

NEWS SNAPS

One shot dead by hoodlums in Bagerhat

UNB, Bagerhat A gang of hoodlums shot dead a man at Dahar Moubhogh village at Fakirhat upazila in Bagerhat on Saturday. Police said the hoodlums attacked Ibrahim Sheikh, 50, at 9 pm when he was returning home and sprayed bullet on him, leaving him seriously injured. He succumbed on way to hospital. Police arrested local UP member Nitayananda and Kalidas Roy in connection with the killing. Police said Ibrahim had a longstanding dispute with the two arrested over the possession of a 'jalmahal' (water body).

Bodies of 2 unidentified youths recovered

UNB, Sirajganj Police recovered the bodies of two unidentified youths from the Phoolgor river in Salanga upazila in Sirajganj Sunday. Local people found the body floating on the river in Alakdia area and informed the police. Police suspect that miscreants kidnapped the youths and three the bodies into the river after murder. The bodies were sent to sadar hospital morgue for autopsy. A case was filed.

Body found after one week of missing

UNB, Chuadanga The body of a young man was recovered from a graveyard in Gangpara area of Alamdanga upazila in Chuadanga Saturday, a week after his missing. While collecting leaves of trees some children found the body of Kudrat, 32, of Malidih village in the upazila, in the graveyard and informed the police. Locals said Kudrat, an activist of group, had a dispute with his rivals over sharing the looted money. He was missing since April 13. The body was sent to sadar hospital morgue for autopsy. A case was filed.

Storm damages standing crops

UNB, Sirajganj Standing crops on vast tracts of land were damaged and over 1,000 thatch houses razed to the ground as a violent storm swept over seven upazilas of Sirajganj early Sunday. Some 25 people were injured and thousands of trees uprooted during the storm that started at about 1am. The affected upazilas are Tarash, Salanga, Kamarkhanda, Ullapara, Belkuchi, Chowhall and sadar. The affected farmers got disheartened due to the extensive damage of standing crops particularly IRRI and Boro.

10 injured as BNP factions clash

UNB, Magura At least 10 people were injured in a clash between two factions of ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) at Arpara bazaar at Shalikhya upazila in Magura Sunday. Witnesses said there was a rivalry between Arab Ali and Monnu Mia, both of them local BNP leaders and Union Parishad (UP) members, since long over establishing supremacy at Arpara bazaar. The clash erupted over a trifling matter and supporters of both the groups used lethal weapons during the clash. Of the injured, A Rahim, 45, Salam Mollik, 35, Motelab Ali, 30 and Mahfuz Mollik, 35, were rushed to the sadar hospital in critical condition.

Soil testing begins in Thakurgaon

UNB, Thakurgaon Padma a mobile team of the Soil Resources Development Institute began soil testing in Thakurgaon on Thursday. The team will collect samples of soil from 32 places and provide information to the farmers on the nature of soil and proportionate use of pesticide. A farmer will be able to know the details on the nature of his soil on payment of a fee of Tk 25. Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources said two mobile team of the Soil Resources Development Institute, 'Padma' and 'Meghna', will conduct the test in 24 upazilas of 20 districts across the country in April and May to give suggestions to the farmers on the use of pesticides. The 'Meghna' team began its work in Sylhet division on April 15.

Monu river dam 'very risky' at 33 points, may collapse

Vast tract of land, human habitation face inundation

RAJAT KANTI GOSWAMI, Moulvibazar

At least 33 points of the Monu river embankment appear to be 'very risky'. The embankment in these points may collapse during the coming flood season. Usually the water level of the hilly river Monu rises sharply during flood. Officials of the local office of Water Development Board (WDB) fear that a vast tract of crop land and human habitations may be inundated. According to the official source of WDB, Moulvibazar, the board engineers have detected 33 points on the Monu river embankment to be very risky. These points have been detected on both the banks of the river. It these risky points are not reconstructed or repaired the river embankment along these points may be collapsed at any time during the flood season. The detected risky points of the Monu river embankment are at the villages of Ranehap, Monu bazaar, Hasanpur and Chaligaon in Kulaura upazila, Tarapassa, Kalai Kuna in Rajnagar upazila, Shayamer Kuna, Barhat, Dullarpur, Kankpur, Basudeb Sri, Bekamura and Kazir bazaar in the Sadar upazila. These risky points are situated along the left bank of the Monu river embankment. The red marked points along the right bank of the Monu river are at Saydal bazaar, Asraygram, Rajapur and Gudaraghat in Kulaura Upazila, Kandirku, Uzirpur, Ekanodhu, Hariapassa, Shwasomahar in Rajnagar upazila, Chadrigat, Balkandi, Mirpur, Khargaon, Asia, Sampashi

and Monrujpur in Sadar upazila. The total length of the river embankment along these risky points are about five kilometres. The officials of WDB, Moulvibazar have submitted a proposal amounting to Tk 12.50 cr to the higher authorities of WDB, Dhaka to reconstruct or repair the embankment. But fate of the proposal is yet to be decided. The Monu river is an international river and it is included in the list of the Joint River Commission (JRC) which was formed jointly by Bangladesh and India. Origin of the Monu river is in Tripura hill under the Indian state of Tripura. The river entered Bangladesh through Sharifpur union in Moulvibazar. This hilly river is flowing in a zigzag manner through Kulaura, Rajangar and Sadar upazila of Moulvibazar and falls at the river Kushiya near Monumukh village. The characteristic of this river is that in the rainy season the river level rises rapidly due to onrush of water from the hilly region in India. Even it flows above the danger level within an hour or two. Every year the river embankment, at different points, is washed away causing inundation of crops lands and human habitation. People residing in the villages near the river have been suffering a lot when the embankment collapses at different points. So it is very important to reconstruct or repair the danger points detected by the WDB engineers.

Election fever grips Rajshahi



PHOTO: ABDUL WADOOD

Electioneering by the candidates of Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) polls on Sunday. (Above left) The four-party alliance mayoral candidate and incumbent mayor Mijanur Rahman Minu MP, as part of his mass contact programme, talking to some female voters, (above right) a woman commissioner candidate brought out a procession with the symbol "pitcher", (below left) left leaning 11-party candidate Fazle Hossain Badsha talking to an aged voter as part of his election campaign, (below middle) a ward commissioner candidate brought out a procession riding on his symbol "elephant," (below right) Prof Salma Rahman, wife of mayoral candidate Minu seeking vote for his husband from two voters.

Kandigram-Kuliarchar road renamed

Kuliarchar upazila council decided to name a pucca road (Kandigram-Dariakandi Bus Stand to Kuliarchar) after late Khan Saheb Maulvi A F Mohammad Nurullah, a veteran politician and former MPA and parliamentary secretary. The council will also establish a public library after the name of great revolutionary of British period former MLA late Maharaj Trailokya Nath Chakravarty, says a press release. Accordingly, on April 10 a gathering was held at the upazila premises to name the road and to inaugurate the library. Life and works of the two eminent personalities were discussed there. Surendra Nath Chakravarty, Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Kuliarchar presided over the meeting. In this connection a colourful scout rally was held. Earlier, at Dariakandi Bus Stand the plaque of the road after late Khan Saheb Nurullah was unveiled by the Deputy Commissioner.

Looking for a way out

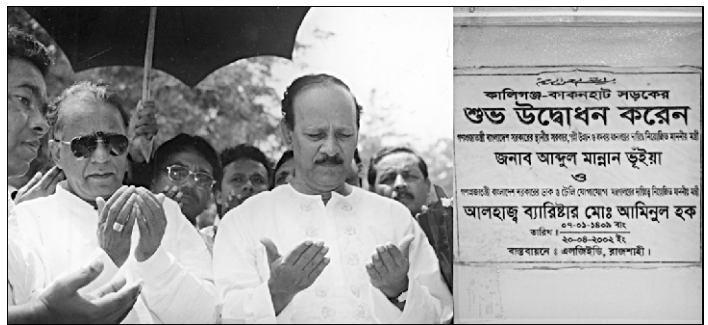
UNB, Bagerhat One morning two years ago Sathi, a beautiful young housewife, found herself in Baniashanta, a brothel on the bank of the Pashur river opposite Mongla Port. Cursing her fate for the hated life in brothel, the 18-year-old girl repeatedly tried to escape, but failed as the brothel keeper kept extra vigil on her. Some days ago, the keeper sold Sathi to another keeper at Lighthal brothel in Bagherhat town where she narrated her woes to a journalist and urged him to find a way out for her return to normal life. Daughter of a poor peasant in village Gobra, Mirzapur of Narail Sathi said she dropped out while reading in Class VII. As her poor parents could not provide further education, she was given in marriage with Amjad Sheikh, a rickshaw-puller in Kalia upazila. Lazy and greedy Amjad pressed for dowry from her father who was unable to give any money. "After four months of our marriage and after I've conceived, my husband took me out of home on the

plea of visiting a relative in the town," said Sathi wiping out her tears. "We traveled to Baniashanta, about which I had no idea, until I learnt that my heartless husband sold me to a keeper in the brothel for Tk 10,000... I cried out, but my husband left me there without responding to my fervent calls," she said. And there, she gave birth to a son now aged two-and-a-half-years. Asked why she does not quietly leave the brothel, which she can do if she wished, Sathi said: "Where shall I go? After living in brothel I will not be accepted by my husband or by the parents. I do not see any place to go and live a normal life even enduring hard labour." "Can you find me a way out?" Sathi posed a counter question and urged for drawing the attention of any social organisation that may be of help. Within the brothel behind the Lighthal Cinema, two Non-government Organisation (NGOs) -- help and Jagrata Sangha -- were found engaged in providing free medical care to the sex workers and informal education to their children.

The brothel has 53 sex workers. Activities of the NGOs are financed by external sources. Officials of the NGOs said they have no programme of rehabilitation of the sex workers who may ask for it.

Attack slated

UNB, Gaibandha Local press club has condemned the attack on the house of Abedur Rahman Swapan, district correspondent of Dainik Inqilab and joint secretary of Gaibandha press club. In a statement, press club president Gobinda Lal Das and vice-presidents Abu Zafar, Syed Nurul Alam and Deepak Kumar Pal demanded immediate arrest of the culprits. They also urged the authorities concerned to take necessary measures to ensure security of the journalist and his family members. A gang of hooligans numbering 8-10 attacked the house of Abedur Rahman on Thursday night. Later they fled the scene, as local people rushed to the spot hearing hue and cry of the inmates of the house. A case was filed with the police.



Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan offering prayer after the inauguration of the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) constructed 15-km Kakanhat-Kaliganj road in Rajshahi on Saturday. With the opening of the road direct communication between the upazila headquarters of Tanore and Godagarj along with two growth centres in these upazilas has become easier. Post and Telecommunications Minister Barrister Md Aminul Haque was present, among others, during the opening ceremony.

5-km human chain in Rangpur for ETV

UNB, Rangpur bringing a total halt to traffic in this northern town for 15 minutes. The artisans, who live in five villages about two kilometres away from Rangpur town, said as the age-old craftsmanship was vanishing, the ETV came up with programmes in a bid to save the artisans and the traditional handicraft. The ETV programmes greatly helped protect the traditional handicraft industry from the verge of extinction, they said adding they came up with the demand to save ETV so that it can air more similar programmes to help save the rural artisans and handicrafts. During the procession, the artisans and their family members carried satranji and weaving tools, and various placards requesting the authorities not to shut down the TV channel. The people of the town spontaneously joined the human chain

Acid attack on mother, daughter in Satkhira

UNB, Satkhira A woman and her minor daughter sustained severe burn injuries in an acid attack by her husband at Batra village in Kolaroa upazila on Wednesday night. Police said Nargis Sultana, 18, was married to Aminur Rahman of the same village about two and half years back. On her inability to bring Tk 50,000 as dowry from her parents, Aminur forced her to sign a divorce letter six months ago. Later Nargis filed a case against her husband. Aminur time and again threatened Nargis to withdraw the case. On the fateful day, he threw acid on Nargis while she was sleeping with her daughter Popi at her father's house. The injured were rushed to the upazila health complex and a case was filed.

Orientation programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Barisal A daylong orientation programme on Arsenic Mitigation Component (AMC) was held in Barisal at the conference room of Barisal Development Society (BDS) by DPHE-Danida Arsenic Mitigation Component with Dhaka Ahsania Mission recently. Twenty PO, PTO, SAE, UPC, FT and VC of Banaripara and Uzirpur upazilas in Barisal participated in the orientation programme organised by Dhaka Ahsania Mission, district office, Barisal. Nurun Nabi of Dhaka office, Omar Khaiyam, regional coordinator of Patuakhali office, Shameem of the Barisal office of Ahsania Mission including Fazilatunnessa Begum of Danida were present in the orientation programme. Dhaka Ahsania Mission is working in four upazilas in Barisal to create awareness among the villagers of arsenic affected areas.

Aus cultivation on 44,896 hectares in Faridpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

The Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) has taken up programme to cultivate Aus paddy on 44,896 hectares of land in eight upazilas of Faridpur during this season with a production target of 51,300 tons. According to DAE source, high yielding variety (HYV) of Aus will be cultivated on 127 hectares of land with a production target of 274 tons while local variety will be cultivated on 44,769 hectares with a production target of 51,026 tons. The source further said 22,024 hectares of land would be brought under jute cultivation in the upazilas with a production target of 2,41,534 bales of jute. Tosha will be cultivated on 21,294 hectares with a production target of 2,34,234 bales while local variety on 730 hectares with a production target of 7,300 bales. An official of DAE when personally contacted total this correspondent that the cultivation of Aus paddy and jute have abruptly fallen because the cultivators find more interest in cultivating IRRI-Boro paddy than Aus paddy and jute cultivation as IRRI-Boro cultivation is more profitable.

