

Feni DIARY

10 unnatural deaths in seven days

From Our Correspondent
FENI, June 7: At least 10 unnatural deaths were reported in seven days from May 25 to May 31 in the district.

Of them, two alleged robbers were beaten to death by villagers at Sarajpur under Sonagazi upazila at night on May 26. The victims were identified as Anwar Hossain, 35, of village Charchandia and Sunan, 22, of village Sarajpur. Three people were electrocuted at Alampur village in Daganbhuiyan upazila on May 26. The victims—Rustam, 25, Glasuddin, 20, and Russell, 20—came in touch with a live electric wire snapped during storm on May 25. Farque, 22, of village Char Chandiya under Sonagazi upazila was killed in a bomb blast while making bomb on May 25. Mohammed Ilias, 25, of village Charchandia under Sonagazi upazila was killed in lightning during storm on May 27 when he was returning home from paddy field. An alleged terrorist was shot dead by unidentified hoodlums at village Chaitaria under Chhagalnitya upazila on May 25. He was identified as Tipu, 27, of village Dalal Bazar under Laxmipur district. Karimullah, 50, of village Hassanpur under Sadar upazila was crushed under the wheels of train at Hosanpur over crossing on May 27. Khorsheed Alam, 25, a Jubo Dal activist, was beaten to death by unidentified assailants at village Madhupur under Sadar upazila on May 31.

Fake police official held

A fake police official was arrested in the town recently. Police said a man identifying himself as a police official tried to enter a house at Dak-tarpara in the town. But the housekeeper became suspicious about the man and raised a hue and cry. Then neighbours detained the man and handed over the man to police. The fake police official was identified as Shahadat Hossain, 40, of village Tanzirpur under Sadar upazila. Later the man was sent to jail.

850 bottles of phensidyl seized

Police seized 850 bottles of Indian phensidyl syrup and arrested three people in this connection from Muhuriganj under Chhagalnitya upazila recently. Acting on a tip-off, police intercepted a microbus on Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Muhuriganj and seized the syrup, popular among addicts, and arrested the three. Iqbal Hossain, son of Sharif Hossain of Dewanhat, Chittagong, is one of the three. Identity of the two could not be known. A case was filed with Chhagalnitya police in this connection.

Three Jubo League men hurt in bomb blast

Three Jubo League activists were injured in bomb blast at village Char Chandiya under Sonagazi upazila recently. According to local people, Shepon, 18, son of Abul Kalam; Mohammed Farid, 21, son of Md Hanif; and Jabol Hoque, 25, son of Mostafa, were injured while making bombs in a house of Mostafa in the village. The injured were rushed to a private hospital in Chittagong.

Two housewives beaten to death

Two housewives were murdered in Sadar upazila allegedly by their husbands recently. Ferdous Ara Bilkis, 20, wife of Abul Hossain of village Dumshda under Sadar upazila, was beaten to death by her husband following an altercation over dowry. The husband used to create pressure on the wife to bring dowry from her father's house, neighbours said. In separate incident, Bibi Fatema, 28, of village Laxaura under Sadar upazila was beaten to death allegedly by her husband Mohammad Hanif following an altercation. The husband often created pressure on the wife to bring dowry from her parents' house.

Youth commits suicide

A young man committed suicide by taking poison recently at village Durgapur under Sonagazi upazila. The victim was identified as Nur Islam, 20. The reason behind the suicide could not be known.

Nine held in Ctg

From Our Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, June 7: Nine people were arrested when they were illegally cutting parts of a ship at Sitakunda here on Monday.

The gang of thieves were engaged in breaking of the ship MV Riveg which had been beached there for scraping after it had developed a hole at its bottom two months back, police said.



Golden paddy: Now is the peak season of IRRI-Boro harvesting. So the farmers of Jamalpur district are very busy in reaping their produce. Photo shows farmers and land labourers of Mollahpara under the Sadar upazila passing hectic time.

— Star photo by Muhammad Ali

Bumper production makes mango growers happy

KURIGRAM, June 7: A bumper production of mangoes in the northern region including Kurigram has made the mango growers happy this year, reports BSS.

Ripe mangoes of local varieties have already appeared in the local markets and the prices are also satisfactory for the growers. Collection of sophisticated varieties of mangoes is expected to begin from the end of June, according to the growers. According to Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), Kurigram, most of the high quality mangoes grow well in the districts of Chapainawabganj, Naogaon and Rajshahi. But now-a-days almost all varieties of mango and HYV Amropoli mango grow well in other districts also. Though this year was an 'off year' for mango yield in the region, the production may cross the level of the last

year's 'on-year' record. Only in Chapainawabganj district this year, the production may cross the level of one lakh tonnes of high quality mangoes.

The total production of mangoes including all varieties may cross the record of two lakh tonnes in the region this year due to very favourable climatic conditions.

According to relevant sources, innumerable mango trees blossomed this year in more than one lakh hectares. Awareness building programmes for the growers, conducted by DAE and other organisations, helped mango growers to apply pesticides in time for excellent yield of mangoes. Early rainfall was also helpful. More than 150 varieties of mangoes including Fazli, Langra, Khirshapati, Amrapali (Indian variety), Gopalbhog, Suryapuri, Surshanrekha, Ma-

hananda, Ashari, Srabani, Himnagar, Mohanbhog, Brindaban, Aswini, Rajbhog, Krishnabhog, Chital, Dudhsar, Aisha, Lalman, Sandhyabhog, Bharati Biswanath, Badshabhog, Kahua and Raniprasad are growing well throughout the region.

The growers, brokers, farias and mango traders are very happy this year, due to bumper yield of mangoes. Exhibitions of high quality mangoes are expected to be arranged in different places of this region at the end of June. About 30,000 people including pullers of rickshaws, carts, vans and day labourers are preparing themselves for harvesting and marketing of mangoes from now.

According to local experts, number of mango processing and preservation stores should be set up in the region to avoid any perishing of the delicious

fruit. It can provide better prices to the growers and encourage export of the fruit abroad. Otherwise, huge quantity of mangoes may be perished this year for want of preservation facilities and timely marketing, they said.

According to Abdur Rouf, Deputy Director of DAE, Kurigram, the Amrapali variety of mango has a brighter prospect throughout the region as the soil and climate suit for farming the variety everywhere in the country. He also expressed his satisfaction over the excellent production of Amrapali mangoes in the biggest garden of the country, Amrapali Hrook Garden, in Rajarhat upazila of Kurigram district. "Through proper initiatives in farming mangoes, Bangladesh may be an exporter country of mangoes in near future, after meeting local demand," he said.

Tangail hospital in bad shape

From A Correspondent

TANGAIL, June 7: Patients are not getting proper treatment facilities at Tangail General Hospital due to shortage of physicians and health care facilities.

According to Tangail General Hospital sources, an average about 35 patients remain in the medicine ward against 25 beds, 25 patients in the gynae-

crowd side by side here and there on the floors creating an unhealthy environment which foils the disinfection measures and thereby increases incidents of infection.

Excess patients also create problems as they stay at the hospital with their attendants causing inconvenience to all.

In many cases patients of surgical treatment have to wait weeks after weeks for surgical operation which is also a cause of rush in the surgical ward.

A post of medicine consultant and another post of surgery consultant have been lying vacant for a long time.

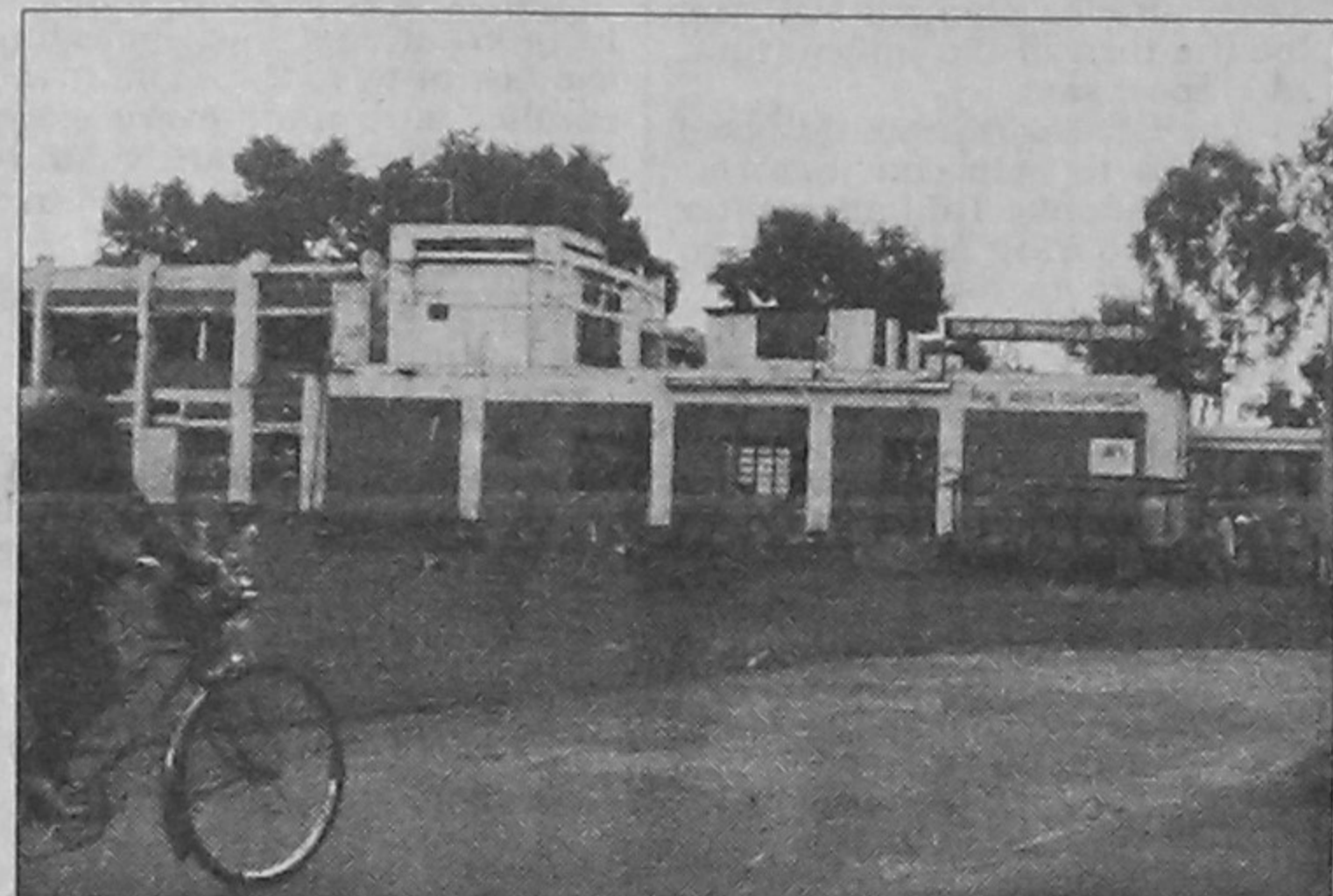
Posts of emergency medical officer, night guard, ward master have been lying vacant for a long time.

The ambulance service of the hospital is not satisfactory. Two ambulances are out of order for a long time and its driver has been receiving salaries without any service.

There is no any permanent blood bank in the hospital. So the patients do not get blood in emergency. They have to collect it through brokers at a high rate.

In most cases on-duty doctor ask the patients to get their tests performed from particular laboratories and X-ray clinics in the town though there are pathological and X-ray facilities with modern equipment at the general hospital.

Patients coming to the hospital for surgical treatment are often advised to go to particular clinics, it is widely alleged.



A partial view of the hospital.

— Star photo

Atmosphere of the hospital is bad. No one can easily move in the hospital due to bad odour. Scarcity of life saving drug is another serious problem. Patients who get themselves admitted to the hospital are to buy medicine from outside. Sometimes, surgical blades, needles, plasters, bandages, gauge and other necessary medical accessories are not available in the hospital.

A total of 33 lakh taka was sanctioned for medical and surgical instruments in the last fiscal (from July 1998 to 30 June 1999).

The quality of diet supplied to the patients is not satisfactory. Patients have to depend on

food supplied by their families. A total of taka 12 lakh was sanctioned for diet in the fiscal 1998-1999. An amount of taka 30 is sanctioned for daily diet per patient.

Established in 1976, the 100 beds general hospital is unable to accommodate the increasing number of patients. During its establishment, the population of Tangail was 13 to 15 lakh, but now the figure is about 40 lakh. So the increase in population demands more facilities in the hospital.

Tangail Citizens' Movement demanded recently to increase the number of beds from 100 to 250 at Tangail General Hospital.

Separate body needed for uplift of N region

From Our correspondent

RAJSHAHI, June 7: Speakers at a roundtable on "Development of the Northern Region and the Role of Politics" suggested a high-powered body be formed to ensure development of the long-neglected northern region.

The body should be entrusted with adequate power to design

plan and allocate fund for the economic development of the neglected region, they said.

Centre of Political Studies, Bangladesh (CPS-B), a newly floated organisation, organised the discussion at the conference room of Rajshahi City Corporation recently.

The speakers also said the

region is not developed due to lack of political will. They urged all political parties to play important role for the development of the region.

CPS-B Executive Director Prof Tarique Taofiqur Rahman moderated the meeting. Rajshahi City Press Club general secretary and CPS-B Director

(Publication) Sardar Abdur Rahman presented the keynote paper.

CPS-B Director (Research) and Rajshahi correspondent of The Daily Star Dr Abdur Wadood delivered introductory speech.

The speakers included Rajshahi Krishni Unnayan Bank Chairman and Dean of Faculty of Business Studies of Rajshahi University Prof Anisur Rahman, Rajshahi Development Authority Chairman Abdus Salek, Western Railway General Manager Nurul Amin Khan, Divisional Director of Bangladesh Investment Board Abul Kashem, former vice chancellor of Rajshahi University Prof Yusuf Ali, former vice chancellor Prof Altaf Hossain and former vice chancellor of Islami University Prof. Abdul Hamid.

Local leaders of several political parties also took part in the discussion. They included Awami League leader Principal Shafiqur Rahman Badsha, BNP leader Moyennuddin Ahmed Manik, Jatiya Party leader Advocate Abdul Hadi, and Jamaat-e-Islami leader Prof Tasnim Alam.

Outlaw held in Khulna

From Our Correspondent
KHULNA, June 7: Police arrested a member of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party recently from Daulatpur area in the city.

The outlaw was identified as Rajiv Hasan.

The man was wanted in several criminal cases including murder, rape and extortion, police said.

Series of robberies in Sirajganj

From Our Correspondent
SIRAJGANJ, June 7: A series of robberies were committed at Nalua Majira village under Tarash upazila early Thursday. Villagers said a gang of robbers numbering about 50 committed robberies in five houses of the village from 2am to 5am. The masked robbers wearing half pants stormed the houses of Abdul Khaleque, Samad Sarker, Santa Khondoker, Monjurul Hoque and Abdul Aziz. The robbers, commonly known as Half Pant Bahini, looted Tk five lakh in cash and other valuables from the houses.

A case was filed in this connection, but no one was arrested.

Jessore Airport to be modernised

JESSORE, June 7: Civil Aviation Authority has taken up a scheme to modernise Jessore Airport, reports BSS.

The scheme will cost about Tk 24 lakh.

According to relevant official sources, Terminal Building of Jessore Airport will be refurbished and water management system, car park construction, Station Manager's office expansion and road construction will be done.

Some private airlines have begun their flight operation programmes in Jessore. So it becomes necessary to further modernise the Jessore Airport befittingly. The government has taken up the development programme for welfare of the passengers.

Housewife burnt to death

BOGRA, June 7: A housewife was tortured and burnt to death allegedly by her husband in the town on Monday, reports UNB. The victim was identified as Jesmin, 20, daughter of Chan Miah and wife of Shimu.

Family sources said Shimu tortured his wife and set fire on her body by pouring kerosene on Saturday. Then he took Jesmin to Mohammad Ali Hospital.

On the next day, she was shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where she succumbed to her burn injuries on Monday night.

The body was brought here on Tuesday. Shimu and his family members used to torture Jesmin regularly demanding Tk 40,000 as dowry since her marriage a year ago.

Fenchuganj power generator to be recommissioned

SYLHET, June 7: Power Development Board has taken up steps to decommission the Fenchuganj 90-mw combined cycle power generator, which remained inoperative for one and a half years, reports UNB.

An Indian contractor has been engaged to rehabilitate the second gas turbine of the plant at a cost of Tk 18 crore.

PDB is expecting to add the additional electricity in the national grid by January next.

International contracting firms Malaysia, France and India took part in the bidding and the Indian company got the work order being the lowest bidder.

The work order was issued on March and the work will start in the next month, which is likely to be completed by January 2001.

PDB sources said, it is contemplating to give the work order of Gas Turbine Unit-1 rehabilitation work of the plant to the same firm at a cost of Tk 9 crore.

Two killed in Sirajganj road mishap

From Our Correspondent
SIRAJGANJ, June 7: Two people died and two others injured in a road mishap at Konabari on Dhaka-Bogra highway on Sunday.

According to police, the accident took place when a Dhaka-bound speeding truck ran over the by-cyclist and hit an auto-rickshaw at about 4 pm. Tempo-driver Firoz Ali, 35, died on the spot and to sustained injuries. The injured persons were admitted to Sirajganj district hospital.

Following the incident, angry people barricaded the highway from 4 pm to 7 pm. Later on police brought the situation under control.

Environment Day observed at CU

From Our Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, June 7: World Environment Day was observed on Chittagong University campus on Monday.

Various programmes were held on the occasion. A plant exhibition was held at CU Museum, which was inaugurated by Vice Chancellor of the university Abdur Mannan.

A seminar was also held at Mathematics and Organic Science Research Centre with scientist Jamal Nazrul Islam in the chair.

Saplings were also planted on the campus on the occasion.

News snaps

JRC meet held

SYLHET, June 7: Bangladesh-India Joint River Commission (JRC) has decided to excavate rivers Barak, Kushiara and Surma running along borders of the two countries, reports UNB. The decision came from a meeting of the Assam-Sylhet sector of JRC held in Sylhet recently. The meeting was told that the rivers would be excavated after conducting a feasibility study. After the study, Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) will prepare a "model" to examine whether the Surma river could be excavated or not. The meeting also decided that the authorities of the two countries would issue ID cards to the workers to be employed for the project works Flood Control Department of India and BSF will issue cards to Indians while BDR and BWDB to Bangladesh workers, sources close to the meeting said.

Aus farming programme

MEHERPUR, June 7: A total of 16,525 hectares of land will be brought under aus cultivation in the three upazilas of the district in the current season, reports BSS. According to official sources, 13,525 hectares will be brought under high yielding variety and the rest under local variety. Of the total hectares, 5,525 will be brought at Sadar, 6,000 at Gangni and 5,000 at Mujibnagar upazilas. The production target of aus paddy has been fixed at 42,000 tonnes, sources added.

3 schemes of Facilities Deptt

CHUADANGA, June 7: The Facilities Department of the Ministry of Education has taken up a programme to implement three schemes, one in each of the three upazilas here, at a total cost of taka 52.50 lakh, reports BSS.

The upazilas are: Chuadanga Sadar, Damurhuda and Jibanagar. The schemes will be implemented under "Expansion of the Existing Buildings of the Selected Secondary Schools Programme." According to an official source, the undertaken schemes include construction of four new rooms on the first floor in each school. The schools are: Hikal Gari High School under Chuadanga Sadar, Natipota High School under Damurhuda and Monohorpur High School under Jibanagar. The implementation work of all the three schemes is expected to start soon.

Revenue Deptt's meeting

BRAHMANBARIA, June 7: A meeting of the district Revenue Department was held at the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner on May 31, reports BSS.

Deputy Commissioner Lutfor Rahman presided over the meeting. The meeting was addressed, among others, by Additional Deputy Commissioner (Rve), Rezaul Kader and Upazila Nirbahi Officer, Brahmanbaria Sadar, M Shah Kamal AC (Land) of Akhaura upazila and other district and upazila level officers attended the meeting. Overall revenue collection was discussed in the meeting.

Silver coins recovered

BAGERHAT, June 7: A pot full of ancient silver coins was recovered from village Baraipara in Rampal upazila on Monday, reports UNB.

Villagers said a group of day-labourers found the pot containing 313-year-old coins while they were cutting a rural road in the morning. The English calendar year that the coins bear is 1777. When asked police could not confirm the incident.



A joint procession was brought out recently by Ganotantrik Chhatra Oikkyo, Chhatra Front, BCL and Chhatra Moitree on the Islamic University campus recently protesting publication of fake news items in some newspapers alleging involvement of some female students of Khaleda Zia Hall.

— Star photo

Step to boost agri output

PIROJIPUR, June 7: In an effort to boost agriculture production, the regional office of Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) disbursed over Tk 12.90 crore loans during the nine months of current fiscal year, reports UNB.

The bank disbursed the loan among 11,605 farmers of seven upazilas. The loan was given to cultivate Aus, Aman and Boro paddy, potato and sugarcane. Of the amount the landless farmers were given Tk 1.40 crore to boost production. Agriculture Extension Department sources said the farmers would be provided with necessary inputs including seed and fertiliser at fair prices to achieve the production target.

Cross dam work hampered

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, June 7: Construction works on a cross dam under Singri Boni sub-project at Gobralata union in Sadar upazila were being hampered due to widespread corruption, reports UNB.

There have been reports that a large chunk of wheat allotted for implementing the project under Food-for-Work Programme was misappropriated by the concerned people. So far, 70 per cent works on the project have been completed with low quality materials and it might be washed away by floodwaters anytime. Some 400 metric tons of wheat was allocated for implementation of the 3-km long flood protection embankment from Oranbari to Bangali Para of the union.

Arms, smuggled goods recovered

COMILLA, June 7: Police arrested 18 people and recovered arms and smuggled goods from different parts here last month, reports UNB.

Police said one pipe gun and two LGs were among the seized arms. The value of the seized goods smuggled from India was said to be Tk three lakh. Twenty cases were filed in this connection.

FWP wheat misappropriated

HABIGANJ, June 7: A court here sentenced a man to two years rigorous imprisonment (RI) for misappropriating wheat of Food-for-World Programme, (FWP), reports UNB.

The accused was identified as Sumandra Chandra Das of Azmirganj upazila. The case history in brief: Sumandra misappropriated some 463 maunds of wheat out of 2047 maunds allocated for the reconstruction of Nikildala-Boldi road in 1987-1988 fiscal. Later, the Bureau of Anti-corruption filed a case against him. After examining records and witnesses, the Additional District and Sessions Judge pronounced the judgement on May 29.

Youth beaten to death

JOYPURHAT, June 7: Villagers beat a young man to death at Deor village in Sadar upazila over stealing banana on Sunday, reports UNB.

Police said a group of people of Chit Haripur village called Mamunur Rashid, 22, out of his house and beat him mercilessly on charge of stealing banana. Mamunur Rashid, son of Abu Tayeb, later succumbed to his injuries. A case was filed against 15 people and police arrested a man in this connection.

Mills' owners violating law

SARIATPUR, June 7: Owners of a number of mills and factories have been violating relevant laws by establishing their enterprises beside the roads and in residential areas, reports BSS.

The trend has created trouble for the people in all the six upazilas and the district headquarters as the factories have been posing threat to the environment. The factories include engineering workshops, welding shops, steel factories, flour mills and spice crushing mills. The people alleged that a section of owners of these factories even established their factories without obtaining proper permission from the authorities. The sound and other types of pollution by these factories have been causing serious problem for the normal life.