

## Sundarbans Forest Division to be divided into 2 zones

From Staff Correspondent  
KHULNA, May 20: The process to divide Sundarbans Forest Division into two zones is nearing completion, said a reliable source.

Sundarbans Forest Division will be divided into South Zone and East Zone. The headquarters of the West Zone will be set up in Khulna, while the place for the office of the East Zone is yet to be decided, the source added.

The decision to divide the present division has been taken in order to inject more efficiency in surveillance to save the resources of the mangrove forest.

The Sundarbans Forest Division was created in 1884 comprising six Range Offices headquartered at Khulna, Satkhira, Chandpur, Swarankhola, Bashirhat and Namkhana. After partition of India, Bashirhat and Namkhana Ranges fell under the jurisdiction of West Bengal, India and four others remained under the control of the erstwhile East Pakistan, now Bangladesh.

A source said, under the new arrangement, Khulna and Satkhira ranges will fall under the West Zone covering Dakop, Kolra and Shyamnagar upazilas. On the other hand, Mongla, Morelganj and Swarankhola ranges will fall under the jurisdiction of the proposed East Zone.

## '5,000 more policemen to be recruited'

From Our Correspondent  
MOULVI BAZAR, May 20: Whip of the parliament and Member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Ministry Md Abdus Shaheed has said 5,000 more policemen will be appointed soon in the country to make the law enforcing agency more effective.

The Whip Md Abdus Shaheed said this while inaugurating the new building of Srimangal police station recently.

Presided over by AKM Shahidul Islam, police super of Moulvibazar, the inaugural function was attended, among others, by Deputy Inspector General of Police in Sylhet Range Md Tofazzal Hussain. Deputy Commissioner of Moulvibazar Nurul Ameen and Executive Engineer of Moulvibazar district Public Works Department (PWD) Abdur Rob.

The Whip urged the policemen to discharge duties with honesty.

He also said members of the police force are now enjoying risk allowance and ration facilities.

## New variety of pepper may gain popularity

From Delwar Kabir  
JHENIDAH, May 20: A new variety of pepper may gain popularity in the country, agriculture officials said.

The new variety has a bright prospect, they said while addressing a seminar styled 'Sustainable Technology Transfer' at village Bagutia in Shailakupa upazila in the district recently.

Presided over by Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Department (AED) of Jhenidah Abdul Awal, the seminar was attended by Abdul Wahab MP as chief guest. Among others, plant protection specialist Rezaul Karim, agriculture officers MA Rashid and Sahidul Alam and a nursery owner Setabuddin Al Azad also spoke on the occasion.

The experts of AED said the hybrid variety, known as China variety, can bring good earning for the farmers.

Setabuddin Al-Azad, a nursery owner, said he cultivated China variety of pepper at a cost of Taka 4,000 on ten decimals of land this year. I expect about Taka 25,000 from the crop, he added.



## Wrath of the River Jamuna

(From L to R) The River Jamuna has already devoured the original location of Majhepara under Betil union of Chowhali Upazila. But now the mighty river has started devouring the newly shifted Majhepara area. Emergency measures should be taken to save the important Betil area which is famous for its weaving industry and as a major commercial area. The River Jamuna has already devoured the local primary school and other institutions. Now Betil High School is threatened by the erosion.

— Star photo

# Erosion playing havoc in Sirajganj, Gaibandha

By Staff Correspondent

River erosion has taken a serious turn in Sirajganj and Gaibandha districts.

Our Sirajganj Correspondent says: Betil Enayetpur under Chowhali Upazila and Sonatani under Shahzadpur Upazila have been seriously affected by erosion.

Many institutions including a vast track of land have been threatened. With rise in river water level, erosion has been intensified at Betil Bazar and in Enayetpur Medical College area.

Meanwhile, property worth about one crore taka had so far been devoured by the river during the last one year. Thousand of affected family members have taken shelter on embankments. The river has again hit their newly makeshift shelters.

The local Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) submitted a 15 crore taka project proposal to the higher authorities to build spurs to save thousands of handloom factories.

Enayetpur mazar, newly constructed Enayetpur Medical College Hospital, Sirajganj Cloth Project, schools and colleges. If the authorities concerned do not pay heed to the BWDB proposal, the educational institutions and commercial establishments might be devoured.

Most of Sonatani Bazar under Shahzadpur Upazila has already been devoured. The proposal to construct 206 to 208 kilometres embankment has been sent and 660 M. Ton wheat has been demanded for this purpose.

If the embankments are not constructed, a large number of houses with vast property would be damaged by the mighty Jamuna.

Our Gaibandha Correspondent reports: At least 30 mouzas under Fulchhari upazila have been badly affected by erosion of the River Brahmaputra.

Major portion of the aforesaid mouzas have already been

engulfed by unabated erosion since last five years.

Meanwhile, a total of 60 educational institutes along with a number of mosques, temples and cultivable lands have been eroded by the surging water of the river.

The erosion has rendered nearly 32,000 families shelterless. Affected families have lost all their belongings including their dwelling houses and movable property. Such erosion victims have turned into destitutes due to this natural calamity. They have been fighting a losing battle for survival on abandoned embankments and roadside spaces under makeshift shelters. They have no job to earn their living now. Many victims have been striving hard for survival as day labourers, rickshawpullers and fishermen, but most of them have to remain jobless.

This is because the job market is very limited in this small district town. Just for liveli-

hood. Even many of them have already died of starvation.

A total five mouzas out of 12 under Kanchipara union, nine out of 21 mouzas under Gajaria union, six mouzas under Arendabari union, four mouzas under Fazlupur union and two mouzas under Fulchhari union have already been devoured by the River Brahmaputra.

The present location of the River Brahmaputra was not so even 20 years ago. At that time the western bank of the river was located 10 to 15 kilometres eastward. Since then river erosion has been playing havoc along the western bank.

At present the western bank of the River Brahmaputra is only four kilometres off Gaibandha town which might engulf the town itself within the next few years if the rate of erosion continued at the present pace.

Meanwhile, all measures taken so far to stop erosion proved ineffective.

## Lawyers boycott courts of two magistrates

From Our Correspondent  
RANGPUR, May 20: Lawyers of Rangpur Bar Association on Monday boycotted the courts of two 1st class magistrates in protest against insulting remarks allegedly passed by the two magistrates.

Court sources said a group of lawyers and the two magistrates locked in an altercation after hearing of a bail petition was not held.

Rangpur Bar Association held an emergency meeting protesting the incident.

## Viral fever in epidemic form in Netrakona

From Our Correspondent  
NETRAKONA, May 20: Viral fever has broken out in an epidemic form in the district. Local civil surgeon office sources said about 40 per cent people have been affected with the disease.

Patients are pouring into health complexes and hospitals for treatment from different areas.

Doctors and health officials have attributed the spread of the disease to the seasonal change in weather.

## Abducted person yet to be traced

From Our Correspondent  
SIRAJGANJ, May 20: Police are yet to trace the whereabouts of Ajjhar Ali, 38, an employee of Kanarkhanda Upazila after one month of his abduction. He was kidnapped by the miscreants from the Upazila Parishad Office area in the first week of April, 2000.

Villagers suspect that he had been murdered over past enmity with some of the villagers.

## Obituary

From Our Correspondent  
MYMENSINGH, May 19: Musammad Kabbana, mother of Md Rafiqul Islam, deputy commissioner of Mymensingh, died of cardiac arrest at Kachua in Chandpur district recently. She was 75.

She was buried at the family graveyard in Chandpur.

## 10 killed in Kushtia road accidents last month

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, May 20: At least ten people were killed in separate road accidents in the district last month.

Reckless driving, defective vehicles and bad condition of roads have been attributed to the rise in road accidents in recent days.

Two people were killed when a Kushtia-bound microbus from Pabna collided with a truck in Paksey Ferry Ghat area on April 1. The two—Selim, 28, and

Marlam, 25—died on the spot. Besides, four others were also injured. They were admitted to hospital.

On the same day Jesmin Akhter, 8, was killed when a microbus knocked her down from behind on Kushtia-Jhenidah road. The girl was crossing the road. Police recovered the body and sent it to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy.

A man was killed in a road accident on the same day in Bhadalia Bus Stand area. The identity of the man could not be known. He was buried at Kushtia Poura graveyard after autopsy.

A motorcyclist was killed when the bike collided with a private car on Kushtia-Jhenidah road on April 3. The victim was identified as Saiful, 25, son of Amruddin of Khazanagar. The body was sent to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy.

Two people were killed near sugar purchasing centre in Bheramara upazila on April 9. The accident occurred when a three-wheeler skidded off the road and fell into a roadside ditch.

The dead were identified as Shajahan, 25, driver of the vehicle, and passenger Golam Nabi, 22, of village Battail of Jogati union under Sadar upazila.

A young man was killed when a passenger bus hit him from behind on April 19 at Phultala on Kushtia-Jhenidah

road in the morning. The victim was identified as Monirul Shaikh.

A young man was killed after he fell from the roof of a passenger bus on April 21 at Mongababaria Bazar, one mile away from Kushtia town. The man, Belal, 25, was rushed to Kushtia General Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

On April 26 a teenage boy was crushed under the wheels of truck loaded with bricks. The boy was identified as Lalchand, 13, son of Shorab Hossain of Monohardia union of Sadar upazila.

Police seized the truck. Separate cases were lodged in these connections.

## College teacher assaulted in Chuadanga

From Our Correspondent

CHUADANGA, May 20: An assistant professor of Chuadanga Government College was severely beaten by a group of unidentified armed hoodlums numbering 5 to 6 at about 10-30 pm on Wednesday.

The hoodlums went to the teachers' hostel, where the teacher resides, and attacked him.

The teacher was identified as Elias Hossain. The reason behind the attack could not be known immediately.

## 17 unnatural deaths in 26 days

From Nurul Karim Majumder

FENI, May 20: At least 17 unnatural deaths were reported in 26 days from April 20 to May 15 in the district.

Abdul Mannan, 26 a Jubo Dal activist, was killed by unidentified gunmen in the town on May 7.

Police said assailants shot the victim from the very close range.

A BCL activist Motalab Hossain Talab, 18, was killed in factional clash on May 9. An unidentified old man was stabbed to death by unknown assailants on May 7 night. The man was admitted to Sadar hospital in critical condition at night.

A young man committed suicide on April 25 at Char Chandina. The youth was identified as Selim, 27. He killed himself by taking poison. The reason behind the suicide could not be known.

Idris Mia, 50, committed suicide at village Kolapara Sadar upazila on May 10.

A two-year-old boy drowned in pond at village Chandpur under Sadar upazila on April 28. The child was identified as Babu. The boy fell in the pond while playing on the bank of the pond.

Mohammad Mortuza, 32, of village Masampur under Sadar upazila, committed suicide on April 24. The man killed himself by taking poison following altercation with his wife, neighbours said.

Murali Mohon Saha, 72, was killed in a fire in the town on April 23. The old man was

rushed to hospital after a shop caught fire. Saha was the shop owner.

Shajita, 18, a student of Feni Nursing Institute, committed suicide at her room in the institute hostel on April 23. The reason behind the suicide could not be known.

Shaheed, 14, a student of Jaylaskar Primary School, was killed by lightning at village Jaylaskar under Daganbhuiya upazila on April 20. The boy was going to school as a nor'wester was lashing the area.

Six people were killed in two separate road accidents at Maidjoo on May 14 and April 25.

An old man was crushed under the wheels of a truck at Jatrashedy on Dhaka-Chittagong highway on April 26. The man was identified as Ishaq Mia. The accident occurred when the man was crossing the road.

Separate cases were lodged in these connections.

## Beheaded body recovered

From Our Correspondent  
JESSORE, May 20: Police recovered a beheaded body from a field at Dighalsingha under Chowgacha upazila in the district recently.

According to police and witnesses, the body, wrapped in white cloth, was found lying in a roadside place.

The identity of the body could not be known.

## News snaps

### Plaintiff murdered

BOGRA, May 20: A middle-aged man, who was critically injured in an armed attack, died in a hospital here on Wednesday, reports UNB.

The dead was identified as Salamat Ullah of Ramshahar village in Sadar Upazila. Salamat is believed to have been killed by a group of men against whom he had filed a case with the local police. His son filed another case against them in connection with the killing.

### Phensidyl seized: Two arrested

HABIGANJ, May 20: Police arrested two people and seized 95 bottles of phensidyl from Kutuber Chawk area on Shyestaganj-Shahjibazar road on Wednesday, reports UNB.

The arrested were identified as Shukkur Miah of village Morashani in Brahmanbaria district and Muhammad Ali of Kadamtoli village in Habiganj sadar upazila. Police said Shukkur and Ali were arrested with 45 bottles of phensidyl. Later acting on information they recovered 50 more bottles from the house of Muhammad Ali.

### Bumper output of IRRI-Boro likely

MANIKGANJ, May 20: A bumper production of IRRI-Boro is expected in seven upazilas in the current season, reports UNB.

Farmers here this year cultivated IRRI-Boro on 99,100 acres of land as against the target of 92,650 acres. They, however, allege that high price of diesel, frequent power failure and load shedding are hampering irrigation in IRRI-Boro cultivation. Harvesting of paddy has already begun in many places.



### Sweet pumpkin farming gains popularity

A newly evolved hybrid sweet pumpkin has become popular among the farmers in Jamalpur district. Photo shows a local cultivator named Tota Mia of village Narikeli in the Sadar thana showing his produce which he cultivates round the year. He earns Taka 15,000 to 20,000 every year by selling sweet pumpkin which weighs one to five kilogram each.

— Star photo

### Transport worker commits suicide

MADARIPUR, May 20: A young transport worker committed suicide by hanging himself from the ceiling of his bedroom here on Thursday, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Rezaul, 21 of Bagerpur area in the town. Family feud might be the reason behind his suicide, police said. Police recovered the body and sent it to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

### Uplift works progressing

BAGERHAT, May 20: Implementation work of 13 development projects at a cost of Tk 24 lakh is progressing fast in nine upazilas here, reports UNB.

The District Council is financing the projects from its own resources under a Rural Development Programme undertaken for the current fiscal year. The projects include construction and repair of rural roads and low-cost bridges and renovation of some union parishad offices. About 60 per cent work on the projects has already been completed and the rest is expected to be finished by June next. The district council, earlier, implemented four development projects under current the ADP in Kachua Upazila at a cost of Tk 1.85 lakh.



Leaders of Rangpur unit of Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA), a citizens' coalition for monitoring elections in Bangladesh, addressing a press conference at Rangpur Chamber Auditorium recently demanding FEMA suggested electoral law reforms. The conference is part of the advocacy programme in favour of recommendations suggested by FEMA.

### Two muggers caught

JOYPURHAT, May 20: Immediately after a snatching, local people caught two muggers red handed from Dogachhi in sadar upazila on Wednesday, reports UNB.

One of the muggers, however, managed to flee the scene along with the snatched money. Police said Mamun of Masterpara and Mohsin alias Tuhin of Sugar Mills Colony of the town were arrested, but their accomplice Mithu fled. The three muggers intercepted two businessmen, Firoz and Miraj, near Dogachhi union council office and snatched away Tk 1.1 lakh from their possession.

### Abducted school girls still missing

BAGERHAT, May 20: Police could not yet trace two schoolgirls who have been missing since last 10 days, reports UNB.

Rozina Khatun and Doli Khatun, two cousins of Sundarkhola village in sadar upazila, have been missing since they went to school on May 10. Family sources said Rozina was a student of class three of Sundarkhola Primary school while Doli resided at a local orphanage. Brothers of the two girls filed a GD after they failed to trace them.

### Training concludes

NARSIGNDI, May 20: A six-day training on 'Applied Nutrition' organised by Bangladesh Institute of Research and Training on Applied Nutrition (BIRTAN) concluded in the training room of the local Agriculture Extension Department (AED) recently, reports BSS.

Among others, the deputy director of AED, the civil surgeon, the officials of livestock, fisheries and BIRTAN addressed the concluding ceremony. A total of 70 participants took part the training.

### Workshop

PATUAKHALI, May 20: A daylong workshop on government-NGO relation was held here on Tuesday, reports UNB.

A total of 50 people, including 15 government officials and 24 public and NGO representatives, took part in the workshop at the conference room of district collectorate. DC Abdus Samad and ADC (general) Bazlur Rashid attended the workshop chaired by local ADAB chairperson Jasmine Akhter.

## Durgasagar Dev Project shelved for unknown reason

From Aroop Talukdar

BARISAL, May 20: 'Durgasagar Dighi' at Madhabpasha, a popular lake, some 15 kilometres away from the divisional headquarter of Barisal attracts many tourists from home and abroad. Thousands of migratory birds arrive here every winter which is the main attraction of this lake.

Thousands of migratory birds along with Siberian ducks come here and stay for some days here.

Madhabpasha, a union of Barisal district, is known for its glorious historical background and heritage.

Kings of Chandradweep ruled their kingdom for nearly 200 years from here. Still now there are so many buildings, though dilapidated, and temples used by the kings and their inheritants.

Durgasagar Dighi is a charming place for its unending natural beauty. There is an interesting story behind the origin of Durgasagar Dighi.

The then Raja Sib Narayan, Roy of Chandradweep died in 1120 BS.

His death created some confusions as well as some problems as he had no family mem-

ber to succeed him after his death except his queen Rani Durgabati.

As usual, they had to obtain a new 'Sanad' (declaration) from the capital to rule the 'Chandradweep' kingdom in absence of Raja Sib Narayan Roy.

Rani Durgabati at that time had been carrying an unborn baby. Then a unanimous decision had been taken that the 'Sanad' would be taken in the name of the new child, whom Rani Durgabati was yet to give birth.

Following decision, Ranajiban Roy, the most faithful 'Dewan' of the estate received the 'Sanad' tactfully in the name of Durga Narayan Roy as the successor of Raja Sib Narayan Roy.

He had been renamed as Jay Narayan Roy later on.

In 1187 BS according to the demand of the people of Chandradweep, Rani Durgabati had excavated a lake on 47 acres of land at the cost of three lakhs of rupees at Madhabpasha.

Later on after the name of Rani Durgabati 'Durgasagar Dighi' has been named. After the completion of excavation of the



### Seeing is believing

Some local tourists enjoying the charm of Durgasagar.

'dighi' a colourful festival had been organised to celebrate the

inaugural ceremony of the excavated dighi.

— Star photo

Several lakhs of people from Mithila, Drabir, Karnatak,