

Narayanganj trader's appeal

UNB, Narayanganj

A helpless trader in Narayanganj has appealed for protection of his life and that of his family members from the threat of a terrorist gang.

Addressing a press conference at the local press club on Monday Amanullah alias Baro Khoka of Nitaiganj in the town said that he along with his wife and two little daughters had been compelled to flee from home fearing attack by the gang.

He alleged that he and his family members are not getting any help from police after repeated appeals for security of their life and property.

He accused his brothers of hiring the terrorist gang with a view to depriving him of the rightful share of his paternal property.

A case was pending over the share of landed property with his brothers. The gang led by Ejaz and Jinnah threatened to eliminate his entire family, he said.

Police were not taking any action on the complaints lodged against the terrorists, he alleged.

With tearful eyes, helpless Amanullah sought protection and cooperation from the authorities and newsmen to save his family from the hands of 'politically backed' goons.

Two Sirajganj BNP leaders expelled

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Two leaders of Sirajganj district BNP were expelled on charges of activities against party interest on Sunday.

The expelled leaders were identified as Alamgir Al Amin Kazol, who was also expelled in April 1989, and Abdul Kader, chairman of Kalia Haripur union parishad chairman.

A press release signed by Noor-e-Alam Helal, member of district BNP convening committee, said the two were expelled after they were found guilty of acting against party interest.

A meeting of local leaders held at the residence of Helal took the decision.

Rivers in eight northern districts drying up

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Rivers flowing through eight northern districts are drying up, posing serious threat to ecological balance in the region.

Local people said the rivers are drying up as the neighbouring Indian government had constructed a dam in the upper-stream of the Teesta and Mahananda rivers in Jalpaiguri in 1986. The dam went into full-fledged operation about three years back. The dam now facilitates irrigation in the Indian side by withdrawing waters from the rivers.

The districts through which the rivers flow are Rangpur, Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Nilphamari, Gaibandha, Dinajpur, Thakurgaon and Panchagarh.

The worst affected rivers in Bangladesh side include the Teesta, Mahananda, Karotoa, Chawai, Talma, Atrai, Dharla, Karum, Tangon, Tersha, Ghoramara, Ichhamati, Trimohoni, Ratnai, Shaniajan, Kalifagar and Chilka.

The navigation in these rivers, now, faces serious setback. During the summer, various crops are cultivated on the riverbeds.

But irrigation is hit hard as the rivers are drying. Lakhs of hectares of croplands depend on river waters.

Meanwhile, water pumps do not function well during the summer due to sharp fall in water level. According to an unofficial estimate, at least 80 per cent pumps have already gone out of order this summer.

The farmers in the region apprehend a gloomy future of cultivation in absence of surface water in the rivers and other water bodies.



A view of the dying river Teesta.

PHOTO:STAR

Low price of paddy worries farmers

Crop procurement drive yet to start

UNB, Jessore

Current low price of paddy in the district, particularly in Jhikargachha upazila, means that the farmers need immediate price support to make up their production cost.

According to market sources, the beleaguered growers have already started selling paddy at throwaway prices to repay loans they have taken from moneylenders at high interest rates.

But the government, which is taking pride of achieving food autarky, could not yet launch its procurement drive here to give price support to the farmers.

Agriculture officials said some 14,000 hectares of lands were brought under IRRI-boro cultivation against the target of 13,225 hectares in the upazila this season.

They said some 85,000 metric tons of paddy were produced from the croplands breaking he records of last three years. They attributed the bountiful production to favourable weather.

The farmers were obviously delighted at the bumper production but their jubilation did not last long. Paddy is now selling at Tk 230-240.

The government has announced that it would procure paddy directly from the farmers at Tk 330 per maund, but still there is no sign of launching its procurement drive.

4 Netrakona rivers need dredging

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Four rivers in Netrakona need immediate dredging as those have silted up.

The Sumashowary, the Magra, the Kongsha and the Dhanu have lost depth. The rivers can not hold much water during the rain season, causing flood.

River beds are gathering silt every year. At some places the rivers can be crossed on foot and in some places paddy and jute are being cultivated.

Thousands of acres of cropland go under flood water every year in the district, causing huge crop loss.

Besides, the rivers failed to provide irrigation facilities to arable lands.

According to an official source, out of about 1,02,555 hectares of arable lands in Netrakona, about 60 thousand hectares have been brought under irrigation facilities.

Two policemen beaten up

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Two policemen of Godagari upazila in Rajshahi were beaten up mercilessly at Char Nawshera village under the upazila last week.

Local people said ASI Deepak Kumar along with Constable Mamtaz Ahmed went to the village to arrest an accused, Abdus Sattar. Local people beat the policemen indiscriminately when they arrested Sattar. On hearing, BDR personnel from local outpost rushed to the spot and rescued the policemen.

Later, police arrested Sattar.

NEWS SNAPS

Man dies only for Tk 20!

UNB, Luxmipur

A 40-year-old man lost his life only for Tk 20, which he had given to a man as loan. Villagers said Habi Hossain of village Neyamatpur aided by two other men severely beat Idris Mia, son of Taher Ahmed of village Battali in Sadar upazila of Luxmipur, two weeks ago as Idris asked Habi to return the money he had borrowed from him.

Idris was admitted to Sadar Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries on Wednesday, 16 days after admission. He was buried at his family graveyard after autopsy at the hospital morgue. A murder case was filed.

Paddy trader stabbed to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

A paddy trader was stabbed to death by miscreants at Muladuli rail crossing near Iswardi of Pabna district on Thursday.

The victim was identified as Khalilur Rahman, 40, of Nikorhata under Iswardi upazila in Pabna district. Police said when the victim left his house with paddy Wednesday evening and reached at Muladuli rail crossing, a gang of miscreants numbering five stabbed him resulting his instant death. A case has been lodged with Sirajganj Bazaar Railway police station in this connection. The cause of murder could not be known.

Body of teenaged boy recovered

UNB, Manikganj

The beheaded body of a teenaged boy was recovered from a paddy field at Footnagar village in Shingair upazila of Manikganj Wednesday, four days after his murder.

Police said M Amjad Miah, 16, son of Abdul Hakim of Footnagar village was killed by some of his fellow-villagers when he went to steal mango from their garden Saturday. On information, police recovered the body and sent it to hospital morgue for autopsy. A case was filed.

Two housewives commit suicide

UNB, Pirojpur

Two housewives committed suicide in Nazirpur upazila of Pirojpur on Sunday-Monday.

Police said Sabita Boiragi, 30, wife of Nikhil Boiragi of Gobardhan village took her life by taking poison on Sunday wife Sabita Nag, 32, wife of Monmoth Nag of Sachia village committed suicide on Saturday. Separate cases were filed.

Village defence personnel slaughtered

UNB, Narsingdi

Unidentified miscreants slaughtered a village defence personnel at Baghaigandhi village in Raipura upazila of Narsingdi on Tuesday. The victim was identified as Farid Mia, 45, a 'dafadar' of the village defence party.

Family sources said the assailants called him out of his house and slaughtered him with sharp weapon. Receiving information from local people, police rushed to the spot in the morning and recovered the body. Farid Mia, who used to guard the village, might have been killed as he had earlier caught many robbers and thieves and handed them over to police.

BNP leader assaulted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Iswardi upazila BNP leader Raju Miah was assaulted by JCD activists on Wednesday evening.

Police said there was a conflict between BNP leader Raju Miah and local JCD activists for a long time. Raju was attacked by the rivals at Alnah crossing on Wednesday. Police and locals rescued him and admitted to local hospital. Raju filed a case with Iswardi police against some JCD activists. He alleged that the JCD members attacked him and snatched away Taka two lakh and gold chain from him. Police arrested JCD local leader Harun from Iswardi Bazaar.

Police, copy suppliers clash: 25 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

At least 25 people were injured in a clash between HSC examinees, copy suppliers and police at Ullapara Akbor Ali Science College at Ullapara on Thursday.

As a result the examination was stopped for 30 minutes from 10-30 am to 11 am on the day. Police and witnesses said the clash ensued when the invigilators in the examination centre were trying to recover copy from the examinees. Angry examinees and copy suppliers jointly ransacked the college rooms and damaged furniture of the college, threw brickbats to police. At this stage police restored to baton charge at the centre.

Train journey becomes risky

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Railway passengers travelling along Chandpur-Shahtali, Chandpur-Hajiganj and Chandpur-Laksham lines have been facing difficulties due to deplorable condition of century-old railway tracks.

Railway tracks of these lines were established during the British period. But these lines had not been repaired properly and regularly for a long time. There are no stones, no slippers at many points along the railway tracks. The tracks have lost weight up to twenty per cent during the long period. The trains have to reduce speed to avert accidents. The movement of a train is slowed down observing the weakness of the lines. To avert accident the slippers of the tracks must be changed after 12 years. The wooden and steel slippers are not replaced by new ones for years together. The slippers, fish plates, hooks, bolts, wheels, wires, iron bars and woods are being stolen by organised gangs of miscreants. All the railway stations of different places of these rail lines have been beset with manifold problems.

The existing on duty staffers at different railway stations of these lines are also facing serious difficulties to maintain these lines operative.

The condition of the waiting rooms at all the stations is far from satisfactory causing great sufferings to the waiting passengers. All the platforms present a dismal look as these are not cleared properly.

Bad smell is the common factor in all stations. There is acute shortage of pure drinking water in all the stations. Most of the level crossing on these lines have no arrangement for gates and gatekeepers. Accident may occur in these crossings. The railway security guards move from one compartment to another in search of goods without booking to get tips from the carriers.

The railway authority is worried over the increased number of ticketless passengers.

Summer fruits are sour

PHOTO FEATURE: HOSSAIN SERAJ



Magura produces a large variety of summer fruits. Fruits like water-melon, lichi, jackfruit, mango etc. help one endure the dreary long days of the summer. Now the indigenous varieties of summer fruits have started to flood the local markets. However, while the summer fruits are tasty and very nutritious as well, the price is much higher than the common people's reach. So they find summer fruits sour in markets.

Chuadanga bazaars in shambles

BSS, Chuadanga

Local bazaars in Chuadanga district are in shambles in absence of development and renovation works.

The pitiable condition of market places in all the four upazilas of the district is causing immense suffering to people.

The sellers and buyers blame the local authorities for not taking up proper maintenance work of the bazaars.

Not a single bazaar has drainage. The situation worsens during the rainy season when most of the bazaars go under knee-deep water.

Congested places for selling fish, meat, vegetables and other commodities have multiplied the difficulties of both the buyers and sellers.

Absence of pure drinking water, latrines and the piling up of garbage and filth are polluting the surrounding areas.

Another report from Brahmanbaria says: Market places in the town are beset with problems.

According to local people, with population boom in the town, gatherings in town markets have also increased.

Vendors have already occupied the footpaths and unauthorized places by the side of the markets, they added.

During daytime, vendors who come from outside the town, usually sit on footpaths on the main roads.

The fish and vegetable markets, especially Furuki Market and Ananda Bazar, are comparatively small. Accommodation problem for buyers and sellers is more acute there. As a result, sellers, hampering easy movement of pedestrians and buyers are now occupying the approach roads and link roads of the markets.

On the other hand, illegal parking of rickshaws on the roads of the markets is creating traffic jam every day.

In many places, footpaths are damaged and traders have setup shops on footpaths to sell fruits, vegetable, fowls.

Some vendors have also setup old garments shop or make siff shops here and there.

Jamalpur Press Club office bearers



President



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OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Hafiz Raihan Sada, editor of local weekly the Kalakal, and Azizur Rahman Doll, local correspondent of the Aiker Kagaj, have recently been elected president and secretary respectively of Jamalpur Press Club.

The other office bearers of the club are Muhammad Ali (The Daily Star) and Taufiq Alam Khan (The New Nation)-- vice presidents; Sajjad Ansary (Weekly Daibadha) and Mukhlesur Rahman Likon (The Independent) --joint secretaries; Bazlur Rahman (UNB)treasure; Abdul Hannan Swapan (The Bangladesh Observer -- sports and cultural secretary; and Subal Chandra Das (The Arthaniti)-- information secretary.