

NEWS SNAPS

One killed in Munshiganj road mishapUNB, *Munshiganj*

A labourer was killed when a shallow-engine driven trolley fell into a roadside ditch on Dighirpar-Tongbari road Tuesday night.

Police said Sheikh Malek, 40, suffered severe injuries when the potato-laden trolley skidded off the road at about 9:30pm. He succumbed to his injuries on way to hospital. Police sent the body to morgue for autopsy. A case was filed with Tongbari police station.

One killed in separate clashesUNB, *Sunamganj*

A middle aged man was killed and 20 other people were injured in separate clashes in Sunamganj on Monday and Tuesday.

Police said a clash over beating a schoolgirl by her classmates left 11 people injured at Nurpur village of Sadar upazila on Monday. Of the injured, Solaiman, 45, succumbed to his wounds at a hospital in Sylhet the following day.

Lightning kills young manUNB, *Pabna*

A young man was killed in lightning at Char Bhagiratpur in Sadar upazila of Pabna on Tuesday.

Locals said the thunderbolt struck Monirul Islam, 23, son of Azer Ali, when he was ploughing land in the morning. In another incident, a little boy drowned in a pond at Baluchar village in Chatmohor upazila on the same day. Villagers said Zahid, 4, son of Rezaul Karim, slipped into the pond while playing on its bank.

Five housewives allegedly commit suicideUNB, *Rajshahi*

Five housewives allegedly committed suicide by taking poison at different places of Rajshahi from Saturday to Tuesday.

The deceased were identified as Saleha, 22, of Mohanandakhali village in Poba upazila, Sabiya of Tathahi village in Tanor, Fahima, 16, of Bhallukgachhi village in Puthia, Salma, 24, of Nauhata and Aklima, 25, of Bonogram area of Rajshahi city. Separate unnatural death (UD) cases were filed, but the causes behind the suicides could not be known immediately.

Four killers convicted in JessoreUNB, *Jessore*

A court in Jessore on Sunday sentenced two people to life term imprisonment and two others to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) for killing a fish trader.

According to the prosecution, Sohrab Hossain, Ashraf Hossain, Khokan Dhali and Tariqul Islam stabbed fish trader Shakur Ali to death following a dispute on a piece of land at Magurpatti in Jessore town on August 16, 1998. After examining the witnesses Additional District and Sessions Judge M Shamsul Haq sentenced Sohrab and Ashraf to life term jail and Khokan and Tariqul to 10 years RI. Another accused in the case, Altar Rahman, was acquitted.

Robbers loot Tk 40,600 from two officesUNB, *Chapainawabganj*

Robbers looted Tk 40,600 from two offices in the Sadar Hospital compound early Tuesday.

A gang of bandits broke open the office room of upazila health and family welfare officer and took away Tk 40,000 kept at a chest for giving staff salary. They also broke open the office room of the hospital superintendent at the first floor of the hospital building and took away Tk six hundred.

Looted police arms yet to be recovered in S-W regionUNB, *Benapole*

Police failed to recover most of the firearms looted by the terrorists and suspected extremists from the members of law enforcing agencies and arms sale-shops in different parts of southwestern region in last one decade, giving a rise to criminal offences.

Terrorists looted over 100 firearms along with huge ammunition from the law enforcers and shopkeepers in the region during the period.

Police not only failed to recover the firearms, the cases filed in these regard remained pending for a long.

As the criminals remained immune to punitive action, they are becoming desperate day by day and committing various crimes in the region.

At least four people were killed at the hands of terrorists during looting of firearms at different parts in the region.

The terrorists looted three arms from police at Bablatala in Jessore and Halsa railway station in Kushtia in 1991 while three rifles from them at Bagharpara and Sundalpur in 1994.

Besides, four rifles were looted from police at

Jibannagar in 1995 while seven more rifles from police camp in Paikgachha in 1996.

On August 24, 1997, the members of outlawed party attacked on an express train and looted eight firearms, leaving an Ansar-commander dead on the spot.

A revolver was looted from an ASI in Bagharpara on December 25 while a rifle from Ansar men at Rupsa in Khulna on December 29 and a gun from Sonali Bank in Gourabazar in Bagerhat the following day in 1997.

In addition, the terrorists snatched away three rifles from Ansar men on May 1, 1998 while 10 firearms, including six rifles, and huge ammunitions from an arms-factory of Cable Industries at Khulna on August 1 in the same year.

The hoodlums also looted 12 rifles and over 150 rounds of bullet from Akij Jute Mills at Nawapara in Jessore on January 19 in 1999 while some firearms from a shop in the town on December 17.

The latest arms looting incident occurred on March 9, 2002 when terrorists snatched away one shotgun from police at Khulna Customs ghat. Three policemen were injured as they opened fire on them.

Millions of taka wasted in name of development in Bandarban**Corruption by officials in connivance with ruling class alleged**UNB, *Bandarban*

A substantial part of millions of taka liberally sanctioned by the government for the development of the hill district has been wasted due to corruption and mismanagement.

An extensive survey across the district showed how public money of this impoverished nation was abused by a section of officials in connivance with the ruling class in absence of good governance.

A water treatment project has been implemented at a cost of Tk 50 million to meet the demand for drinking water. As part of the plan, Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) constructed at reservoir on a hilltop at a cost of Tk 10 million, but it is now abandoned.

Officials said an engineer was transferred in Bandarban from Barisal and given the task of constructing the reservoir. But it had to be abandoned because of the engineer's ill planning and loose construction.

A sluice gate constructed by the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) at a cost of Tk 12.3 million has proved a misery for the town dwellers. Stagnation of water and flooding are caused during the monsoon, admit the officials.

After spending Tk 250 million, work on the 59-kilometers Lama-Sualok road is likely to be declared abandoned. Explaining the reason, officials said the work was not done in accordance with its 'alignment'. Those closely connected with the work said there were heavy corruption, malpractice and fraudulence in construction.

Besides, 9-kilometre of the road running through the Army Firing Squad zone has already been unofficially declared abandoned after 'pucca' construction.

LGED executive engineer Mohammad Shah Alam told that a fresh alignment of the road is being prepared, connecting with Chimbuk-Thansi highway at its 16-mile point.

Starting in 1997 at an estimated cost of Tk 370 million, construction of the road was to be completed by June 2002.

DPHE has constructed a 31-bed hospital in a remote place of Thansi upazila at a cost of Tk 70 million. The site of the hospital was chosen wrongly, many people allege, under duress and for malpractice, on the bank of the river Sangu. As strong current of the river threatened erosion of the hospital, Water Development Board has constructed an embankment at a cost of Tk 5.334 million for its protection.

About five years ago, Public Works Department (PWD) has mindlessly constructed a circuit house on a hilltop of Bandarban town at a cost of Tk 5 million. Soon landslide threatened to collapse the wrongly planned circuit house. The government has by now sanctioned Tk 5 million more for protection of the posh house.

DPHE with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) assistance and some Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) have constructed, according to official count, more than 500 ring wells in different parts of the district during the last five years. A survey showed that all but 20 or 25 have either dried up or

become inoperative or totally vanished.

Residents and informed sources said the contractors in connivance with the engineers concerned constructed the ring wells during the monsoon when the water level under the ground was high. They, however, got paid long before the shallow deep wells dried up.

Heavy corruption was alleged in implementing fish projects under food aid of World Health Organisation (WHO). Informed sources said full payment for construction of four projects in fiscal 2000-01 was made to the contractors before completion of the work undertaken during the monsoon. Later, it was reported to the WHO that the projects were completed, but washed away by the flooding.

Water Development Board awarded a Tk 2.531 million contract during the monsoon of fiscal 2000-01 for protection of Bandarban town and the garrison from erosion of the river Sangu. Before completing work, the contractors reported that 80 per cent of the construction was damaged by flood.

Some consulting firms having no experience in development work in hilly areas were awarded contracts for many projects. A Youth Complex constructed at a cost of Tk 30 million at Balkaghat developed cracks and goes under water during the flood.

An elderly official requesting anonymity lamented the abuse of public fund and said: "There are many projects in Bandarban which are yet to see the light of the day, but payment has been made to the contractors."



PHOTO: STAR

Workers of the United People's Democratic Party (UPDF) parade the streets of Chittagong in a procession condemning the killing of Rupayan Khisha, a leader of UPDF recently.

Alleged robber killed in mob beatingUNB, *Faridpur*

An alleged armed robber was killed and two others were injured in mass beating at Karimpur in Kamarkhali on Dhaka-Khulna highway early Friday.

Police and witnesses said a gang of bandits boarded a Khulna-bound night coach of "Ananda Paribahan" in the guise of passengers and took control of the coach at gunpoint.

Later, they got down from the bus at Karimpur after looting valuables worth about Tk 2 lakh from the passengers.

Hearing the hue and cry of the passengers, local people rushed to the spot and caught three armed robbers red-handed, and beat them up mercilessly.

Mobarak, 32, of Azal Bera village died on the spot. Later, police rescued the injured, Enayet, 42, and Momin, and took them to the police station.

35 injured in separate incidents in Sherpur, Magura in two daysUNB, *Dhaka*

At least 35 people were injured in separate incidents in Sherpur and Magura on Sunday-Monday.

Of them, 10 people were injured in Kosba Garotila area of Sherpur town on Monday while 25 at Gangni village of Sadar upazila in Magura on Sunday.

Sherpur police said 10 people were injured when a group of 17 people, led by Delwar, Mister and Malek of Kamarchar, allegedly attacked rival Sahera Begum's house at Kosba Garotila Monday morning following dispute over a small piece of land.

Five houses were ransacked and looted during the attack, police said.

Two of the injured were admitted to Sadar Hospital.

However, police arrested all the

17 as the inmates of the house tactfully confined them into a room and informed the police.

The arrested persons, including two women, were sent to jail.

Meanwhile, at least 25 people were injured in a series of clashes between the activists of ruling BNP and opposition Awami League in Sadar upazila of Magura on Sunday.

Local people said the clash erupted between the supporters of former chairmen of Kuchiamora union and BNP leader Ruhul Amin and local Awami League (AL) leader and also a former union parisdad (UP) chairman Nazrul Islam Mantu over a land-related dispute.

During the series of clashes, both the groups used lethal weapons and bricks.