

## NEWS SNAPS

**One killed in Laxmipur bus accident**

UNB, Laxmipur

A rickshaw-puller was killed in a bus mishap on Choumuhani-Laxmipur road in Laxmipur on Saturday.

Police and witnesses said the driver of the Laxmipur bound bus from Choumuhani lost control of its steering and it hit a rickshaw killing its puller Hossain of village Khaguria in Sadar upazila on the spot. Another report from Barisal adds: At least 30 passengers were injured in a bus accident at Shiali on Barisal-Patuakhali road on the same day. Witnesses said the mishap occurred when the bus hit a roadside tree as the driver lost its control. The injured were sent to the local health centre and Patuakhali sadar hospital.

**30 cows snatched by armed bandits**

UNB, Savar

Armed bandits swooped on a trawler on Ballerpool Beel in Savar and took away 30 cows on Friday night.

Witnesses said 7-8 pirates attacked the trawler at about 7 pm when the cow-traders were taking back the cows from Savar Bazaar. Four cow-traders were also injured as the robbers beat and chopped them mercilessly. They were admitted to the local clinics. A case was filed with the police.

**Five villages affected by river erosion**

BSS, Barisal

About 1,600 acres of land in seven villages of Bhandaria upazila have been eroded into the river Kancha during the last few years.

The affected villages are Telikhali, Bothla, Chowaria, Charkhali, Chinguria, Nadmula and Hetalia. Of the total 506 acres in Telkhali, 6.46 acres in Bothla, 43.56 acres in Chowaria, 4,152 acres in Charkhali, 13 acres in Chinguria and 939.40 acres in Nadmula villages were eroded in the river. The speed of erosion has increased in recent year. Erosion usually increased in the rainy season. Several thousand people living along the river are in constant fear as to when their houses will be devoured by the river.

**Eight BNP activists rescued after abduction**

UNB, Laxmipur

Eight BNP activists were rescued after a few hours of their abduction following a factional clash at Paler Hat in Sadar upazila on Thursday.

Police said nine supporters of former BNP MP Abul Khaer Bhuiyan were abducted and mercilessly beaten up allegedly by the rival group of Hiru Chowdhury of the same party. Of them, police rescued eight youths -- Yusuf, 22, Anwarullah, 30, Anwar Hossain, 22, Sohel, 21, M Kalu, 26, Kamal, 25, Shohag, 18, and Chowdhury, 22 -- from different areas. They were rushed to the Sadar hospital in a critical condition.

Another abducted young man identified as M Amin, 30, could not be rescued till Friday. Police arrested six people in this connection.

**Arsenic detected in tubewells of B'baria**

UNB, Brahmanbaria

Arsenic has been detected beyond permissible limit in the waters of 12,201 tubewells in Brahmanbaria posing threat to human health.

Arsenic was found in waters of 1,268 tubewells in Sadar, 7,695 tubewells in Sarail, 1,067 tubewells in Bancharampur, 1,181 tubewells in Nabnagar, 812 tubewells in Nasirnagar, 174 tubewells in Kasba and four tubewells in Akhaura upazilas, a local source said.

It also claimed that some 119 people affected with arsenic-related diseases. According to PHED, 445 deep tubewells have been installed in different parts of the district to supply safe water to the people.

**15 injured in Patuakhali road mishap**

UNB, Patuakhali

At least 15 people were injured in a road accident at Gabua in sadar upazila on Saturday.

Witnesses said the accident took place at 11 am when a Barisal-bound bus dashed with a roadside tree as the driver lost its control. Seven of the injured -- Dhalu Shikdar, 55, Mannan Miah, 70, Nizam, 35, Amiruzzaman, 43, Gouranga, 55, Hossain Mridha, 80, and Sekander Houlader, 70 -- were admitted to Sadar hospital. Driver and helper of the bus fled from the scene. In another incident, Shohag, 25, son of Asmat Ali was electrocuted in Baufal upazila on Thursday morning. Locals said he came in contact with a live electric wire while climbing up a tree.

**Appointment hailed**

UNB, Brahmanbaria

A politician in Sharail upazila of Brahmanbaria was inducted in the cabinet for the first time in 28 years.

District BNP president and MP of Sharail Advocate Abdus Sattar Bhuiyan has been made State Minister in the cabinet of Begum Khaleda Zia's new government. He got the portfolio of Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs. Local leaders and workers of BNP, its front organisations and local people expressed their happiness on the appointment of Abdus Sattar as State Minister. In 1973, Taheruddin Thakur of Sharail upazila who is now an undertrial prisoner in Jail Killing case was made State Minister for Information.

**Rice sanctioned for students in Barisal**

BSS, Barisal

The government has sanctioned 14,09,970 kg of rice for 1,50,997 students in 38 upazilas of six southern districts in Barisal division.

The sanction was made under the programme of Food-for-Education in the current academic year. According to an official source, the rice has been given among the students of 1,40,997 families from 1,483 schools. Meanwhile, 12,68,973 kg of rice have already been distributed among the students of Barisal, Jhalakati, Bhola, Pirojpur, Patuakhali and Barguna. Of the total, 40,636 students were benefited in Barisal district, 10,947 students in Jhalakati, 13,379 students in Barguna, 17,878 students in Patuakhali 15,422 students in Pirojpur and 52,735 students in Bhola.

**Two youths with pistols arrested**

UNB, Manikganj

Two youths were arrested along with two pistols from Aricha Ghat in Manikganj on Friday night.

The arrested were identified as Sheikh Hasan, 21, of Kacharpal village of Jhenidah district and Subjan, 20, of the same village. Police said the youths reached Aricha Ghat from Gabtali by a bus. When the bus conductor demanded fare from them they expressed inability saying that they had no money. Later at one stage of their altercation police came to the spot and recovered the pistols after searching their bags.

**Cattle disease breaks out in epidemic form**

BSS, Gopalganj

Foot and mouth diseases of cattle have broken out in epidemic form in Gopalganj district.

The local Livestock Department officers could not give details and figures relating to the spread of the disease. The farmers however, urged the higher authorities to take immediate steps to combat the diseases.



PHOTO: STAR

Rameeja Khaton, 22, a housewife of Char Chilakhal in Rangpur stands beside the wreckage of her house which was totally damaged by a devastating tornado on October 5.

**Hundreds of tornado victims in Rangpur in great misery**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Hundreds of people of tornado affected Gangachhara upazila in Rangpur have been passing days in great misery.

This is due to lack of food, shelter, clothes, medical aid and lack of any source of earning for living.

It has been presumed that 1,500 families have become shelterless as their houses had been either damaged or blew away by the tornado. Four unions in Gangachhara upazila are worst hit by the calamity. These are Betgari, Kolkond, Nohali and Alam-Biditor unions.

Eyewitnesses said, at around 1:30 pm on October 5, suddenly a tornado lashed the area and continued for only five minutes. In this short period, it caused a havoc and left a trail of devastations.

Alema Khaton, 45, of Kolkond was killed due to house collapse and over 200 people have been injured following tree falling and house collapse. Standing crops like amon and vegetables suffered a colossal damage.

While visiting the tornado ravaged areas, this correspondent found a large number of families have been passing their days under open-sky in great distress beyond description. Most of the affected families have been facing a semi-starvation condition.

Many families of the affected areas narrated me a harrowing tale of devastation due to the calamity. The elderly people said that they never found such tornado in their life time.

Nirasha Mamud, 48, of Char Matukpur white giving a heart

touching description of devastations said that all his four tin-shed houses along with house hold belongings blew away. He could not trace those as yet.

Safia Khaton, 50, a widow of Char Chilakhal, Safed Ali, 51, of Betgari, Wahed Ali, 45, of Kalkond and many others narrated the narrowing tale of tornado. They said that they had lost their houses and property due to the tornado. Most of them have now become beggars.

Their immediate requirements are food, shelter, clothes and medical aid.

The district administration, so far disbursed Tk 52,000 and five metric tons of wheat as relief to the victims of the affected areas, which are quite inadequate alleged a number of union parishad members and other leading persons of the localities.

**10 hurt as BNP activists clash with bank employees**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

At least 10 people were injured in a clash between the activists of BNP and the employees of a bank at Baghbat in Sadar upazila on Friday.

The clash erupted when a group of BNP activists went to Baghbat branch of Rupail Bank to remove the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The employees of the bank resisted the move and as a result, a clash ensued in which 10 people were injured.

Of the injured, two were admitted to the Sadar Hospital.

Police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

Meanwhile, the district police recovered 35 dozens of chocolate bombs, 135 bottles of phenisidyl and some Indian goods from a night coach near the Jamuna Bridge.

**Three girls abducted, raped by terrorists**

UNB, Magura

A gang of armed terrorists kidnapped three girls and raped them at village Nohata in Sreepur upazila of Magura at midnight Tuesday night.

Witnesses said the gang, allegedly led by Abu Sayeed, Kinon and Shamsul entered into the houses of Anil Kumar Pal and Gobinda Pal and kidnapped the three girls.

The terrorists took the girls to a nearby field and raped them. Later, they were released.

The armed men also injured 10 inmates of the two houses while they tried to prevent them. Injured Gobinda Pal, 40, Nikhil Chandra Pal, 45, Sumil Pal, 30, Shumila Rani Pal, 25, and Niva Rani Pal, 30, were admitted to Sadar Hospital.

On information, Police Superintendent, Assistant Police Superintendent and Officer in-charge of Sreepur thana visited the village.

**JCD-BCL clash leaves 10 injured in Sirajganj**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

At least 10 students were injured in a clash between Awami League (AL) backed student wing Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and BNP backed student wing Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) in Ullapara bus stand area at 10:30 am on Saturday.

Police said the clash erupted when the supporters of JCD attacked three BCL workers at Ullapara bus stand. JCD workers stabbed them mercilessly and they were critically injured. Of them, Rajib, 22, Manik, 22, and Mannan, 21, were admitted to Sirajganj hospital. Following the incident, supporters of BCL workers resist them and fierce clash erupted in the area.

Another clash occurred at Purnimaganj on Friday evening where 40 people were injured, 10 of them critically injured who were

admitted to Purnimaganj Health Complex. The clash erupted when the co-villager of Puthia and Purnimaganj attacked each other while a village salish (a trial by local influential persons) was going on.

Later, the salish was postponed.

Another report from Benapole reports: Bangladesh Chhatra League secretary of Sarsha upazila unit of Jessore district was stabbed by a gang of terrorists at Amrakhali on Jessore-Benapole Road on Saturday.

The injured was identified as Ruhul Quddus, 30. He came under attack while returning home from his hatchery. Locals said dispute over ownership of the hatchery was the reason behind the attack. But Awami League leaders blamed BNP workers for the attack.

A case was filed.



Members of Moulvibazar district association in Dhaka greets advocate Ibadur Rahman Chowdhury with bouquet on Sunday following his induction in the new cabinet of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia as a state minister.

**Thakurgaon silk factory may close down**

BSS, Thakurgaon

Thakurgaon Silk Factory, the only silk factory of greater Dinajpur district, is on verge of closure and about 7,000 cocoon growers have already left their jobs.

The government took initiatives to modernise Thakurgaon Silk Factory in 1999. During the modernisation of the factory it was also decided that the modernised factory would be run by imported silk threads, and the thread manufacturing section would be closed down.

According to that decision, the reeling section of the factory was closed down. As a result, the production of thread from the locally produced cocoons was stopped and the cocoon growers of the area became unemployed. About 7,000 cocoon growers and their 25,000 family members left their traditional profession of cocoon cultivation. As a result, the Extension Department of the Silk Board, different mulberry farms of the area and many private mulberry plantations became useless. Six mulberry farms of Thakurgaon, Panchagarh and Dinajpur districts were closed down. The farms are Thandiram, Sakoa, Ratnai, Sangaon, Brahamanbhita and Sadamahala.

A source of the Thakurgaon Silk Factory said that after the modernisation of the factory in 1999 Tk two

crore was given as working capital for test production. But after that no money was sanctioned for punching threads, creating selling mechanism publicity, co-ordination of different works and other purposes.

At present the production of the factory is almost nil for want of thread. The source said that to run the factory smoothly monthly 500 kgs of thread is required. But at present only 20 to 50 kgs of thread is supplied per month. Previously huge quantity of thread was produced locally and after meeting the demand of the factory the excess thread was supplied to Rajshahi Silk factory.

The president and secretary of the Thakurgaon Silk Factory workers union said that Thakurgaon Silk Factory is on verge of collapse. Due to short supply of thread, dye and other materials production of the factory is going to be closed.

He further said that the factory was not modernised fully, it was modernised only partially. Previously it was decided that the factory would run in 2 to 3 shifts. But at present hardly one shift is running. Due to shortage of fund, 70 workers of the factory are not getting salary from last June. At present the workers with their families have been passing their days in financial hardship.

**CUJA's concern over attack on varsity journalists**

CU CORRESPONDENT

Chittagong University Journalists Association (CUJA) expressed their grave concern over the attack on the journalists at different universities of the country reportedly by the cadres of Shibir and JCD - student wings of Jamaat and BNP respectively.

The leaders of CUJA in a press

statement here on Friday protested the heinous attacks on Chakor Malitha, the Jahangirnagar University (JU) correspondent of 'Prothom Alo' at JU campus and Swapon Bashu, the staff correspondent of BSS at Dhaka University (DU) campus.

They also demanded immediate intervention of the new government to take necessary mea-

sures against the persons involved in these attacks.

The statement signed by CUJA president Shahabuddin Nipu and General Secretary Majumder Nazim Uddin also strongly condemned the massive threat to all university correspondents working at Rajshahi University by some miscreants from a rally.