

Rajshahi mayor asks for Tk 1.5 cr to fight dengue

RAJSHAHI, Aug 8: With eight people down with dengue fever so far, the city corporation has sounded a red alert and asked for Tk 1.5 crore financial aid from the government to fight the impending menace, reports UNB.

City Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu in a press conference at his office Friday said health officials of the corporation collected larvae from several spots in the city and identified university, Bhadra, Shalbagan, court and areas near the river Padma as high risk zones.

City dwellers alleged that neither the city corporation nor the local Public Health Department, so far, took effective eradication drive despite demonstrations, meetings and symposia by various organisations and institutions.

Minu said the citizens were

getting panicky but funds were inadequate to meet the expenses of large-scale mosquito eradication drive. The corporation, he said, asked the Local Government Ministry to grant Tk 1.5 crore for dengue prevention and treatment in the city.

Doctors of Rajshahi Medical College Hospital so far identified eight dengue patients, of whom four have been sent to Dhaka for treatment.

Principal of the RMCH Dr AB Siddiqui said the hospital was running short of test kits for dengue virus.

While protests and demonstrations continue demanding anti aedes measures, city dwellers are using mosquito nets in the day also to keep off aedes mosquitoes.

Protesting the authority's indifference to the outbreak of dengue fever, the local unit of

workers' Party and its students from Chhatra Maitri staged demonstrations and laid siege to the city corporation office on August 2 and 3.

Teachers of Rajshahi University also brought out a procession to raise public awareness on the growing menace.

Responding to the demands of 25,000 students and 800 teachers, a 12-member committee has been formed with Pro-VC Prof Wazed Ali as president to conduct aedes eradication drive in the university area. But the committee is yet to take any effective initiative.

The university authorities said the city-corporation was responsible for taking measures in all areas within its jurisdiction, including the Rajshahi University.



"Sishu Sarga" (children's heaven) of the late celebrated artist S M Sultan is being ruined gradually. It was constructed in Narail by him in 1989. He ran it well till his death. He also built a zoo in his home. There still stands his barge boat. But after his demise the barge boat is also being neglected. Now the boat has been tied with a tree on the dry land on the bank of the River Chitra. Many zoo animals have died already. Mysteriously the conservation committee of S M Sultan's property has disappeared. The government should take up programme on emergency basis to safeguard late S M Sultan's property which is our national asset. --Star photo

Jute output won't reach target in Kushtia

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Aug 8: Target of jute production in the district will not be achieved this season as the cultivation target was not attained due to adverse weather condition and seed crisis during farming, official sources said.

Besides, low price of jute, once the country's main source of exports earning, over the years has frustrated the growers to cultivate the crop.

Jute cultivation has been declining in the district as farmers are opting for other cash crops due to low price of jute.

The farmers are also facing problem in rotting raw jute due to scarcity of water in natural bodies.

It is a common phenomenon that every ear during peak time of cultivation the growers face crisis of quality seed. The smugglers take advantage of the seed crisis, marketing low-quality Indian seed.

According to local Agriculture Extension Department (AED), Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) cannot supply the total requirement of seed. Farmers have to depend on their own procurement of the seed.

Target was fixed to bring 10,630 hectares of land under jute cultivation in six upazilas of

the district. Of them, 10,519 hectares of land were meant for 'tosa' variety and 120 hectares for 'local' variety.

But only 7,628 hectares of land were brought under the cultivation. Of them, 44 hectares were brought under local variety and 7,584 hectares under 'tosa' variety.

In Sadar upazila, target was fixed to bring 1,110 hectares under the farming, but 850 hectares were brought under the cultivation. In Kumarkali, 1,350 hectares were brought under the farming against the target of 2,010 hectares. 723 hectares were brought against the target of 920 hectares in Khoksha upazila. 790 hectares were brought against the target of 1,070 hectares in Mirpur upazila. 555 hectares were brought against the target of 1,510 hectares in Bheramara upazila, and 3360 hectares were brought against the target of 4,010 in Daulatpur upazila.

The total production target was fixed at 7,600 bales of jute.

Jute farmers also said middlemen always control the price in local markets, depriving them of fair price. Besides, many jute mills are reluctant to purchase jute directly from the growers, encouraging the middlemen.

Meanwhile, BSS from Barisal says: About 50,043 hectares of land were brought under high yielding variety of jute cultivation in 10 districts under Barisal Agriculture Zone during the current season.

The districts are Barisal, Jhalakathi, Bhola, Pirojpur, Patuakhali, Faridpur, Madaripur, Gopalganj, Rajbari and Shariatpur.

According to an official source, 46,870 hectares were brought under the cultivation of 'Tosha' variety and 3,173 hectares under local variety.

A total of 2,05,985 bales of raw jute are expected to be produced in this region this year.

One thousand five hundred and five hectares were cultivated in Barisal district, five hectares in Pirojpur, 104 hectares in Jhalakathi, three hectares in Patuakhali, 243 hectares in Bhola, 18,494 hectares in Faridpur, 9,835 hectares in Madaripur, 4,475 hectares in Gopalganj, 10,287 hectares in Rajbari and 5,110 hectares in Shariatpur districts.

Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) distributed seeds, fertilisers, insecticide and other inputs to the farmers for making the farming programme a success.

Girl lifted, raped

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Aug 8: A teenage girl was abducted and later raped by a gang of armed hoodlums at Gariapur, on the outskirts of the town recently.

According to police, the gang numbering about five kidnapped the girl aged about 15 and her male companion, whose relationship to the girl could not be known, from a Khulna-bound night coach, Green Star, at the bus stand at gunpoint at about 9:30 PM.

The hoodlums took them to the nearby under construction BRAC Complex. Later the kidnappers took the girl to a separate room confining the companion and raped her. The companion, however, managed to escape and informed police at early hours on Sunday. The girl was rescued later.

Meanwhile, police arrested Nazrul and Manir, who were identified by the companion, from Nathulabad Bus Terminal area in this connection. Another suspect, identified as Anil, was held from Gariapur.

Use of organic fertilisers suggested

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Aug 8: Speakers at a discussion held at village Golaknagar under Shailakupa upazila here recently said there is no alternative to using organic fertiliser to save soil fertility.

Indiscriminate use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides is sharply deteriorating the soil fertility, the added. They urged the farmers to use organic fertilisers to save soil fertility.

The discussion was held in connection with exchanging views of dhaincha farming.

Organised by Unnayan Dhara, an NGO, the discussion was presided over by renowned farmer of the village Khelafat Biswas.

Among others, Anwar Hossain and Shawkat Noon of Proshika, journalist Delwar Kabir, farmers Moklesur Rahman, Raisuddin, Abdul Basat, Kazi Nazmul Hasan and Sahiduzzaman Milu participated in the discussion.

Earlier the participants visited the demonstration plot of dhaincha.

Punishment

BAGERHAT, Aug 8: Some 4,355 SSC students, who were expelled for cheating in the last SSC examinations under Jessore Board, will not be allowed to sit in the next examinations, reports UNB.

Board officials said the expelled students would be barred from appearing in the next examinations as punishment.

They said the number of expelled students under the board is on the rise as 13,000 students were expelled in last five years.

This year highest 959 students were expelled in Kushtia while lowest 68 in Pirojpur district.

Breakup of the expelled students: Bagerhat-247, Khulna-318, Jessore-229, Jhenidah-285, Magura-191, Narail-83, Satkhira-186, Barisal-507, Patuakhali-368, Bhola-240, Jhalakati-86, Meherpur-268, Barguna-80 and Chuadanga-332.

The workshop was presided over by M Atiqul Islam Chowdhury, Deputy Commissioner of Faridpur.

Gopalganj village markets in bad shape

From Our Correspondent

GOPALGANJ, Aug 8: Most village markets in the district remain in pitiable condition, causing immense sufferings to people.

Lack of proper maintenance and negligence by the authorities concerned is the main reason behind the poor condition of the markets, local people said.

Most of the markets were established at local initiatives, but these have not been renovated proportionately with the growing population.

Filth and garbage are piled up hither and thither that emit bad smell, threatening public health.

Absence of pure drinking water facilities in markets is another problem. Local people have urged the authorities concerned to take steps to renovate the markets.

Baseless rumour

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Aug 8: The people here have become panic stricken following a baseless rumour of possible submergence of the town due to battering of violent waves of the mighty River Jamuna directly at the hard point of the town protection embankment.

This correspondent contacted with the officials of Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) and visited the spot, but found nothing alarming.

The BWDB staffer also showed him the map of the town protection embankment and showed the so-called alarming spot. He

found that the spot is situated 170-metre east of the hard point of the embankment where a 100-metre hole has been created. BWDB staffers have detected the hole through a survey conducted by an instrument of river searing echo sounder.

According to the official of BWDB, if the erosion begins from the eastern side of this hole, it will not hit the hard point at all.

Some unscrupulous people have spread this rumour with an ulterior motive so that they can earn money through dishonest way.



The so-called alarming spot has been cross marked. This is situated 170-metre away from the hard point of Sirajganj town protection embankment. --Star photo

CHTDB starts rehabilitating 800 landless families

RANGAMATI, Aug 8: Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTDB) has started rehabilitating 800 landless and marginal farmers' families in the region through raising orchards of orange and cultivating mixed crops under a project for a period of six years, reports BSS.

A number of 150 families from Baghaichhari upazila of Rangamati district, 150 families from Khagrachhari Sadar upazila and Dighinala in Khagrachhari district and 500 families from Ruma, Thanchi, Roanegchhari and Lama upazilas in Bandarban district were selected as beneficiaries of the project, officials said.

Each selected family will be provided with financial and technical assistance as well as consultative services to raise orchards of oranges, banana, pineapple, coffee and safeda on an area of three acres of land.

Necessary process is going on to complete rehabilitation of 500 families in the three hill districts of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban by the current fiscal

under this project, officials added.

Another report from Barisal says: A total of 180 poor and destitute families will be rehabilitated in six 'Ashrayan Projects' and 335 landless families in eight 'Ideal Villages' in four upazilas of Jhalakathi district soon.

According to an official source, 20 families have already been rehabilitated in one Ashrayan Project while 215 families were rehabilitated in seven Ideal Villages on 27.97 acres of land. Besides, 120 families will be rehabilitated under this project on 14 acres of land soon.

A total of 18 barracks are being constructed on 13.01 acres of land in 10 unions of the district for the rehabilitation of 180 families under six Ashrayan Projects, the source added.

Of the six projects, 20 families were rehabilitated on 0.90 acres of land in two barracks in Subidpur Asharayan Project under Nalchity upazila till now. The government had sanctioned taka two lakh as loan for their rehabilitation also.

Heart patients don't get proper treatment

SHARIATPUR, Aug 8: The number of heart patients is increasing alarmingly in the district, reports BSS.

A survey conducted by a local NGO revealed that most of the patients are 35 to 45 years of age who come to the local hospitals and Upazila Health Complexes for treatment but go back without treatment as there is no heart specialists.

The doctors on duty in these health complexes advised the patients to take rest while in most cases patients were advised to consult with some of their senior physicians either at Shariatpur or Dhaka.

A good number of patients are going to foreign countries like India and Singapore every year for better treatment as they do not get proper treatment in the country.

Many poor rural people do not know about heart disease. They are very ignorant about their health and diseases. The number of such patients is increasing day by day in the district. Local people complained that most of the doctors serving in the hospital here are connected with one or more private clinics. A good number of doctors have their own clinics. It is alleged that many doctors of different health complexes and hospitals advised the patients to go to their clinics for better treatment which is very expensive.

It is learnt that some private clinics have sprung up in the district town without registration.

It is alleged that eight doctors working at Shariatpur Sadar Hospital have jointly set up a private clinic at Kachari Road in the town where rural people are falling victim for harassment as they are compelled to pay heavy charges fixed by the clinic authorities.

Besides, solvent patients who have hardly faith abroad. As a result, the rich people are being benefited but the poor patients who live in hand to mouth in the rural areas are deprived of proper treatment.

In case of heart patients, proper treatment is required which is very expensive. According to reliable sources, at present the Upazila Health Complexes and the union level health sub-centres here are facing shortage of specialist physicians and medicines.

Moulvibazar Municipality budget

From Our Correspondent

MOULVIBAZAR, Aug 8: Budget of Moulvibazar municipality for the financial year of 200-2001 was announced here recently.

New tax was not imposed in the budget.

News snaps

Alleged mugger arrested

BARISAL, Aug 8: Police arrested a mugger along with arms and ammunition from C&B road in the town on Friday, reports UNB. Police said arrested Abdul Jalil and four of his accomplices tried to intercept a patrol tempo of Detective Branch Police at 3 am, mistakenly thinking it of a passenger tempo. Finding police inside the tempo his accomplices managed to flee the scene. Police also recovered a loaded revolver from his possession.

Indefinite strike

BAGERHAT, Aug 8: Workers of Bagerhat Municipality began an indefinite strike from Thursday suspending all utility services, reports UNB.

President of Municipality Workers' Union M Shahjahan Ali said the strike has been called for realising their six-point demand, including payment of their arrears. The workers said they would not return to work unless payment of their unpaid salaries. They blamed municipality chairman Atahar Hossain Ali for dilly-dallying in payment of their salaries. Due to the strike enforcement, water supply, conservancy and other activities of the municipality remained stopped from Thursday noon creating untold sufferings to the town dwellers.

Blacksmiths in misery

SHARIATPUR, Aug 8: Blacksmith community here has been passing their days in great economic hardship due to price-hike of inputs and lack of marketing facilities of their products, reports UNB.

Many of the 6000 blacksmiths left their profession to earn bread and butter. Chitta Ranjan Karmakar, a blacksmith in Burihat bazar told that with price spiral of the inputs, the production cost could not be realised by selling the products. Moreover, he said, the financial institutions do not provide loan to them to run their business. The blacksmiths once used to produce various apparatuses like machete, spade, axe, knife, scissors, kitchen knife, sickles and hoe, used in household work. But now-a-days, foreign-made items are available in the market with comparatively low price.

Cattle lifters arrested

PATUAKHALI, Aug 8: Police arrested six members of a cattle-lifter ring on Wednesday and Thursday from Barisal and Patuakhali districts, reports UNB.

Patuakhali Sadar Police arrested three thieves Jaman, 25, Tofail, 33, and Noor Islam, 25, from village Dharandi on Wednesday night and recovered five cows from their possession. Hailed from Keshabpur village in Baula upazila, the burglars theft the cows from char areas of Bhola district three days back. In Barisal town, another three thieves Alauddin, Apu Mia and Mojibul Huq were arrested when they were selling beef of a stealing cow at a Club Road Bazar Thursday morning. Police said the slaughtered cow was among the nine cows robbed from Hilla upazila Tuesday night. Police later recovered another four cows following their confessional statement.

Misappropriation

KISHOREGANJ, Aug 8: Four people, including the Assistant Upazila Education Officer of Nikli, have been sued for misappropriating foodgrains allocated for Food for Education Programme, reports UNB.

The persons charged with selling the foodgrains in black market are: AUEO Joyanal Abedin, dealer Abdul Alim, businessman Alauddin and boatman Jamal Uddin. According to the case filed on July 30, Nikli police seized 42 sacks of wheat and 2 sacks of rice from the river Soaizoni while being taken away by a boat on July 2. Boatman Jamal was arrested from the spot. Police said the accused persons were selling the foodgrains allocated for the primary schools of Singpur union.

Work progressing

TANGAIL, Aug 8: Construction of three storeyed academic building for Sheikh Fazlunnessa Mohila College is progressing fast, reports BSS.

The building is being built at a cost of Taka 50 lakh by the Tangail Zila Parishad. The fund was allocated during the last financial year. The work is expected to be completed December next.

BWDB implements project

COMILLA, Aug 8: Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) has implemented an embankment repair and reconstruction project in the district at a cost of 2.70 crore, reports BSS.

The project covers, repair and reconstruction of embankment on rivers, Meghna, Kunda Gukarna, Kurulia and Buree.

Teachers' shortage

NAOGAON, Aug 8: Some 19 posts of teachers, including the Principal, have been lying vacant at the Naogaon University College hampering academic activities, reports UNB.

There are 63 posts of teachers in the college. Of the total, 10 posts of Associate Professor, four each of Assistant Professors and Lecturers and the post of the Principal have been lying vacant. Mainly the students of the departments of English, Bengali, Chemistry, Mathematics, Botany, Political Science, Islamic History and Accounting have been facing setbacks due to the shortage of teachers. Apart from this, some posts of employees, including clerk, cashier and librarian, are also lying vacant in the college.

Dacoits arrested

NARSINGDI, Aug 8: Police arrested two activists of an inter-district dacoit gang along with arms at College Road in Shibpur upazila on Thursday, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip, police intercepted a microbus at 8pm and arrested Mozammel Huq and Jhanu Chandra Gosh. One light machine gun and one pipe gun were also recovered from their possession. Local people, however, said that police caught at least seven robbers from the microbus, but later they released some of them. Another report from Bogra adds: Bangladesh Rifles seized smuggled Indian cattle-heads from Paota Railgate on Bogra-Naogaon highway on Wednesday. Acting on a tip, BDR jawans of 37 rifle battalion raided the area in the night and seized four trucks loaded with 58 cattle worth about Tk eight lakh.

5,955 vying for 115 posts

KISHOREGANJ, Aug 8: Some 5,955 candidates are vying for 115 posts of assistant teachers in 13 upazilas, reports UNB.

Of the candidates, 4,364 are male and 1,591 female, officials said. They said 583 applications were submitted against five posts in sadar upazila, 693 against 26 posts in Karimganj, 600 against two posts in Hossainpur, 320 against 13 in Tarail, 642 against three in Katiadi, 551 against 10 posts in Bazitpur, 255 against four posts in Nikli. Besides, 370 applications were submitted against seven posts in Kuliachar, 269 against six posts in Bhairab, 288 against 21 in Itna, 248 against eight posts in Mitamoin, 196 against one post in Aushtagar and 940 against nine posts in Pakundia upazila.

Driver killed in road mishap

JOYPURHAT, Aug 8: A tempo driver was killed and five school students were wounded when his vehicle hit a stationary truck at Mangalbari in the town on Sunday, reports UNB.

The deceased was identified as Jahangir Hossain. The injured Abdul Jabbar, 15, Mehedi, 8, Kankan, 7, Anik, 8, and Munni, 8, were admitted to Sadar Hospital. Another report from Satkhira adds: A head-on collision between a bus and a truck left 12 people injured in Kamarpur area on Satkhira-Ashasuni road on Monday. The injured were admitted to Ashasuni health complex.

Pagodas being developed

RANGAMATI, Aug 8: Chairman of the Task Force on Repatriated Tribals and Internal Refugees Rehabilitation Affairs, Dipankar Talukder, MP, has here completed distribution of cheques for Taka 6,21,500 for the development of 105 Buddha Bihas, reports BSS.

The distribution was started on July 24 last at Razasthali Upazila and ended on Thursday at Borkal Upazila during his mass-contact visit. Bangladesh Buddha Welfare Trust has allocated Taka 18 lakh for the development of 288 pagodas, better known as Buddha Bihas, in the three hill districts of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban, Dipankar said, adding that government has enhanced allocation.

Four alleged killers arrested

JESSORE, Aug 8: Police arrested three sons and their mother on charge of killing Ganganandapur Union Parishad Chairman Abdul Jalil last night, police sources said here, reports BSS.

They said Jalil was found murdered in a paddy field near the home of lady UP member Fatema Begum where Jalil had gone last night on an invitation.

Police arrested Paban, Swapan, Binoy and their mother Ridubala Dasi from Daspara, near the place from where the body was recovered.



Salesmen sell sweetmeats at a busy shop in Nutunbazar in Magura town. But the condition of the shop is unhygienic, posing serious threat to public health. The photograph was taken last week. --Star photo