

National

**Satkhira
DIARY**

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, June 28: Two skeletons of a dead man was stolen by a group of organised thieves from the graves of village Kashimari in Shyamnagar thana recently.

Local people said, Abdul Hosain, 35, and Moksed Ali, 25, both of village Kashimari in Shyamnagar thana were killed by lightning two years back. They were buried in two separate graves. Recently, a group of organised miscreants are engaged in stealing the skeletons of the deceased who were killed by lightning.

Girl raped

One 11-year-old girl was raped by a group of miscreants thana at Patkelghata in Tala upazila recently.

Local people said, the 11-year-old victim of village Kompor in Keshabpur upazila of Jessore district while returning home from her maternal uncle's house at Dumuria in Khulna district was raped by a group of miscreants led by Khokon, son of Prashanta Roy of village Barabala in Tala upazila. The miscreant caught her and took to an abandon house where they raped her one after another. Later on the villagers rescued her in a pool of blood. They admitted her in a local clinic.

The miscreants have been threatening her parents not to file case in this regard.

Student drowns

One student was drowned in the River Marichchop near at Bairampur in Assasuni thana recently.

The victim was identified as Abdul Wadud, 16, son of Aftabuddin of village Bairampur in Assasuni thana.

Eye-witnesses said, three friends including the victim were walking by the side of the river and at one stage the victim wished to cross the river swimming. While he tried to do so at one stage he drowned. Later on the villagers rescued the body from the river.

No step yet to combat arsenic at a Rangpur upazila

Sanction needed for installation of tubewells at Pirogachha

From Mozammel Haq

RANGPUR, June 28: Water of many tubewells in this district have been contaminated with arsenic.

Many people have already been attacked with arsenic related diseases drinking water of these tubewells. But they are being deprived of proper treatment as the government is yet to provide adequate treatment facilities to arsenic victims.

The Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) is yet to conduct any survey to detect the number of arsenic affected persons here.

Five thousand families of four villages under Kandi union of Pirogachha upazila have been facing an acute scarcity of arsenic-free water which is the crying need of the hour. They are passing their days in great panic now. Many of them are compelled to drink water of red-marked tubewells while others procure tubewell water from distant places facing many hazards.

In June 1998, 12 members of two families at Pathak Shikhar village had been detected arsenic related diseases. They had been identified as Maifuz, 20, Hasina, 10, Monzah, 35, Karim Mia, 30, Majran, 45, Mariam, 35, Asadul, 38, Shahidul, 40, Menajuddin, 45, Hussain Ali, 48, Noor Islam, 16, Rahim, 35, Rafiq, 25, Nazrul, 30, and Tota, 34.

However, the Deputy Civil Surgeon of Rangpur told The Daily Star that no fresh attacks of the disease have been reported. He admitted that acute scarcity of arsenic-free water is prevailing in the affected area.

A spokesman of DPHE said that they had already sealed 52 tubewells at Pathak Shikhar, Chapra and Purbo Pathak Shikhar villages under Kandi union. They have installed five new tubewells while 14 new tubewells are being installed in the current fiscal year. He said that 30 more tubewells are needed to meet the requirements. But due to non-availability of sanction from the higher authorities, installation works of the tubewells could not be started.

The Deputy Civil Surgeon hoped that the activities of ar-

senic mitigation project would start within a short period.

UNB from Jhalakathi says:

Excessive quantum of arsenic has been detected in the waters of many shallow tubewells in the rural areas of Jhalakathi.

There are about 6,000 shallow tubewells across the district most of which are feared to be arsenic contaminated.

About three lakh people are using these tubewells. Public Health Engineering Department is yet to fully start the survey on arsenic contamination in water.

Jhalakathi Development Society (JDS), an NGO, under the emergency screening programme conducted a test on water of over 100 both shallow and deep tubewells at downtown, Gagan, Sanjoypur and Utam Nagar villages of Sadar upazila recently.

The survey found the presence of arsenic beyond the permissible limit in many tubewells water. They also sealed a number of shallow and deep tubewells, said Muhammad Shah Alam Khalifa, director of the NGO.

Officials of Public Health Engineering Department were

present during the conducting of test. The survey report of JDS has already been sent to ICDDR,B Dhaka.

During the survey they also found Wazed Ali Sikder, Monir Hossain, Jalal Sikder, his wife Liza Begum, Motiar Rahman and Nupur of Gagan village and Josna Begum of Uttam Nagar affected by arsenic related diseases.

Of the victims, condition of Jalal was stated to be critical. His palms were affected badly.

The NGO identified the contaminated tubewells with red marks and advised the local people not to use its water. Poor and ignorant villagers, however, continue to use the contaminated water defying the advice.

UNB from Sylhet reports:

Five local NGOs started field level work in 11 unions of Golapganj upazila in Sylhet district under a massive programme to eliminate arsenic contamination in water.

As part of the nine-month programme that began on June 1, the field workers will visit door-to-door to make the villagers aware of arsenic consequences and constitute groups among the beneficiaries.

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The groups will train the villagers the method of eliminating arsenic from water.

A preliminary survey conducted last year in the upazila detected arsenic in 2,000 tubewells, of which 500 were found contaminated with arsenic beyond tolerable level.

BSS from Comilla reports:

The two-day media workshop of Arsenic Mitigation Programmes concluded at Comilla BRAC auditorium on June 11.

The workshop was organised by Comilla Press Club, with the cooperation of UNICEF and NGO Communico, sixty-eight local journalists from greater Comilla, Noakhali and Chittagong participated in the workshop.

UNICEF representative

Chinmoy Mutsuddy, Shirin Akhter, Shafiqul Islam, Communico Representative Amish Barua, Comilla Press Club President Golam Mustafa Chowdhury spoke in the inaugural session.

A field visit of the participants was held at Kachua Upazila in Chandpur District.

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Crimes down in Jessore

From Atiur Rahman

JESSORE, June 28: The law and order situation have marked a steady record of progress during the last 14 months from April, 1999 to May, 2000.

According to police, the number of crimes of this period was 613 which was less than that of the same period of the previous year.

The total number of crimes during the period was 2,659 while that of the previous year was 3,272.

Police recovered a total of 209 unauthorised arms and 451 ammunition from different parts of the district in this period and arrested 9,505 persons allegedly involved in various

crimes.

In an exclusive interview, the Police Super of Jessore, MA Rouf who joined here in April, 1999 told The Daily Star that 3,272 persons were arrested in connection with court cases, 2,437 persons were arrested in different cases, 2,924 persons were arrested in executing warrant, 313 persons were arrested as listed terrorists, 390 as notorious smugglers while 149 arrested in arms cases and 17 in explosive cases.

Detailing the crime position of the period under review, the

period two children were tortured while it was nil in previous year.

Abductions during this period were 15 against 30 in previous year and incidents of car lifting were 50 against 45 in previous year, he said.

Giving list of illegal arms recovery by police, the SP told that a total of 209 arms and 451 ammunition were recovered during this period.

Incidentally a total of 327 gang leaders surrendered along with 227 arms in July last year.

While drawing his attention to a number of lead stories published recently in different dailies regarding regrouping of outlawed party activists, the SP told that before the police crackdown in Jessore in April, 1999 the district was a den of outlawed party activists and professional terrorists.

Murder, extortion, rape and hijacking were regular phenomena in this district. But the picture has changed after the police crackdown.

He asserted that controlling crime is no hard job for members of the law enforcement agencies. It needed determination and planning. He also said that we have sufficient strength, courage and manpower to combat any situation within the country. He does not understand why the crimes can not be controlled and wrongdoers can not be brought to book.

He, however, said that the leaders of student wing of the ruling party have become problems for the administration to maintain the law and order situation and ensure public security.

Briefing The Daily Star, Rouf said that the overall law and order situation was not grave in the entire district.

He admitted that during this



MA Rouf

SP further told that 22 armed robberies were committed against 39 in previous year, 38 mugging incidents against 47 in previous year.

He also informed that one person was killed in riot while in the previous year there was no casualty in rioting.

He also informed that there were 35 rape incidents in this period, against 58 in previous year. Ninety-seven women were tortured in this period while 179 women were tortured in previous year.

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period two children were tortured while it was nil in previous year.

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The meeting also urged the Prime Minister to set up the proposed Science and Technology University, meant for greater Dinajpur district, at Thakurgaon as there is no such highest seat of learning in this district.

The meeting was presided over by Convenor of the implementation committee, advocate F A Mohammad Hossain. Others who spoke in the meeting were Alhaj Faizul Karim, Principal Syed Merajul Hossain, Md Akhtar Hossain Raja, General Secretary, Thakurgaon Press Club, Abul Torab Manik and Md. Lashkar Hossain, President, Thakurgaon Chamber of Commerce and Industries.

In the light of this declaration, the meeting urged the Prime Minister to transform Dinajpur Haji Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University into a full-fledged agriculture university for the

advancement of agricultural research and socio-economic development of the farmers of the northern region of the country.

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Form Our Correspondent

JENIDAH, June 28: Two senior officials of Mbarakganj Sugar Mills in Jenidah district were sued by the Bureau of Anti-corruption for misappropriation of factory fund.

Deputy General Manager (DGM) Nowshir Ali and Deputy Manager (DM) Sushil Kumar Shingha were sued for misappropriation over Taka 90 thousand.

Police said the two officials

drawn Taka 90,230 from the mill accounts submitting fake vouchers against plantation in Mbarakganj Sugar Mills area while serving as cane development officers.

The authority reserves the power to accept any tender or reject all tenders without assigning any reason.

Subir Chowdhury

Director

Art Division.

Flood situation in 3 dists may deteriorate

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, June 28: Flood situation in 10 upazilas of Sirajganj, Pabna and Bogra districts is likely to take a serious turn within three days.

Incessant rain and onrush of hilly water have been raising the water level of the rivers Jamuna and Padma day by day. Low-lying areas of Kazipur, Sirajganj, Sadar, Belkuchi, Chowhali and Shahjadpur, upazilas, Sariakandi and Dhunot upazila of Bogra district and Pabna sadar and Bera upazila of Pabna district have been submerged.

Water Development Board (WDB) sources said in 24 hours ending 6 pm of Tuesday 30-tembre, water level at Sirajganj point.

About 1,000 kucha houses of the above-mentioned upazilas are under water. Flood protection embankments of Dhunot, Kazipur and Shahjadpur areas are under threat and may collapse at any time flooding vast areas in Dhunot, Kazipur, Sirajganj, Sadar and Shahjadpur upazilas and the adjoining areas.

The under-construction spur, embankment of Kazipur and newly-constructed ring dam at Sonatori under Shahjadpur upazila is under threat because of heavy current in the mighty Jamuna.

Meanwhile, several villages of Kazipur, Sirajganj, Sadar, Belkuchi, Chowhali and Shahjadpur of Sirajganj district, Dhunot of Bogra, Bera and Pabna sadar upazila of Pabna district might be inundated due to incessant rain and onrush of hilly water since of three days.

Agriculture Extension Department sources said about 50 thousand acres of croplands of the above-mentioned upazilas have been submerged.

Tk 4 crore was allocated for the Jalisha Kauna canal and Tk 12 lakh for Mayarhat canal, official sources said. Local Government Engineering Department is implementing the project under the financial assistance from donor agency DANIDA. Eighty per cent work of the projects have already been completed and the rest is likely to be finished soon. After the successful completion of the projects some 5,000 hectares of land will come under irrigation facilities.