abduction and killing. They also deposited one firearms including four round of cartridges.



HABIGANJ: A two-day workshop on Health and Population Programme for Journalists was held recently under the auspices of Habiganj Family Planning Directorate at the conference room of the local circuit house. — Star photo



MYMENSINGH: Vendors have occupied almost all the portions of the main road here creating problems for pedestrians and transport drivers alike. — Star photo

## Body of young girl recovered

From Our Correspondent  
 MYMENSINGH, June 19: Gaupur police recovered the dead body of a young girl recently from a water body. Police and the victim's family sources said, Halem Khatun, 15, daughter of Abdul Majid of village Naugoan in Gouripur thana went out of her house on the night of June 5 in response to natural call. Since then she was missing. After a long search, her body was found in a water body. Police recovered the body which bore several injury marks. The body was sent to My-mensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) morgue for autopsy.

## 3 feared dead as boat capsizes in Meghna

From Our Correspondent  
 BRAHMANBARIA, June 19: At least three persons are feared dead when a boat capsized recently in the river Meghna near village Bishuhandi and Koroyma in Banchharampur thana. According to eye witness, the boat was on way to Banch-harmpur through Norsingdi, through the Meghna river. The ill-fated boat capsized due to gusty wind. Twenty-five persons fell down the river. The boatman and his two helpers were rescued at once by another trawler from the spot. Later on 22 were rescued, but the rest three persons remained missing till filing of the report. Nobody knows their whereabouts till filing of this report.

## Fish production deficit in Pabna 11,000 tons

From Ranesh Maitra

PABNA, June 19: In this northern district, which was once famous for fish, annual deficit of fish production stands at 11,000 tons, an official estimate said. According to a recently published official statistics, at present only 2,600 tons of fish are being produced here annually. Of them, 1,500 tons of fish are being produced per year in 129 beels stretching on about 4,00,900 acres of land. The rivers produce only 300 tons of fish and ponds provide 800 tons of fish every year. The statistics say that there are 460 demonstration ponds and 222 demonstration fish

farms in Pabna district. Most of the rivers, beels and ponds, homes of fish, in the district are drying up for various reasons, causing a gradual decline in fish production. Illgal structures built by influential people in rivers, narrowing the width and obstructing the free flow of waters, are playing havoc with the fish production in river water, one of the major natural sources of fish. Moreover, the abnormal fall in water level in the Padma and the Jamuna rivers due to appearance of innumerable shoals is hampering fish production. The other rivers facing

the same problem, besides water pollution are the Ichhamati, the Baral and the Karatao. These rivers contain water only during the rainy season, local people said. The declining trend in the district's fish production has also been attributed to gradual siltation and water pollution in beels, another natural source of fish. The beels include Chalan beel, the largest one, beel Gandahasti, popularly known as Gaznar beel, Garkar beel, Ichhar beel, Kumillier beel, Naduriar beel, Bara beel, Dikshi beel, Khilishgudhar beel, Roul beel and Beel Kuraha.

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MAGURA: The teachers of 17 colleges in the district brought out a procession recently protesting the attack on Abdur Razzak, a teacher of Beroil-Palita Nazir Ahmed College. — Star photo

## Road constructed saving half of allocated money

BANDARBAN, June 19: Sixteen Engineering Battalion of Bangladesh Army here constructed a road saving half of the allocated money, reports UNB. Commander of the battalion Lt Col Fazlur Rahman Mrida told that the government had allocated Tk 18.30 crore for the construction of 16.5 kilometer Dighinala-Marissy road.

But under the direct supervision of his battalion the construction work was completed costing Tk 8.95 crore only saving Tk 9.35 crore. The amount will be deposited to the government soon, he said. It was learnt that Roads and Highway (R&H) Department submitted an estimated cost of Tk 26.45 crore to the government for the construction of 19.5 km road in 1997. The department constructed three kilometers of the road at a cost of Tk 9.27 crore. Finding inconsistency with the expenses and the work, the government shifted the responsibility of the work to the 16 engineering battalion.

The army completed the work including the renovation of the three kilometers of the road, which was constructed by the R&H Department at less than half of the estimated cost. Lt Col Fazlur Rahman further told that no major renovation work of the road would be needed in next 20 years. Mentionable that the 16 Engineering Battalion is now constructing the 50-kilometer Thanchi-Chimbuk road at an estimated cost of Tk 60 crore.