

NEWS SNAPS



PHOTO: STAR

Krishnachura, a flower of summer, is in full bloom at Jhenidah town. The scene near to Jhenidah Rest House, delights the passers-by.

One stabbed to death by miscreants

UNB, Kishoreganj
A man was stabbed to death by miscreants at Chanpur village in Katiadi upazila in Kishoreganj on Thursday.

Police said some 5-6 miscreants intercepted the motorbike of Krishna Chandra Ghosh, 30, of Kathaltali village on Kargaon-Manikkhali road and stabbed him to death when he refused to pay them toll. Krishna, an assistant of a local contractor, was returning home with his friend after supervising the construction work of a road at Chanpur village. A case was filed with the police.

Import of betel nut from Myanmar slated

UNB, Bagerhat
Betel nut traders and growers brought out a procession in Bagerhat town on Sunday in protest against import of the commodity from foreign countries.

Later, they submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Bagerhat. The traders said that betel nuts, produced in seven southern districts of Bagerhat, Barisal, Bhola, Patuakhali, Jhalakathi, Pirojpur and Barguna, are purchased at a trading centre in Bagerhat and later supplied to other districts. But some unscrupulous traders are importing betel nuts from neighbouring Myanmar resulting in the decrease of betel nut price in the market, they alleged. Earlier the traders at a press conference in Bagerhat on April 9 urged the government to take necessary steps to stop import of betel nut from Myanmar.

BCL wins college students' union poll

UNB, Gopalganj
Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of Awami League, won the election of government Bangabandhu College Students' Union held in Gopalganj peacefully on Thursday.

Arif Hossain Khan Jewel and Shamim Hasan Sumon were elected vice-president and general secretary respectively bagging 403 and 569 votes. They bagged all the 22 seats defeating the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student front of ruling BNP. The other office bearers are: Palash Sardar (assistant general secretary), Sajal Sheikh (cultural secretary), Al Amin Chowdhury (sports secretary), Mehedi Hasan Sohel (publicity secretary), Sohag Sheikh (social welfare secretary), Sardar Waliur Rahman (drama secretary), Humayun Kabir Mollah (library secretary), and Russel Mollah, Shariful Islam, Zahir Hasan (members).

One gets 5-yr RI for torturing wife

UNB, Kishoreganj
A court in Kishoreganj has sentenced a man to five years rigorous imprisonment (RI) for torturing his wife for dowry.

The court also fined the convict, a Rouf, a union parishad (UP) member of Charkandi Union of Pakundia upazila, Tk 1,000, in default, to suffer one year more RI. According to the prosecution, the accused used to torture his wife Zebunnesa for dowry and on October 13, 2000 he attempted to strangle her. A case was filed and police, after investigation, submitted chargesheet against him. After examining the records and witnesses, local Women and Children Repression Prevention Special Court handed down the verdict on Wednesday.

Villagers, staff of Pran Co clash: 10 hurt

UNB, Narsingdi
Ten people were injured in a clash between villagers and employees of a factory at Shantanpara village in Polash upazila in Narsingdi Sunday.

Witnesses said the clash ensued at about 10am when the villagers prevented the factory employees of Pran Company from earth filling on their lands beside the factory in the village. Company sources said they purchased the lands and paid money to some of the owners. But the owners of the lands alleged that the company started earth-filling work without paying their money. The injured were undergoing treatment in different clinics. A case was filed.

Six alleged armed robbers arrested

UNB, Gopalganj
Police arrested six alleged armed robbers from two villages in Kashiani upazila in Gopalganj recently.

Police said they arrested three robbers -- Lipton, Masud and Azizur -- from Tilchhara village and three others -- Lelin, Rahman and Ashraf Ali -- from Khagra village on Apr 22. All the armed robbers were wanted in a number of robbery and other criminal cases, police added.

Godagari Customs office a death trap of seized cattle

ABDUL WADOOD, Rajshahi

The cows protest in their own language against the injustice done to them, but nobody pays heed to the protest.

The reason, may be, because they are animals who can not organise any movement like human beings.

The animals, mostly cows, are brought in Godagari Customs office from India in an illegal way. Some are, however, legalised in the Customs corridors.

The cows are collected from Rajasthan, Gujarat, Panjab, Uttar Pradesh, Moddhya Pradesh and Bihar of India. They are carried to the borders on board trucks travelling several hundreds of kilometres ignoring, rain, sun and cold. The animals are not fed well in the long journey. It takes three to seven days to cross the border depending on the situation of the border surveillance teams. After crossing the border, some of the cows are brought to the Customs corridors for legalisation from where most of the cows are carried to the markets by smugglers.

Some of the illegal cows are seized by the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel who hand over them to the local Customs office.

About 90 per cent of the cows are used for supplying meat.

During the long journey for about a month from India on board motor vehicles and sometimes on foot the animals are not given sufficient rest, or fed well. They are not protected from sun, rain and cold. Most of the cows get sick and are attacked by various diseases. The seriously sick cows are sold on the way at reduced prices.

While visiting the Godagari Customs Office last week, this correspondent saw some cows at the office premises which were tied with ropes under the open sky.

When contacted, the Customs authorities informed that they were waiting for the animals auction. The BDR personnel seized the cows while they were being taken to markets illegally.

An official, on conditions of anonymity, said that they get no fund for making shelter of the cows. "Not only in Godagari, but in almost all the Customs offices all

over the country, the same scene is visible". The Customs Department earns a lot of money from auction of seized illegal cows. The department also earns a good revenue from the corridors. But he categorically informed this correspondent that the department is not at all interested in making the minimum infrastructural development of the Customs offices and corridors.

During the winter, sufferings of the cows mount most, the official said. Their sufferings also increase during the rainy season when the cows are to remain standing on mud while in the rainy season the animals are kept under the open sky for hours together resulting in sickness. Even many cows face death, the official revealed. He informed that a cow died because of severe cold in their office just about two weeks ago.

Most of these cows are ultimately slaughtered for supplying meat, but they deserve human behaviour from the human beings during the interim period before being slaughtered, he said.

Mother gives birth to three sons at a time

BSS, Satkhira

A mother gave birth to three sons at a time at sadar hospital in Satkhira on Sunday last.

The mother and her newly born children are quite well, hospital sources said.

Latifa Khatun, 25, second wife of Mujibur Rahman of village Biralakhkhali in Shymnagar upazila was married two years ago as Mujib's first wife gave birth to two female issues. When Latifa was two months' pregnant, she was left by her husband.

She was living at her father's house in the same village. She was admitted to Satkhira Sadar Hospital on Saturday.



PHOTO: STAR

Corpse of a cow at Godagari Customs House. The animal died a few weeks back because of inclement weather. Usually seized animals are kept there under the open sky before being auctioned which sometimes results in their ultimate death.

Fall in water level, emergence of shoal reduce navigability of three rivers

UNB, Shariatpur

Sharp fall in water level and emergence of shoal have reduced the navigability of the Padma, Ariakha and Kirtinasha rivers seriously hampering ferry services in the country's southern region.

According to BIWTA sources, the river routes of the region have become mostly unfit for want of navigability caused by massive accumulation of silt in past 25 years and some of the routes have already become risky for water vessels.

As a result, carrying of daily commodities including perishable ones by ferries and mechanised boats from the district and neighbouring Madaripur, Munshiganj, Gopalganj, Patuakhali and Barisal to other parts of the country is being hampered seriously.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) has engaged one dredger for dredging of Mawa-Shariatpur and Mawa-Madaripur ferry routes for smooth running of water vessels.

It has also started a hydrographic survey to determine the real situation of the routes and will deploy another dredger after completion of the survey, officials said.

According to Water Development Board the two mighty rivers Padma and the Jamuna together carry over 30 lakh metric tons of silt every year along their 500 kilometres routes.

As the quantity of silt this year is heavy, a serious obstacle has been created in the movement of vessels in almost all the rivers, including the Padma before the onset of the dry season.



PHOTO: STAR

A sunflower field at Kalna village of Lohagora upazila in Narail where peasants find its cultivation to be most profitable. The Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) has taken up a scheme to promote its cultivation.

Move to increase sunflower cultivation in Narail

A CORRESPONDENT, Narail

As the farmers of Narail are increasingly taking interest in farming sunflower, the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) has come up with encouraging programmes to help them.

The programmes include ensuring supply of quality seeds, setting up of demonstration plots, bringing more and more lands under sunflower cultivation and extracting more edible oil from sunflower seeds.

A large number of farmers are now cultivating sunflower under the Crop Diversification Programme. DAE has set up three demonstration plots in Narail to attract more farmers.

An agriculture official said sunflower can be cultivated in both Rabi and Kharif seasons on loamy and sandy-loamy soils having irrigation facility. He said the land should be free from weeds and it needs more fertiliser for better harvest. Post Aman period is more suitable for sunflower cultivation, he added.

The growers can harvest at least 16 maunds of

seeds per acre with local variety while 25 maunds with high yielding variety (HYV) seeds.

Sunflower cultivation is getting popular day by day as its yield is better than that of mustard, the official said.

Another reason behind the DAE's promotional programme is that sunflower oil has been proved to be good for cardiac patients as it contains 55 per cent lanolic acid compared to other edible oil. When mustard oil contains 50 per cent erolic acid, sunflower oil has no erolic acid.

Experts said per 100 gm sunflower oil contains 20 gms of protein, 17 gms of carbohydrate, 0.7 gms of theamin, 0.1 mg of rebuffavin, 4 mgs of niaci and 615 gms of calorie.

Bangladesh produce only 25 per cent edible oil of its total demand while the rest is imported. "So, increased cultivation of sunflower and soybean can help reduce the import of edible oil," the official said.

Sohag longs for home

DELWAR KABIR, Jhenidah

"Would you please take me away from this prison?"

A little unfortunate boy keeps on asking this question to any prisoner or any other personnel of Jhenidah prison whenever he meets him there.

Sohag, a victim of circumstances, is yet to know when he will be able to meet his dear parents after getting free from this prison where he is in 'safe custody' since February 3 this year.

He claims to be the son of a rickshawpuller named Abdul Quddus of village Nowbeki in Munshiganj despite resemblance of his speaking language with that of greater Jessore.

However, the jail authority informed this correspondent that Mohespur Police have kept Sohag in 'the safe custody' here as per general diary (GD) number 120, dated February 3, 2002. e as per general diary (GD) number 120, dated February 3, 2002. Since then police have been searching for the actual address of the unfortunate boy. Now he is kept in a separate unit arranged by the Jhenidah prison authority, jail officials said to this correspondent.

According to Sohag, his mother's name is Salma. He has three more brothers and four sisters.

However, he seems to be a bit abnormal, said the jail authority. The jail authority will produce Sohag before the court on May 4. Meanwhile, some human development organisations have already shown their keen interest to take the responsibility of the boy.

When this correspondent met the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Jhenidah, Abu Bakar Mohammad Shahjahan, he told him that most probably someone was trying to traffic the boy to India, but fortunately he was rescued by police. Now we are trying to trace his actual guardian, the DC added.



Sohag