

## National

## News snaps

## Man commits suicide

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, July 17: A 20-year-old man committed suicide recently by taking poison at village Pangmasua in Kaladi thana.

Police and hospital sources said, Mofizuddin, 20, son of Md Idris Mia swallowed poison. Afterwards he was admitted into Bhagalpur Hospital where he breathed his last. The cause behind the suicide could not be known.

## Arms, ammunition recovered

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, July 17: Gaibandha police in a drive recently recovered three arms and ammunition from village Ramchandrapur in the sadar thana.

On getting a secret information a police contingent raided the house of an abounding criminal named Joynal of the aforementioned village. They recovered one revolver, one pipe gun and one shotgun gun from a box. They also recovered a few ammunition and equipments used for manufacturing fire arms. Police, however, arrested his second wife Sirina Begum and sent her to jail hajat. Police could not arrest the main criminal Joynal.

## Snatcher caught red-handed

From Our Correspondent

PARIDPUR, July 17: A snatcher was caught red-handed recently at Dhuldi, eight kilometres off the town.

According to locals, a gang of snatchers five to six in number attacked Sarwar Mia, Site Manager of BS Jute Spinning Mills, being built at Shibrampur in Kotwali thana. They tried to snatch away money from him while he was passing through Dhuldi area by rickshaw at 9 pm on the day. The attacker raised a hue and cry for help. Then the local people rushed to the spot and caught hold one of the snatchers identified as Ayub Ali, 25. The rest managed to flee the scene. Later on Ayub was handed over to Kotwali police.

## Two more commit suicide

From Our Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, July 17: Two persons committed suicide in the district recently.

A housewife committed suicide by taking insecticide at village Barnai in Nandai thana recently. The victim was identified as Zulekha Khatun, 30, wife of Abdul Quddus, a day labourer. She took insecticide as she could not bear the pangs of colic pain. A boy committed suicide by jumping before a speeding train at village Aranyapasha of the same thana. The victim was identified as Khakan, 14, son of Shambu Miah of the village. The reason behind his suicide could not be known immediately.

## Population Day observed

COMILLA, July 17: International Population Day was observed in the district in a befitting manner on July 11, reports BSS.

The Department of Family Planning and different non-government organisations arranged various programmes to mark the day. A discussion was held at Diabetic Hospital conference room which was presided over by Deputy Director of Family Planning M Abdul Latif. Ltd Col (Retd) Akbar Hossain, MP was present as the chief guest and Additional District Magistrate Mesbahul Alam and Dr Zobaida Hannan were the special guests. Dr Abdul Momin, Dr Muzibur Rahman, Dr Abdurrahman, Abdul Hamid and Yar Ahmed spoke on the occasion. Certificates and prizes were distributed among the best family planning workers, assistants and inspectors.

## Bumper output of Boro likely

BHERAMARA, July 17: A bumper production of Boro crop is expected in the just concluded season, reports BSS.

According to the District Agriculture office sources, the target of production of Boro during the season was set at about fifty thousand tonnes. Due to weather remaining favourable and timely supply of seeds, fertilizer and insecticides the bumper production was possible. The peasants now expect to harvest more than the target set.

## Decision withdrawn

LALMONIRHAT, July 17: Lalmonirhat Lawyers Association has withdrawn its recent decision of boycotting the District and Session Judge's court after a fruitful discussion with the judicial officers, reports BSS.

The discussion was held at the chamber of the District and Session Judge recently. The boycott decision was taken on July 11 for alleged misbehaviour with some lawyers.

## Phensidyl seized

NARSINGDI, July 17: Narsingdi Sadar thana police seized 391 bottles of phensidyl from the road, in front of Narsingdi district hospital at Bashil, on Dhaka-Sylhet highway of the district recently, reports BSS.

Police sources said mobile police on duty found two bags containing 391 bottles of phensidyl on the road, in front of the hospital. Police seized the bags of the phensidyl, but the owner of the phensidyl managed to escape.

## Plantation programme progressing

BANDARBAN, July 17: Forest Department here has planned to distribute two lakh saplings of fruit bearing and other trees on nominal charges during the current tree plant campaign, reports BSS.

Forest Department sources told here that plantation was in full swing in all naked hills under Bandarban Hill District. More than 15 lakh saplings of various trees are being planted on the naked hills from January last. The sources said that massive plantation programme had been taking up here with a view to achieving ecological balance and afforestation target.

## Young man killed in road accident

MADRIPUR, July 17: A young man was killed and another injured by a speeding bus at Kalabari under Sadar thana on Barisal-Faridpur highway on Friday, reports BSS.

Eye witnesses said the accident occurred when they were run over a passenger bus. They were travelling by a motor cycle. The victim Kawsar Hossain (18) died on the spot. The injured was admitted to Faridpur Medical College Hospital in a critical condition.

## Welfare scheme for poor

SHARIATPUR, July 17: The Social Welfare Department has undertaken a Tk 1.88 crore scheme for the welfare of the poor villagers of six thanas, reports BSS.

The money has already been disbursed among 30,000 poor villagers as soft loan. The borrowers have invested the money in small projects, including fisheries and livestock. Officials said recovery of such loans is quite satisfactory.

## Life term for killer husband

JOYPUR, July 17: A court here on Thursday convicted a man and sentenced him to life term in jail for killing his wife in 1997, reports BSS.

The court also fined him Tk 5,000, in default, to suffer six months more. According to prosecution, Gazilul Islam, 28, son of Ibrahim Ali of village Panchi in Kalai thana, beat to death his wife Rehena Khatun, 24, on June 29, 1997 for dowry.

After examining the witnesses and records, District and Sessions Judge Abu Bakar found Gazilul guilty of murder and handed down the verdict. The Judge, however, acquitted five other accused in the case as the allegations brought against them were not proved.

## Tragic death of young man

NAOGAON, July 17: A young man, who unwittingly slept alongside Naogaon-Dhurmurhat road in Porakhatia area Monday night, was crushed under the wheels of a running truck, reports BSS.

Villagers said Belal, 22, son of Danesh Ali of Berhadanga village, slept on the road as he felt drowsy while fishing in a roadside beel, leaving behind his fishing net in the beel. Police recovered the body the next morning and sent it to hospital morgue for autopsy.

## Science fair held

SHARIATPUR, July 17: A science fair and Shishu Ananda Mela was held on recently at Sharaiptur Government Girls High School premises here, reports BSS.

The inaugural function of the fair was presided over by Fazila Parveen, headmistress of Sharaiptur Government Girls High School. The Deputy Commissioner Sharaiptur, Syed Ibrahim Khan was present on the occasion as the chief guest. Additional Deputy Commissioner M A Rashid and Prof Mohammad Ali Hossain, among others, spoke on the occasion.

## Scarcity of fish in Netrakona markets

## Siltation hampers pisciculture in Cox's bazar

From Abdul Monayem Khan

COX'S BAZAR, July 17: Pisciculture has been affected badly due to massive siltation in the Bakkhali, Matamuhuri, Nafriver and in different canals and water bodies.

According to government and non-government sources, unplanned use of chemical fertilisers and insecticides in crop fields has also affected the growth of different species of fries. Hundreds of fishermen have been facing numerous problems due to shortage of fund and price-hike of fishing materials.

Earlier, different species of fish were available in abundance in rivers, ponds and other water bodies, but now the situation has become quite opposite due to indiscriminate fishing by non-professionals.

Acute scarcity of fish has been prevailing in the rural areas here for the last one month in this rainy season.

This is because some of the professional fishermen have left their profession while others migrated to other places for survival.

Indiscriminate fishing of fries in different parts of the region defying the government ban is another cause of the scarcity of fish. The government has banned fishing fries below nine inches all over the country with a view to boosting up the fish production.

According to witnesses, fries are being sold in the markets of Sadar thana, Kutubdia, Moheshkhali, Ramu, Chokoria, Ukhia and Teknaf thanas. The matter was brought to the notice of the Fisheries Department on several occasions, but the department took no steps.

About 9,000 ponds in different parts of the region are lying uncultivated since long.

Local people said, about 50 per cent of the ponds in the area have been silted and dried up due to lack of maintenance. A large number of ponds are also covered with water hyacinths hampering fish cultivation.

Experts said 12,000 metric tons of fish can be produced annually if these ponds are properly cultivated. The authorities should take programmes for re-excavation of silted rivers and ponds and introduce scientific

methods of fish culture.

On the other hand, different varieties of sweet water fish are on the verge of extinction as fries being caught indiscriminately violating the government ban.

The eggs of fish are also being destroyed. Sweet water fish like Kol, Magur, Shingi, Pabda, Puti, Mola, Tuki, Shoal, Boal are rarely found in the local markets. These were found abundantly in the markets during the rainy season in the past.

**Experts said 12000 metric tons of fish can be produced annually if the ponds are cultivated properly. The Fisheries Department should take programmes of reexcavation of silted up rivers, ponds and other water bodies. The department should also introduce scientific methods of fish culture. On the other hand, different varieties of sweet water fish are on the verge of extinction as fries are being caught indiscriminately in Cox's Bazar district violating the government ban. The eggs of fish are also being destroyed. The matter was already brought to the notice of the Fisheries Department on several occasions, but no steps have yet been taken by the department or the members of the law enforcing agencies till now.**

The district fisheries department sources informed that the season stretching from Ashar to Aswin of the Bangla year (June to October), is the breeding period of fish, which are caught abundantly in this period.

The government prohibited the fishing of small varieties of fish like Ruhu, Katla, Kalibaus up to 23 centimetre (nine inches) from July to December. But fries are being caught indiscriminately defying the ban.

The authorities concerned and the law enforcing agencies never played their due role against the violators of the ban, local

people alleged.

Our Netrakona Correspondent says: An acute scarcity of fish has been prevailing throughout the district for the last two and a half months.

While visiting the markets in 10 thanas, this correspondent found that the supply of fish in the markets had been quite inadequate. The prices of fish shot up due to its short supply. Only some small varieties of fish are being sold at prices between Tk 125 and Tk 160 per kg. Other fish like Hilsa, Mrigal, Rui, Katla and Silver Cup are being sold at Tk 160 to Tk 200 per kg. Big varieties of fish are not available in the markets.

According to the local observers, low production due to lack of its scientific cultivation here has caused scarcity of fish. Besides, fishing of fries by 'current nets' is another reason for fish scarcity.

There are hundreds of ponds, 'beels', canals and other water bodies in the district. But most of those are lying abandoned due to lack of necessary steps and proper management to be taken by the departments concerned.

Some pisciculturists opined that there is a bright prospect of cultivating fish bright throughout the year here. The possible production from this district alone can meet the total fish demand of greater Mymensingh.

But due to lack of initiatives and patronage, high interest rate of bank loans and non-availability of high yielding variety of fries are the main reasons behind fish scarcity.

Though some private bodies and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have been trying to boost fish production in the district by opening of hatcheries in different places, but the organisations could not yield good result due to numerous reasons. At present only a few people are engaged in pisciculture in a planned manner here. Fries are now coming from Mymensingh for cultivation here. While talking to The Daily Star some fishermen of different thanas gave an appalling picture of pisciculture. They are now leading a miserable life, they added.



Hay day for boatmen:

Boatmen of Natore who remained almost idle before the advent of the rainy season are now passing busy days ferrying passengers across the rivers.

— Star photo by Anwar Ali

## Army man killed in road mishap

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, July 17: One army man was killed and 15 other were injured, eight of them seriously, in a road accident near Bandarhat in Singra thana of the district recently.

According to police, a Kadirabad Cantonment-bound military truck from Bogra Cantonment collided with a roadside tree and fell into a ditch, killing havildar Shahiduzzaman, 38, of Kadirabad Cantonment in Natore.

The injured persons were admitted in Natore Sadar Hospital and shifted to Bogra military hospital later.

Seriously injured army personnel were Havildar Abdus Samad, 26, Naik Shah Jalal, 25, Mahirul, 26, Sepoy Sajidur, 25, Anwar, 26, Sadek, 26, Habib, 26, and Abdur Rashid, 32.

The truck was carrying ordnance goods from Bogra Cantonment. However, damage to the goods was not reported.

## 2 extremists arrested

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, July 17: Two alleged extremists were arrested by Singra thana police on Tuesday night.

Police acting on a tip off, arrested the two from Chalan beel area. The arrested persons were Shaheed, son of late Fazey Uddin of Dahia village, and Afzal, son of Hazrat Ullah of Bhash village under Singra thana.

They are said to be members of outlawed Purba Bangla Sarbahara Party.

In recent days about 15 remote villages of Chalan beel area under Natore, Pabna and Sirajganj districts have become a sanctuary for the outlawed Sarbahara group.

300 policemen in a joint drive conducted in remote villages of the three districts arrested 35 extremists on July 10.

More than 50 road robberies were occurred in the northern region of the country during the last six months.

## Khasia tribe reacts sharply

## Betel leaf sellers asked to collect business permits

MOULVIBAZAR, July 17: Members of the Khasia tribe here reacted sharply following an order of the district administration to collect permits for selling betel leaf, reports UNB.

The district administration recently issued the order asking all betel leaf sellers to collect permits to run their business.

A headman of Khasia tribe here told the news agency that production and sale of betel leaf is their only profession from generation to generation.

"We produce betel leaf in the hills and jungles of the border area and sell those in different hats and bazaars as our major

goods," he said.

With the introduction of the permit system for sale of betel

leaf, the poor Khasias will be deprived and the business controlled by the vested quarters, he feared.

He said the main drawback of the permit system is that a farmer will be allowed to sell a specific quantity of betel leaf and his excess production will perish. This will hamper production of betel leaf, quite contradictory to the government call for increasing production.

Local people urged the government to withdraw the order to redress the grievances of the Khasia tribe for maintaining peace and harmony in the region.

## Alleged irregularities in Jamalpur schools

JAMALPUR, July 17: Lack of

adequate number of teachers and other problems have been hampering academic activities in different educational institutions across the district, reports UNB.

Nandina Model Academy in Sadar thana has been facing many problems hampering its academic activities.

The school, established in 1984 by some local people and included in the government Monthly Payment Order (MPO) on the same year, has over 500 students. But the numbers of classrooms, furniture and other educational equipment are too inadequate.

The students have been facing serious problems due to this reason. The classrooms lack ceiling and the conditions of the partitions are deplorable.

There is no boundary wall of the school.

In the face of irregularities and other allegations, the In-

spection and Audit Department conducted investigation and some allegations were found valid.

Following the inspection, the salaries and allowances of the teachers and employees were stopped.

After much effort, the teachers and employees got their arrear salaries of 10 months, but still their salaries and allowances of 23 months remained unpaid,