

NEWS SNAPS

**Businessman murdered by outlaws**

**UNB, Chuadanga**  
A businessman was murdered by outlaws at Chandpur village in Darshana upazila of Chuadanga on Thursday night.

Police said the assailants picked up Abdus Sattar, 45, at gunpoint and hacked him to death at Shothangar field. They also took away Tk 5,000 from him. The outlaws also chopped another man, Anwar Hossain, 35, as he resisted them while they were picking up Sattar. Anwar was admitted to a local hospital in a critical condition. The body of Sattar was sent to hospital morgue for autopsy. A case was filed.

**Suicides on rise in Chuadanga**

**UNB, Chuadanga**  
The tendency of committing suicide is on the rise in Jibonnagar upazila of Chuadanga with six people killing themselves in 20 days from Oct 6-26.

Medical sources said at least 20 people attempted to commit suicide during the period and of them six died in local hospital. The main reasons behind the tendency of suicide were said to be poverty, family feud and trouble in conjugal lives.

**Wife beaten to death by husband**

**UNB, Satkhira**  
Failing to realise dowry, a young man allegedly beat his teenage wife to death at Joyanagar village in Shyamnagar upazila of Satkhira recently.

Police and witnesses said Shilpi, 19, was beaten mercilessly by her husband Rajabul, 26, Monday night when she expressed her inability to bring dowry from her parent's house. Eight months back Shilpi, daughter of Tobarak Gazi of Bangshipur village was married with Rajabul, son of Dhonai Sarder of village Joyanagar, police said quoting victim's family sources. Family sources also said that since their marriage Rajabul was torturing her for dowry. The killer husband went into hiding after the murder. A case was filed with the local police station.

**Lightning kills three in Bandarban**

**BSS, Bandarban**  
Three persons including one woman were killed by lightning in Alikadam and Lama upazilas of Bandarban in last two days.

According to family sources, Abu Sayeed 23, and his wife Jannat Ara Begum, 20, of Bazaar area in Alikadam upazila died by lightning near their residence on Sunday. Besides, Usaiching Marna 28, of village Rupashipara in Lama upazila was struck by lightning when he was working in the field on Monday.

**Alleged kidnapper arrested in N'ganj**

**UNB, Narayanganj**  
A youth was arrested on charge of kidnapping a businessman from Silo Gate area of Siddhirganj in Narayanganj on Wednesday.

The arrested was identified as Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal activists Titu, 30. Police said three youths including Titu abducted cotton trader Humayan Kabir from Isha Kha Road of the town and were caught while taking him to Siddhirganj in a private car. Titu was arrested but others managed to flee. A case was filed. Another report from Khulna adds: Police arrested a Chhatra League leader from Darogapara area of the town on Tuesday. The arrested was identified as Chowdhury Raihan Farid, office secretary of BCL central committee. He was an accused of five cases including a murder case, police said.

**Essentials beyond reach of consumers**

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Prices of essential commodities have gone up beyond the reach of common consumers in Gopalganj and Jhenidah.

**Our Gopalganj correspondent reports:** Prices of vegetables have shot up abnormally in the local markets.

According to market sources, now one kilogram of bean is being sold between Tk 15 to Tk 16, one kilogram of basil is being sold between Tk 10 to Tk 12, one kilogram of spinach is being sold between Tk 18 to Tk 20, one kilogram of cabbage is being sold between Tk 13 to Tk 14, one kilogram of brinjal is being sold between Tk 14 to Tk 15, one piece of gourd is being sold between Tk 15 to Tk 20, one kilogram of parboil is being sold between Tk 14 to Tk 15, one kilogram of potato is being sold between Tk 8 to Tk 10, one kilogram tomato is being sold between Tk 60 to Tk 65, one kilogram of gourd is being sold between Tk 14 to Tk 15, one kilogram green chilli is being sold between Tk 40 to Tk 50, one kilogram of onion is being

sold between Tk 28 to Tk 30, and one kilogram of garlic is being sold between Tk 45 to Tk 50.

When contacted with a vegetable traders Mostafa Mir of Gopalganj Natun Bazaar, he old this correspondent that prices of vegetables have increased due to short supply.

**Our Jhenidah Correspondent reports:** Prices of essential commodities have been increasing in the markets day by day.

It has been causing much inconveniences to the low income group people. This trend has been prevailing for last couple of weeks, expressed some consumers.

In the market per kilogram (kg) of brinjal is being sold at Tk 12 instead of previous rate of Tk 8, basil at Tk 7 in stead of Tk 5, onion at Tk 30 instead of Tk 20, green chilli at Tk 30 instead of Tk 15, cauliflower at Tk 25 instead of Tk 12, cabbies at Tk 16 instead of Tk 12, leaf amaranths at Tk 16 instead of Tk 8, chicken (local) at Tk 90 instead of Tk 80 and broiler at Tk 65 instead of Tk 50.

Prices of rice has also increased. Now ordinary quality rice is being

sold between Tk 13 and 14 instead of Tk 12. Price of fine rice has also increased.

**Attack on AL office in Bagerhat**

**UNB, Bagerhat**

A group of armed terrorists attacked and ransacked the Awami League (AL) office in Chitalmari upazila of Bagerhat on Saturday disrupting the Jail Killing Day programme.

According to police and witnesses, the armed terrorists attacked the party office at noon when a discussion meeting, organised to observe the Jail Killing Day, was going on.

The AL leaders and workers left the place as the armed men fired several blank shots. The hoodlums then ransacked the office and damaged a counter of 'Parjatak Paribahan'.

Local AL leaders blamed BNP and Chhatra Dal activists for the incident. But, BNP denied its involvement with the attack.

**Faridpur farmers abandon cultivation of watermelon**

**RAFIQ HASAN, back from Faridpur**

Farmers in Faridpur sadar and Nagarkanda upazilas, famous for high quality watermelon, have now abandoned cultivating it following huge crop losses in the last few years.

Watermelon plants die after growing a little due to a mysterious disease, the farmers said during a visit to the area recently.

They said the plants become yellow and die immediately without producing any fruits.

Most of the farmers in the area are no longer willing to cultivate water melon on their fields in the coming season following the suffering of loss in the previous seasons.

Water melon cultivation season starts from the Bengali month of Agrahayan.

Earlier, around 1,000 acres of land in two upazila's had been used for watermelon cultivation and farmers became benefited from the products.

But now farmers hardly cultivate it on their fields.

"Earlier, we earned Tk 10,000 cultivating watermelon on only 10 kathas of land, but now we can not expect Tk 2,000 from the same land," said Sheikh Siddique of Bhojerdangi in Nagarkanda.

"The farmers have become poor following crop damage in the last few years," said Mohammad Habibur Rahman, a member of Gerda union Parishad in Faridpur sadar thana.

He alleged that the local agricultural extension officials had been informed about the matter, but

they had not taken any steps to protect the farmers.

"The local pesticide dealers suggested us to use different types of pesticides for protecting the plants from the attack of disease, but that also did not give any positive result," said Belayet Hossain of Keshabnagar.

The farmers are confused about the reason of such crop damage in the last three years. Some of them thought that unwise use of fertiliser or pesticide may cause spreading the disease while some others said the damage had been because of low quality seeds.

"We have to buy seeds from the markets as we can not produce high yielding seeds on the fields," said Chanu Mian of sadar upazila.

Low quality seeds may be the reason of crop damage, but that can not affect the whole area because every farmer collects seeds from his own, he said arguing that if one farmer collect low quality seeds it will affect his crop but not every one's plants, he argued.

According to Habibur Rahman, the problem is related to the soil. "The soil of the area should be tested first which had never been done earlier," he said.

Villagers said earlier as many as 20 truck loaded of watermelon had been exported from the area every day during peak season, but last year it had been reduced to hardly one truck.

When contacted Khalequzzaman, an entomologist and regional manager of Syngenta, a multinational company producing pesticides, said the water melon plants die due to a complex disease which is still unidentified.

He admitted that the pesticides provided by his company failed to give any effective result in this regard.

"The Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) is the main authority to prescribe pesticides and we provided it according to their suggestion," Khaleq said.

He, however, blamed the farmers for not using pesticide properly as use of lower dose sometimes increases the resistance power of pest.

He said reports of such type of diseases also came from Madaripur and Shariatpur area. The government should give proper attention to find out a solution to the problem, he said suggesting massive soil test of the area.

**Gabkhan Bridge to be completed soon**

**BSS, Barisal**

The construction of the 5th Bangladesh-China Friendship "Gabkhan Bridge" over the Gabkhan Channel of Jhalakathi district have been progressing fast and waiting for inauguration at any time within a very short period.

After completion of the bridge, the road communications of the southern region from Barisal to Khulna via Jhalakathi will be easier and time consumption for the vehicles will be shorter.

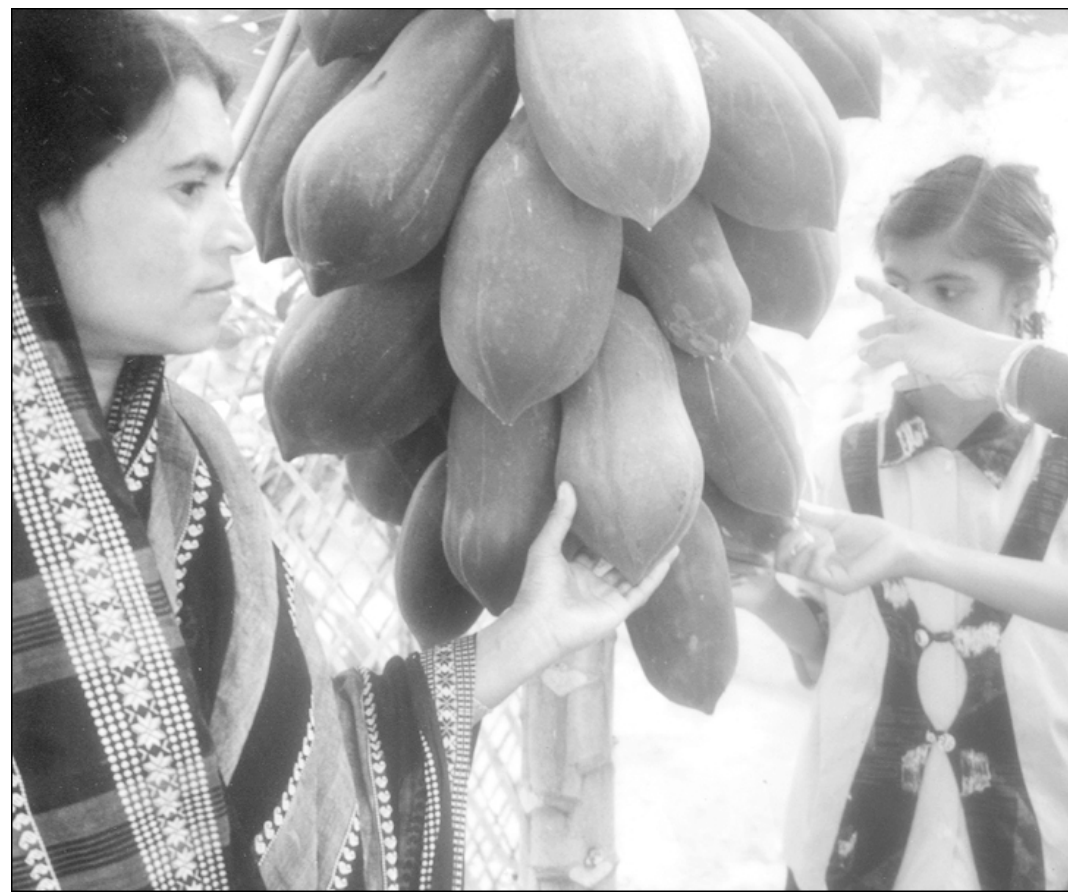


PHOTO: STAR

A housewife in Jamalpur town showing her papayas to some curious people. Bumper production of papaya has been achieved in the ongoing season. A large number of women in this district town earned good profit by cultivating papaya, a nutritious and tasteful fruit, this year.

**Traffic jam on Pakshey-Bheramara ferry ghat**

**UNB, Pabna**

About 3,000 vehicles remained stranded on both sides of the Pakshey-Bheramara ferry ghat (terminal) for the last few days following disruption of ferry movement due to abrupt fall of water in the river Padma and emergence of shoals.

Want of adequate number of ferries and their capacity to carry vehicles are also causing delay in ferrying the vehicles, passengers alleged.

This correspondent found 5/6 km long queue of vehicles on both sides and some trucks remained stranded for three days.

Most of the buses forced the passengers to get down at the ghat, which linked road communication between northern and southern parts of the country.

Official sources said at present each ferry takes almost three hours against normal 45 minutes to cross the channel and was able to carry only five to six vehicles due to shrinkage of navigability.

They said the problem would be deepened if dredging of the river was not started immediately.