

## NEWS SNAPS

## Engineer killed as truck hits motorbike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Rajshahi*

An assistant engineer of the Bangladesh Power Development Board was killed on the spot when a truck hit a motorbike in Sonadighi area under Godagari upazila in the district on Sunday night.

The dead was identified as Mozammel Haque, 45, an assistant engineer of PDB Rajshahi Office. Police said a Rajshahi-bound truck knocked him down at about 11:30 pm when the engineer was going to his village home on a motorbike at Matikata village under the upazila. Local people seized the truck but the driver managed to escape. A case was filed in this connection.

## One dies in road accident

UNB, *Jhenidah*

Aman was killed and 40 people were injured as a passenger bus overturned on Kushtia-Jhenidah highway in Jhenidah Monday morning.

The dead was identified as Kuddus. Police said the Khulna-bound bus from Kushtia turned turtle at about 11 am while its driver was trying to save a goat on the road at Amtail, three kilometer off the town. The injured were admitted to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital. Two of the critically injured were shifted to Khulna. A case was filed.

## Body recovered

UNB, *Munshiganj*

Police recovered the body of a day-labourer from a beel water body at Keutkhali village in Srinagar upazila in Munshiganj on Monday.

Police suspect that victim Jalaluddin, 50, was murdered but they could not ascertain the motive behind the killing. A case was filed.

## Housewife beaten to death

BSS, *Nilphamary*

Housewife Laily Begum, 35, of village Sitarpat under Sadar upazila in Nilphamary district was beaten to death allegedly by her husband on Saturday.

Laily had a quarrel with her husband Jadu Miah, 49, on Saturday night. At one stage, Jadu Miah beat her mercilessly. Laily died on the spot. The husband went into hiding. A case was lodged.

## Pak national gets bail

UNB, *Mymensingh*

A court in Mymensingh on Monday granted ad-interim bail to Pakistani citizen Noor Hossain, an accused of a fraudulence case, on condition that he would not leave Bangladesh.

Magistrate Kazi Wasiuddin also issued an order to return the car, which was rented by Noor Hossain, to its owner Shirin Akhter. Noor Hossain along with his wife came to Bangladesh on April 22 this year and took away Tk 30,000 from a business organisation in the town through trickery. Later, police arrested him with the car on way to Dhaka.

## Pabna BNP men scuffle

UNB, *Pabna*

BNP activists scuffled with one another in their office in Pabna Sunday over holding programmes on the occasion of Begum Zia's arrival in the district on May 19.

Witnesses said the trouble ensued when a group, led by the district committee convenor, proposed to hold a meeting commemorating late party leader Rafiqul Islam Bakul. At one stage of the quarrel, the rival group ousted them from the meeting room. Infighting in the local BNP surfaced after the death of Bakul and joining of trade union leader Shimul Biswas to the party.

## Potato sells at Tk 2 a kg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Netrakona*

Potato is selling at only Tk 2 per kg following a bumper production in Netrakona district this season.

The growers say they are now in trouble with their products as there is no cold storage in the district. Seeing no alternative, the cultivators are selling potato at very cheap price in the local markets. The growers are facing financial losses while selling their crops for the big gap between the prodution cost and market rate.

## Cattle diseases break out

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Netrakona*

Cattle diseases have broken out in an epidemic form in Netrakona district.

According to official sources, at least 150 cattle died of the diseases, popularly known as 'galaphula' and 'khura' in Durgapur, Atpara, Madan, Mohanganj, Barhatta, Kendua and Khalajuri upazilas in recent days. The diseases attack jaws and hooves of cattle. Most of the affected cattle are not getting proper treatment because of absence of adequate number of veterinary doctors in rural areas. However, quacks are doing brisk business, local people said. People in the remote areas said since the outbreak of the diseases no attempt for vaccination of the cattle has been initiated by the Livestock Department. Farmers alleged many cattle, which were vaccinated earlier, have been attacked with the diseases.

## Heavy downpour in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Sirajganj*

People in Sirajganj district experienced heavy downpour on Monday.

According to Met office, 100-mm rainfalls were recorded in the district. The heavy downpour inundated many low-lying areas. Farmers said Boro paddy and mustard crops were affected due to the rains.

## Contraband goods seized

UNB, *Chuadanga*

Huge quantities of smuggled goods were seized in separate raids in Chuadanga district on Thursday-Saturday.

The haul included 26,000 kg of onion, 5,500 kg of sugar and 1,000 kg of salt. Police said they seized 224 sacks of onion from two Dhaka-bound trucks at Meherpur when the drivers after being challenged ran away leaving behind the vehicles near Bara Bazar on Saturday. The onion worth about Tk 2.6 lakh was deposited with local customs house. In another operation on Thursday, an anti-smuggling taskforce seized 5,500 kg of sugar and 1,000 kg of salt from an Iswardi-bound train. The smuggled items were being carried in a wagon under cover of sand for the Jamuna Bridge, police said.

## Cyclone centre set up

UNB, *Chittagong*

A cyclone centre has been set up at Shahid Abul Kalam Government Primary School in Mirsarai upazila in Chittagong at a cost of Tk 1.5 crore.

Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Engineer Mosharraf Hossain on Saturday inaugurated the cyclone centre set up with financial assistance from the Japanese government.

## Development schemes taken up

UNB, *Bandarban*

Red Crescent Society has taken up various development programmes in Thanchi and Sadar upazilas of Bandarban district at a cost of Tk 8 lakh under Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Project.

The programmes include installation of eight tubewells, renovation of eight ring-wells, distribution of 200 slab-latrines and water supply to local people from two fountains. The local people will also be provided with soft loans for agricultural works and poultry farming.

## Six arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Six people including two women were arrested for their alleged involvement in heroin trade recently Mymensingh town.

The arrested were identified as Abul Kasem, Zakaria, Alam, Jewel, Joshna and Fuli. In another raid, police arrested another heroin trader from Baghmara area of the town. He was identified as Asad.

## Old age allowance distributed

BSS, *Rangpur*

The Social Welfare Department of the government has disbursed Taka 2 crore 68 lakh and 83 thousand among 7,470 elderly people as old age allowance in 8 upazilas of Rangpur district during March this year.

The upazila-wise break-up of the disbursement is as follows: Rangpur Sadar Taka 35,55,000 for 990 people, Badarganj Taka 32,40,000 for 900, Pirganj Taka 48,60,000 for 1350, Gangachara Taka 32,40,000 for 900, Taragong Taka 16,20,000 for 450, Kaunia Taka 19,44,000 for 540, Pirgachha Taka 29,16,000 for 810 and Mithapukur Taka 55,08,000 for 1530. Each recipient gets Tk 100 as monthly allowance.

## AGENCIES

Storms hit Manikganj, Natore, Pirojpur and Bagerhat districts on Monday, injuring people and damaging houses and crops.

In Manikganj, tornado hit sadar upazila, damaging huge crops and about one thousand dwelling houses.

Over 100 people were injured in tree and house collapses and lightning during the storm in five villages Bhatbaur, Muljan, Manora, Natunbasti and Purba Seota.

The tornado lasted for only 90 seconds while rain occurred for about two hours after the storm. A vast tracts of standing IRRI-Boro crops were damaged while crops in the low-lying areas went under rain water.

The injured including seven in a lightning, received treatment at sadar hospital.

A severe nor'wester lashed three

upazilas of Natore district, damaging standing crops on vast tract of land.

The storm accompanied by heavy rains also uprooted a large number of trees and damaged Kutcha houses in Gurudaspur, Sadar and Singra upazilas.

Meanwhile, a 33-kv electricity line of Palli Bidyut Samity at Banpara in Boraigram upazila went out of order due to the high wind, disrupting power supply at different places.

In Pirojpur, a nor'wester that swept over the district with win speed of 60-100 kilometres per hour caused serious damages to Boro paddy.

A number of houses and shanties were also damaged and many trees were uprooted by the storm which began at around 6 pm, and continued till 6.30 pm.

But, no casualty of life was reported from any part of the district



PHOTO: STAR

Flouting traffic rules passengers travel on rooftops of buses in Sirajganj district as elsewhere in the country. The malpractice, which draws little or no attention from the authorities, is one of many sources of highway mishaps.

## Rapid fall in river water level, emergence of shoals

## Navigation badly hit in Jamalpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Jamalpur*

Rapid fall in water level in all the rivers and emergence of chars (shoals) have seriously affected the navigation in the district.

The chars have appeared at many places in the Jamuna, Brahmaputra, Kangsha, Jheani, Jinjiram, Padma and Louhajang due to heavy siltation.

Official sources said that an additional amount of a little more than Tk five lakh is needed for warding off the ongoing onslaught of siltation.

According to the Water Development Board (WDB) sources, water is flowing lower than the normal level, as evidenced by assessment records in the Brahmaputra at Dewangonj, in Jamuna at Jagannath ghat, in Jheani near Jamalpur, in Kangsha at Sherpur, in Padma at Rajshahi

and in Louhajang at Sarisabari.

The WDB said that a 15-feet layer of silt has been deposited in the Brahmaputra bed at Bahadurabad, whereas the Jamuna at Jagannathganj ghat has witnessed sedimentation of 14 feet of silt.

It is feared that in the coming lean period, the ground and surface water levels will go down further, which may seriously affect the ecological balance and create water dearth for both drinking and irrigation purposes.

Now water transportation modes including ferries and country boats shuttling between Jagannathganj ghat to Sirajgonj ghat, Bahadurabad ghat to Sanandabari ghat, Bahadurabad to Chilamari ghat, Madergonj to Shariakandi ghat and Bahadurabad to Teestamukh ghat have to ply additional areas to reach their destinations.

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Electric supply remained suspended in the town and the nearby villages as electric poles were uprooted in some areas due to storm.

In some areas of the town, road communications were snapped as fallen trees and its branches created congestion.

A nor'wester lashed Bagerhat district, razing over hundred houses to the ground and uprooting numerous trees.

The storm, which started at about 5pm, also caused havoc to standing crops on vast tract of land in different parts of the district.

Two fishing boats in the Panguchhi and Bhairab rivers sank during the storm that lasted for about an hour. However, there was no report of any casualty.



PHOTO: STAR

A farmer poses with a mango tree laden with fruits at Shatakholi village under Shalikhpa upazila in Magura district. Mango growers in the district expect good output of the crop this season.