

JFF gas leakage victims released from hospital

From Our Correspondent
JAMALPUR, June 13: Two of the victims of gas leakage at Jamuna Fertiliser Factory (JFF) were released after treatment from the district general hospital on Monday.

Earlier, some 25 people fell sick in a gas leak during overhauling of JFF at Tarakandi in Jamalpur on Friday afternoon. Two of them, Mazur, a line-man of Rural Electrification Board (REB) and Morshed, a fertiliser dealer, were admitted in the hospital.

Unabated liquor trade in Kushtia

From Our Correspondent
KUSHTIA, June 13: Liquor traders are doing brisk business here as there is no effective control over selling of rectified spirit.

Unscrupulous traders in connivance with a section of homeopaths collect rectified spirit, the main component country liquor, from homeopathy pharmacies, sources said. Homeopaths use rectified spirit to produce medicines.

The traders mix water with rectified spirit to make country liquor. One pound of rectified spirit costs Tk 60.00. This kind of liquor is seriously injurious to health.

The illegal trade has become a common feature in the town. But Drugs and Narcotics Control Department officials are very reluctant to launch drive against the traders, local people alleged.

They have urged the authorities concerned to take immediate steps to check the illegal trade.

Ambitious Coastal Green Belt Project progressing

From Aroop Talukdar

BARISAL, June 13: The Coastal Green Belt Project in 12 coastal districts along the Bay of Bengal is progressing. The project is supposed to be completed by 2002.

The districts include Barisal, Patuakhali, Pirojpur, Barguna, Noakhali, Feni, Laxmipur, Bagerhat, Cox's Bazar, Chittagong, Bhola and Jhalokati. The project has been undertaken with a view to protecting the vast coastal area from natural disaster and for maintaining the ecological balance.

The eight-year long project began in 1994-95 financial year by the Forest and Environment Ministry with the financial assistance of Asian Development Bank (ADB) at a cost of Taka 100.25 crores. The project is expected to be completed by 2002.

Despite government ban on green forestry is being destroyed by a section of greedy people across the country. As a result many districts, especially the southern regional districts have been facing the threat of environmental degradation. Forest resources are also being decreased due to natural disasters which hit several times particularly along the southern districts for a long time.

Under the project about 1,500-kilometre embankments, 3,000-km roads and over thousand kilometres of rural roads are being constructed. Besides, under the project about 3 crores saplings of high yielding varieties of fruit bearing trees and other valuable trees are being



Some beneficiaries along the green forest.

planted in and around the educational institutions, religious organisations, government offices and dwelling houses in the districts.

It is expected that with the implementation of the project about 10,500 hectares of land will be brought under the afforestation programme.

When contacted the Divisional Forest Officer here, Abul

Bashar said that initially the project had been undertaken in 10 districts. Later on Barisal and Jhalokati have been included. Accordingly the revised budget for the project has been fixed at Taka 100.30 crores.

As per the project profile, earnings from the planted trees under the project will be distributed as follows: Forest

Department 10 per cent, beneficiaries 55 per cent, land owner 10 per cent, nearby private land owner 10 per cent, union council 5 per cent. Related Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) will get Taka 200 for selection and training of each beneficiary per year. It will continue for the next two years.

— Star photo

Sesame farming surpasses target in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent
JHENIDAH, June 13: Some 3,500 hectares of land have been brought under sesame, seeds of which yield edible oil, farming this season in the district, surpassing the cultivation target.

According to local Agriculture Extension Department (AED) sources, the target was fixed to bring 500 hectares of land under the cultivation.

As the farmers have been facing problems with the low prices of jute and paddy in recent years they have opted for sesame this season, some officials of AED said.

Besides, sesame farming does not require much irrigation and fertiliser, they added. According to agriculture experts, sesame may be cultivated as inter crop with cotton, aus paddy and jute.

Schoolgirl found dead in Magura

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA, June 13: A schoolgirl in Shalikhia upazila here was found dead at her bedroom on Monday.

The victim was identified as Roni Akter, 14, daughter of Tamlujuddin of village Krishnapur.

Roni, student of Arpara Girls' School, was reprimanded by her teacher in school for adopting unfair means in examinations on June 4, family sources said.

An unnatural death case was filed in this connection.

Charge framed against garment factory owner, others

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, June 13: Charge was framed against a garment factory owner and three others for torturing a woman here on Sunday.

A court trying cases filed under Women and Children Oppression (Prevention) Act framed charge against Alhaj Khalilur Rahman, first vice president of BGMEA (Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association), his son Selimur Rahman, office staff Md Ali and Noor Uddin, a matchmaker. Farida Akter Bhulu, daughter of Alhaj Khalilur Rahman, however was exempted.

The charge sheet was submitted to the court by CID police in early 1999.

Shahana Parul filed a case against Khalilur Rahman and four others with Doublemooing police station in mid 1998 accusing them for unleashing torture on her.

The court fixed August 3, 2000 for hearing the case.

News snaps

Seven killed by tiger

BAGERHAT, June 13: Tigers killed at least seven people mostly illegal timber collectors and poachers who entered the Sundarbans, the longest mangrove forest of the world, during the last week of May, police and forest officials said, reports BSS.

All the victims were involved with illegal timber collection and fishing shrimp fry in different rivers along the Bay of Bengal. According to police, tiger grabbed Ebadul Kalamagar village of Satkhira district on May 30 when he was fishing in the Malancha river. Later his mutilated body was recovered from the forest. Kalpado Mondol, 42, of the same district met similar tragic fate when he was fishing shrimps in the Baromath-abhangra river inside the Sundarbans on May 27. Local people recovered the mangled bodies of Sultan Sheikh and Masum of Dhankhal village of Shamnagar thana from the Sundarbans on May 27. Tigers also killed Salam of Harnagar village and Aziz of Singharali village on May 26 when they were fishing in the canals of the Sundarbans. Shamsur Rahman lost his life while he was illegally collecting timbers from the shoals of Madarabia canal under Khulna range on May 24.

Goods recovered: Two arrested

MANIKGANJ, June 13: Police arrested two alleged thieves and recovered stolen goods worth about Tk 50,000 from their possession from Savar Bazaar on Sunday, reports UNB.

Police said an organised gang of thieves stole valuables from the house of Abdul Awal at village Charbadit in sadar upazila on December 12 last year. Later, the house owner filed a case with local police station. But police could not arrest anyone in this connection until Sunday. Being tipped off by locals, police raided the Savar Bazaar on the day and arrested Muhammad Alauddin of Gangni, Meherpur and Shahidul Islam of Bhararia village, Manikganj, and recovered the stolen goods.

SSC examinee commits suicide

SHERPUR, June 13: An SSC examinee of Dhaitapara village in sadar upazila allegedly committed suicide on Sunday night after failing to come out successful in the examination, reports UNB.

Police said Rafiqul Islam, 16, son of Moslemuddin, took poison at about 10 pm as he did not find his roll number in the result sheet. He was rushed to Sherpur Sadar Hospital in a critical condition and died there at about 2 am on Monday.



This is a 110-year-old building in Sirajganj town. It is now being demolished instead of preservation. The building was built by a local physician Parbati Babu at the intersection of Mujib Road and rice traders corner. After the liberation of the country the owner left for India. It was turned into the Police Super's office when Sirajganj became a district town. Afterwards the building became the Bhasani Centre. After that it became Bhasani Degree College. Finally the building was auctioned at Taka 3 lakh 25 thousand only and now it is being demolished by the contractors.

— Star photo by Akhteruzzaman Bablu

Two killed in road mishap

RANGPUR, June 13: Two people, one of them a policeman, was killed in a traffic mishap in front of Mithapukur Police Station on Rangpur-Bogra highway on Saturday, reports UNB.

The victims were identified as Ayubul Hannan, a sub-inspector of Mithapukur Police Station and Babu, 25, a rickshaw-puller. Police said the accident took place when a truck first knocked down the rickshawpuller at Shotiabari and then the policeman when he tried to stop it by putting up barricade. However, the driver managed to escape with his vehicle.

Housewife gangraped

COX'S BAZAR, June 13: A young housewife was gang-raped at a village in Teknaf upazila on Sunday night, reports UNB.

Police said a band of about 8 ruffians picked up the woman when she was going to their neighbouring village from her house at Nilaphulderail village. They took her to a nearby hill and raped her there overnight.

Cheat convicted

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, June 13: A court here found a man guilty of cheating and sentenced him to three years rigorous imprisonment, reports UNB.

The court also fined Shajahan Ali of Shibola in Nabaganj Tk 2,000, in default to suffer three months more in jail. According to prosecution, Shajahan took Tk 80,000 from Asgar Ali on April 15, 1994 promising to send him to Malaysia, but he pocketed the money instead of sending Asgar abroad. After examining records and witnesses, the judge punished the accused.

Road dev projects progressing

TANGAIL, June 13: Ten projects of development of roads are being implemented in Nagarpur upazila under its annual development programme, reports BSS.

The projects cost Taka 14 lakh. The work would be implemented under the supervision of the upazila engineer by this month.

Youth with gun arrested

COX'S BAZAR, June 13: Police arrested a youth with a gun here on Monday during the dawn-to-dusk hartal enforced by BNP-led opposition alliance, reports UNB.

The arrested Mohammad Kalu, 20, of Boalkhali, Chittagong informed police that he works in a tea stall in Ukhiya thana headquarters. Leaders of a political party hired him along with some other youths for working in support of the hartal, he told police.

More examinees commit suicide

RAJBARI, June 13: An SSC examinee allegedly committed suicide by taking poison at Majhburi in Pangsha upazila early Monday, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Babu Biswas, 18, a student of Majhburi High School. Family sources said Babu took his life after failing to come out successful in the examination. Another report adds: Two girls were fighting their lives at Faridpur Medical College Hospital after taking poison on Monday. The victims were identified as Kusum, 19, and Rubina Akter, 19, of Rasura village in sadar upazila.

Female examinee commits suicide

PABNA, June 13: Failing to pass the SSC examinations, an examinee committed suicide by hanging herself from the ceiling of their house at Jogpara in the town, reports UNB.

Hearing the news of her failure, Archana, 17, daughter of Anil Chandra, hanged herself on Sunday evening. She was immediately rescued by the family members and admitted to sadar hospital where she died on Monday morning.

Sanction

RANGAMATI, June 13: Rangamati Hill District Council (RHDC) has distributed cash and kind amounting to Taka 13,00,725 to different organisations and clubs during the current fiscal to promote sports and culture, reports BSS.

Apart from distributing sports materials and musical instruments amounting to Taka 5,08,325 to different clubs and organisations during the current year, RHDC has disbursed Taka 137,200 to Rangamati District Sports Association to hold Junior Gold Cup tournament in the current fiscal. RHDC has also disbursed Taka 3,07,000 to assist in holding sports and cultural programmes at national and regional levels and Taka 226,414 to organise programmes at different national and nationally important days in the current fiscal.

Pirojpur bus tragedy turns Sejan into an orphan

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, June 13: Sejan Azad, a 3-year-old boy was found playing near a graveyard in a village of Bhandaria in Pirojpur, a southern district under Barisal division when this correspondent visited there home recently.

He did not know or even guess that this graveyard was of his beloved mother, whom he will never see again. Because she has gone to eternity for ever.

Sejan's mother Suraya Azad was killed in the fatal bus plunge incident at Charkhal ferryghat under the Bhandaria thana in Pirojpur on May 27.

The ill-fated passenger bus dived into the Kacha river from the ferry tearing its safety chain as the driver lost control over the brake of his vehicle. Suraya Azad, 35, a popular teacher of Majida Begum college of Bhandaria who was travelling to Pirojpur on board the bus met a tragic death instantly.

Her husband Noasher Azad, 38, is an advocate who practises law at the High Court. Before joining the High Court in Dhaka he was a member of Pirojpur Bar. On the very fateful day Noasher was staying at his village home at Bhandaria. Later on he came to the spot and received his wife's dead body after hearing the tragic news of



Ill-fated Sejan—Star photo bus plunge. Sejan is their youngest son among three children.

Poor victims of dowry

RANGPUR, June 13: A teenager housewife allegedly committed suicide under the wheels of a running train at Shakawapara village in Badarganj upazila here on Friday, reports UNB.

Family sources said the day-labourer parents of victim Kalpana 18, paid Tk 5,000 to her husband Kalil Mia against his demand of Tk 7,000. But Kalil on the fateful day beat her mercilessly to bring the rest of the amount.

The poor Kalpana finding no other way out gave her life protesting the illegal demand of her greedy husband.

Another report from Rangpur adds: A greedy husband beat his wife to death as she refused to bring dowry money from her

poor parents at a remote village of the district on May 31.

Family sources said Keramat Ali of Jagannathpur village in Shibganj upazila used to torture his wife Zarina 35, mother of four children, since long to realise the dowry demand.

On the fateful day he poisoned her to death on her refusal to bring the dowry money from her parents. Later he dumped the body into a nearby pond. Police recovered the body on the following day.

In yet another incident in Thakurgaon, a housewife was beaten to death on May 31 by her husband for her refusal to bring dowry from her parents at Bheblazan village in Sadar upazila.

Flood situation static in Sylhet

Rains inundate Cox's Bazar areas

By Staff Correspondent

The overall flood situation in Sylhet remained unchanged on Monday while huge areas of Cox's Bazar Municipality, sadar thana, Ramu, Chakaria and Ukhiya upazilas went under water due to continuous rain and onrush of water because of continuous rain and onrush of water from the hilly region.

Our Sylhet Correspondent reports: The overall situation of flash flood in four bordering thanas here remained unchanged as rains continued and onrush of waters from the upper stream in the Indian territory continued for the fourth day on Monday. About 30 thousand stone collecting labourers have become jobless as extraction of stones remained suspended in four quarries in Gowainghat and Companyganj thanas.

In Companyganj thana, about 200 boats used for carrying stones from the two quarries had been drowned in the

gushing waters from the hilly areas in the Indian borders during the last two days. Collection of stones from the country's biggest quarry Bholaganj and Uthma remained suspended for the third day on Monday. It has made 20,000 labourers jobless.

In Kanaighat thana, nine unions have been affected. Plying of vehicles on the Sylhet-Kanaighat-Darbast Road have been suspended as water was flowing through it. The rivers Surma and Lova were flowing above the danger level. The gushing waters have inundated Dalachar, Mahespur and Chaura areas as the Surma Dyke at Gouripur near the thana headquarters remained unrepaired yet.

Road communications between the district headquarters and Gowainghat upazila remained suspended for the fourth day on Monday as part of the Sari-Gowainghat road was still

under water, official sources said. Stone collection in Jafflong and Bichhnakandi quarries remained suspended.

Our Cox's Bazar Correspondent says: Huge areas of Cox's Bazar Municipality, Sadar thana, Ramu, Chokoria and Ukhiya upazila went under water due to continuous rain and onrush of water from the hilly region.

At least 30,000 people are marooned in Chokoria, Ramu and Sadar upazilas due to flash flood by heavy rain.

The Bakkhali and Matamuhuri now flowing above danger level. Cox's Bazar town experienced 90 mm rainfall on Monday, according to local Met office. Over 5,000 day labourers of Moheshkhali and Kutubdia upazilas have become jobless due to heavy rainfall. Rain water remains stagnant for hours in different areas of Cox's Bazar town following heavy showers over the last few days.

Rare example of holding honours exams in time

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY, June 13: The Department of Genetics and Breeding of the university has set an example by holding the honours final examinations and publishing the results according to schedules.

The department, which faces no session jam, was successful to complete the examinations of the first batch students on May 25 this year and publish the results on June 3.

The results were made public at a simple ceremony with chairman of the department Prof Abdul Khaleque in the chair. Vice-Chancellor Prof Sayeedur Rahman Khan distributed provisional certificates among successful students as the chief guest. Also present there were Pro Vice-Chancellor Prof M Wazed Ali and Project Director of Rangpur Science and Technology University Prof Khaliquezaman.

The first batch students got admitted into department in May 1997 under 1996-97 academic session.

Eighteen students appeared in the examinations, and 13 of them placed in first class and two in second class. Shamima Begum Chhobi stood first class first.

Controller (in-charge) of ex-

aminations Abdul Mannan, Prof AKM Ershadul Islam also spoke on the occasion.

Most of the departments of the university have reduced the session jams in recent years, thanks to congenial atmosphere on the campus. The university witnessed no unscheduled closure in the last three years.

In his speech, Prof Sayeedur Rahman Khan said it is the professional commitment of the teachers to complete courses, take examinations and publish results in due time. "The teachers of the department have set a rare example of professional commitment," he added.

A sign of encouragement

FARIDPUR, June 13: In a sign of encouragement, district administration has realised Tk 18.45 lakh from some brickfield owners as fine for burning logs, reports UNB.

Official sources said the fine was realised through mobile courts this season under Brick Burning (Control) Act 1989 and Brick Burning (Control) (Amendment) Ordinance 1992.



Rajshahi University Vice-Chancellor Prof Syeedur Rahman Khan distributing certificates among the graduates of the Department of Genetics and Breeding of the university.

Four muggers convicted

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, June 13: A court here sentenced four people in absentia to nine years' in prison for mugging.

The court also fined them Tk 75,000 each and in default to suffer two years more.

According to prosecution

story, Abdul Mannan Molla, a businessman from Barguna district filed a case on March 8, 2000 with Khulna police stating that Kalazar, Chora Badal, Nazrul and Sundar had robbed him of Tk 70,000 at gunpoint on March 7 in the city.

Sanitation programme turns miracle in Lalmonirhat

LALMONIRHAT, June 13: It was simply a miracle which had driven away two major diseases — dysentery and diarrhoea from the remote Patgram Upazila bordering India's Assam state, reports BSS.

Not a single taka of the government was spent to bring about such a revolution. Only the advice of an Upazila-based government official acted superbly to help the common people get rid of these two dangerous diseases.

"I have only advised my people Patgram Upazila to use sanitary latrine which has worked wonder to save them from diarrhoea and dysentery", former Upazila Nirbahi Officer UNO Shariful Alam told this correspondent who visited the area recently.

Alam visited scores of households, advised everybody to install sanitary latrine in their homesteads and assured them that it would protect them from the scourge of epidemics as well as environment pollution. The success in fact lies with peoples'

abiding by the advice of all social leaders, government agencies, UNICEF and NGOs working in the area since 1999.

At present about 95 per cent households have already installed sanitary latrines on their own in Patgram, inhabited by 1,84,295 people in 26,172 sq kms area including the Dahagram-Angarpota enclave. The 100 per cent coverage is sure to take place within June this year due to the intense efforts of Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE), supported by UNICEF and NGOs.

Zulekha with her husband and two kids at Dahagram suffered from dysentery almost round the year before January 1999. Now they are all right by using a sanitary latrine installed on the north-west corner of their home. "Shariful Saheb visited our home several times and convinced us that such a latrine can only help us to live a healthy life," she said.

Jalil, Karim, Sahfiq and Achiva of other villages told the

same story and they were now happily living a life free from the attack of diarrhoea and dysentery, almost a regular phenomenon in this upazila before 1999. Upazila officials as well as villagers said that there was no incidence of these two diseases now in any part of Patgram.

Anybody visiting the area will see at least one sanitary latrine in most of the households. It was simply beyond the dream even two years ago. People in general have now realised that they are the main actors who have to decide how they will live a disease-free life.

The task was apparently easy at the initial stage but soon turned difficult for Alam when he found his advice seldom receiving any positive response. The reason was that the poor people of Patgram were traditionally used to excrete in a scattered manner in open places. Many social taboos including fear of ghost also acted at the initial period against sanitary latrine in the area.

Alam, now working as a consultant for a Dutch project in Tangail on lien, mobilised the whole Upazila administration with active support from the district administration, DPHE and UNICEF as well as all social leaders of the area to convince the people to use sanitary latrine. Well-skilled in knowledge of what he ought to do for his people, he directed all his thoughts towards improving the lives of common people in Patgram.

His conscience first woke up seeing diarrhoea, dysentery and other stomach diseases which took a toll of 25 lives after the devastating flood of 1998 in Patgram, leading to a serious fall in public health in the area. The situation turned more disastrous for the inter-country trade and business involving Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Bhutan through the Burmari land-port of this Upazila.

Since the development of countryside is the top priority of the present government, the Upazila administration with

support from UNICEF and DPHE sorted out the problem of physical facilities and also made the people aware about sanitation for a healthy life. They immediately chalked out of four-tier project titled "Participatory Appraisal Planning and Local Initiative (PAPLI)".

The main features of the project were: people's participation, convergence of resources, avoidance of overlapping, effective coordination, utilisation of local resources, participatory planning along with implementation and evaluation and adoption of sustainable and innovative project. These have ultimately resulted in around 95 per cent coverage of sanitary latrines now from only 11.48 per cent in early 1999. Besides all logistics and expertise supplied by the DPHE and the district administration, UNICEF officials M A Latif, Nurul Islam and Afroza Ahmed directed all software supports to the project. Students, teachers, busi-

nessmen, politicians and inmates of mosques with the help of union councils and administration voluntarily publicised the beneficial aspect of sanitary latrine at the grass-root level. "Then we mobilised resources from various sources for constructing latrine slabs which the people quite spontaneously purchased for their own use", former Upazila chairman Shaidullah Prodhan said, adding, "You won't hear about any new case of diarrhoea or dysentery in Patgram now."

Now this model is being taken up in two unions of 16 districts in Rajshahi just drawn up to the effect in a recent workshop in Rangpur participated by DPHE, UNICEF and other NGOs working in Rajshahi division.

"Inshallah, we will again bring about a miracle by implementing this type of project in Rajshahi division without spending press public money", the Divisional Commissioner Khan Shahabuddin said while presiding over the workshop.