

## NEWS SNAPS

## Sandha trawler tragedy claims two

UNB, Pirojpur

A little girl was killed and her mother went missing as a trawler capsized after being hit by another one at Indurhat in Swarupkathi in the river Sandha on Saturday evening.

Witnesses said the Chandpur-bound tree-laden trawler hit the Indurhat-bound trawler carrying 42 passengers at about 5.30 pm. Locals rescued the body of the 8-month-old girl, Sathi, while her mother Laizu, 25, remained missing. However the other passengers swam ashore.

## Outlaws kill cow trader in Chuadanga

UNB, Chuadanga

A cow trader was killed by outlaws at Sharoiganj Bazar in Sadar upazila of Chuadanga Wednesday night.

The victim was identified as Noor Islam, 35, son of Sheikh Zahir Uddin of Kirangachhi village in the upazila. Family sources said Noor Islam went out of his house to purchase cows on the fateful night, but he did not return. Police recovered his body from near a godown in the bazaar Thursday and sent it to hospital morgue for autopsy. A case was filed.

## 35 injured in Gazipur road accident

UNB, Gazipur

A bus, carrying a bridal party, went down a roadside ditch at Bahoria Chala in Gazipur Friday night leaving 35 people, including the bride and bridegroom, injured.

Locals said the Kaliakoir-bound bus fell into the ditch as the driver lost control over the steering. Sixteen of the injured were admitted to the sadar hospital.



Sadaruddin Ahmed, Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Natore distributes a spray machine to a participant of a training course on "Mango Pest Management" as the chief guest. Pran Agri-business Limited arranged the training course recently for mango cultivators in the northern district town.

## Rape, murder of Sabina in Natore

## BNP cadres foil human chain programme of 20 NGOs

ANWAR ALI, Natore

Officials and workers of 20 Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) including ADAB could not organise a human chain, scheduled to be held in protest against rape and murder of Sabina at Gurudaspur bazaar following attack on a publicity van and life threats to the people engaged in publicity campaign by the ruling party cadres.

While talking to The Daily Star over telephone, Abdur Rouf, an ADAB official told that they were forced to withdraw a peaceful programme like formation of a human chain at Gurudaspur following attack on their propaganda machine and threats to the people engaged in publicity campaign.

Two persons—Bablu, nephew of the local ruling party MP and Majnu, his associate attacked the van-puller who was miking the recorded programme of human chain at Poalsura Daripara village on Wednesday morning. They also snatched the cassette from the van-puller, Rouf alleged.

An unknown person, claiming to belong to the ruling party threatened Enamul Haque, vice-president of ADAB over telephone and asked him not to observe the programme, he alleged.

The Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Gurudaspur, when contacted, confirmed the report.

"Had anybody of the NGO officials informed me earlier of their programme, we could have taken proper security measures for them", said the UNO.

The officer-in-charge of Gurudaspur thana Forkan Ali Shikdar quoting the NGO officials claimed that they had no problem of security.

The NGO officials and workers, however, held a meeting on Wednesday afternoon at the office of Bonga Jononi, a local NGO in Gurudaspur.

The speakers expressed their deep concern over the rape and murder of Sabina of Gurudaspur.

Among others, Afaz Uddin, Abdur Rouf, Shiraj Uddin, Suja-ud-Doula addressed the meeting with Barkat Ali Babul, chairman of ADAB in Rajshahi in the chair.

## Seven acid victims in Satkhira yet to get justice

BSS, Satkhira

Despite stringent law to combat acid violence, delay in framing charge-sheets, filing cases and arresting the attackers has increased the sufferings of acid victims in Satkhira.

A total of seven persons, including five housewives, fell victim to acid violence in five separate incidents in Satkhira last year. The victims are Shahina Khatun, 28, Sabina Khatun, 19, Anjuman Ara Khatun, 22, Renu Parvin, 28, Sabina, 5, Nazma Khatun, 15, and Helal 5.

Most of the victims have been passing their days in untold agony and fear as most attackers are yet to be brought to book. The attackers are even threatening the victims to take revenge if cases against them are not withdrawn.

Shahina Khatun of Kaliganj upazila received severe burn injury when her husband Shahidul Islam threw acid on her on December 25 last year.

The attack was an act of revenge against Shahina for filing a case against Shahidul for demanding dowry. Though police arrested the accused, the trial is yet to begin due to some legal impediments.

Earlier in the dowry case, Shahidul came out on bail from jail and took revenge on Shahina by burning her face, mouth and left eye.

Nazma Khatun of Dadpur village of Tala upazila received severe injuries on her face, neck and right hand and her younger brother Helal got minor injury when Abdur Sheikh of the same village threw acid on them on the night of December 7.

The attack was a sequel to refusal by Nazma to Abdur Sheikh's proposal for marriage.

Although over three months have passed, the attackers are freely moving in the villages and threatening the victims.

Sabina Khatun, wife of Musa Karim of village Fringi of Satkhira sadar upazila, fell victim to acid attack by her husband on July 7, 2001. During the attacks she was staying at her father's residence at Bahiada in Deahata upazila.

Sabina received injuries on her face and left hand. The attack was a sequel to a family dispute. Though police arrested the lone accused in the case and submitted the charge-sheet, the trial is yet to get momentum due to various reasons.

Anjuman Ara Khatun of village Muhundi of Tala upazila received burn injuries on her face, throat and chest when her husband Masumbillah allegedly threw acid on her on December 19, 2001. Immediately after the incident Masumbillah divorced Anjuman Ara on the plea that she has an ugly face.

The attack an act of revenge against her for her alleged relations with Sadruddin before the marriage. Police are yet to prepare the charge-sheet and apprehend the accused.

Renu Parvin, wife of Surat Ali and Sabina of village Arar Kadakati of Assasuni upazila, received burn injuries when a group of miscreants threw acid on them on the night of February 25 last year.

The victims had to file case with the concerned court as Assasuni police refused to register FIR in the

incident.

Under a directive of the court, police registered the case on March 3 accusing seven persons in the incident. The attack was a sequel to dispute over land. Police gave the final report on the case acquitting the accused from the charges.

When asked why investigation into acid attacks could not be completed within the stipulated time, Satkhira Police Super (SP) Sohrab Hossain told that police were trying to arrest the accused first and then complete the investigation.

"If we give charge-sheet without arresting the culprits then they may attack the victims again," the SP further said.

About the failure to arrest the attackers in most cases, the SP said the culprits went into hiding immediately after the incident making it difficult for police to track them down.

Replying to a query about inordinate delay in the dispensation of justice in the acid cases, Abdul Majid, a senior lawyer of Satkhira Judge Court said there is no mandatory time frame for completing the trial in acid attacks.

Besides, preparation of the case at the initial stage takes much time as police usually delays submitting investigation report.

He alleged that when the court issues warrant of arrest, police take recourse to dilly-dallying tactics in apprehending the offenders. Prosecution witnesses also do not appear before the court on scheduled dates creating the scope for delaying justice, he added.

## 103 women journalists work in different dailies in Rajshahi divn

BSS, Rajshahi

A total of 103 women journalists work, five of them as editors, in different local and national dailies in Rajshahi division, a survey report revealed in Rajshahi said.

The survey identified conservative attitude of society, lack of proper payment and professional risks and work during night as main obstacles to flourish women journalism in the region.

It found that growing number of young women of the region are interested to work as active reporters though most of the working women journalists are still engaged in desk work.

The BWJS members with personal financial assistance from its

Chief Advisor, Jonathan Padgham conducted a month long survey on the women journalists in Rajshahi division.

The survey revealed that the number of regional dailies now published from Rajshahi division is 27, but 12 of the irregular. The number of regular weeklies is 15.

The survey carried out by Rajshahi-based Bangladesh Women Journalists' Society said that out of the total number of woman journalists, 34 are related with daily newspapers, 53 are related with weeklies and 16 are related with fortnightly and monthlies.

Six of the journalists work as correspondents of Dhaka-based national newspapers, including two English dailies.

Of the five women editors, one is

with a daily newspaper, three with weeklies and the rest one edits specialised monthly computer Web published from Bogra.

They are Begum Rafiq Hossain of Daily Uttar Path of Natore, Sharmin Sultana of weekly Duniya of Rajshahi, Begum Fazila Nazrul of Weekly Natore of Barta, Jahanara Anwar of weekly Panchgarh Barta and Afsa Khatun of Monthly Computer Web.

A total of 14 women journalists work as joint editors and executive editors of the regional dailies and the weeklies including Begum Rafiq Hossain of the Daily Sonar Desh, Tasrin Hossain of The Daily Sunshine, Sahera Banu of The Daily Lal Golup and Mousumi Akhter of The Daily Upachar.

## Garden owners do not know technique of modern Mango farming

BSS, Rajshahi

A good production of mango is expected this year in the greater Rajshahi region although earlier the coming summer was described as the "off year" for this delicious fruit.

Owners of the mango gardens are seen taking precautionary measures by spraying insecticide for protecting the fruits though a small number of mango trees have already been attacked by pests.

Local people said, hundreds of mango garden owners do not know the technique of modern mango farming nor they use fertilisers and lack the idea of irrigation. Although some farmers tried to use fertilisers, they failed to get the desired results since they did not take proper care.

The fallen leaves of the mango trees, which were once permitted to decay for making compost, are now used as cooking fuel. As a result, the fertility of soil of the mango gardens has been decreasing gradually. Not a single farmer of the region irrigates his garden resulting in the dropping of green mangoes during dry season.

To protect mango trees from different kinds of insects and ensure

good production, the farmers should spray pesticides at least once in a year before November 15, experts have suggested.

"Despite off year, mango buds sprouted in almost all the trees in the region owing to favourable climatic conditions this year bringing a bright prospect", said the concerned officials of local office of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE).

They expressed optimism about the coming mango harvest.

He said if no rainfall or dense fog occurs during the coming 10-15 days, the production of mango would be good. About 50-60 per cent of mango trees have already shown their budding within this time. Last year, there was bumper production of mango, breaking all previous records in the region with favourable climatic condition, officials said.

They said there are 23,348 hectares of mango-groves with around 16 lakh of mango trees. About 80 per cent mango trees are fruit bearing in the region comprising Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Natore, Naogaon, Bogra, Joipurhat, Pabna and Sirajganj.

Chapainawabganj and Rajshahi districts are famous for "off-time" mango production and the mangoes of these two districts are very famous for taste and quality across the country.

"Flowering and budding of mango trees this year indicate much of the potentiality and almost all the trees here are now in full bloom. Buds are found in many trees. New leaves are growing forecasting good production," said Nurul Islam, a mango grower of Shibgonj in Chapainawabganj.

A source close to the local office of Fruit Research Centre (FRC) said that the growth of mango trees was found normal and buds appeared timely as optimum temperature was available during the budding season. Besides, rainfall at the beginning of February and absence of heavy fog also helped the budding.

"The main problems of mango productions are: fluctuation of temperature, excessive rainfall or fog, attack by pests and insects and inclement weather. The attack of pest and the hailstorm of the coming Biashakh and Joistha months remain as major threats to the future for this crop," experts added.



About 2,000 landless people proceeding towards the office of Thana Nirbahi Officer (TNO), Pangsha B M Ahsanul Haque in a procession to submit a memorandum containing a demand for government khas land. The procession arranged by Samata, a major Non-governmental Organisation (NGO), was followed by a big gathering at Pangsha upazila headquarters in Rajbari on March 13.