

NEWS SNAPS

Villagers kill tiger in Jessore

UNB, Benapole
Villagers at Ulakal in Jhikargachha upazila beat a tiger to death when it entered the village Sunday.

Witnesses said the tiger fell prey to the wrath of the villagers when it took shelter under a culvert. The tiger died on the spot.

Cop crushed under wheels of train

UNB, Brahmanbaria
A police constable of Akhaura GRP was crushed under the wheels of a train on Monday. Witnesses said police constable Abu Sayeed died on the spot when the Dhaka-bound 'Subarna Express' from Chittagong ran him over near Akhaura railway station. His body was sent to his village home in Sirajganj.

One killed in Feni road accident

UNB, Feni
One person was killed and four others were injured in a road accident at Lalpool on Dhaka-Chittagong highway Tuesday night.

Police said the accident took place at about 9:30 pm when a tempo was dashed by a speeding microbus. As the tempo turned turtle its helper and four passengers suffered injuries. Two of the critically injured were rushed to Feni Sadar Hospital where passenger Shahabuddin, 40, succumbed to his injuries, hospital sources said. The condition of injured helper, Ekramul Karim, 14, was stated to be critical.

Youth dies after taking hemp

UNB, Laxmipur
A young man died and another became sick after taking hemp at Ramgati upazila Tuesday night.

Family sources said Abdul, 35, son of Chhokku Majhi of Char Laurence village died on the spot and his friend Azad, 25, became sick just after taking hemp. Azad was admitted to Laxmipur Sadar Hospital in a critical condition.

Prisoner dies at Jessore jail hospital

UNB, Jessore
A convicted prisoner died at Jessore jail hospital Sunday. The dead was identified as Abdul Latif, 27, son of Ismail Hossain of Teghori village in Chougachha upazila. Latif, who was sentenced to life term imprisonment in a murder case in 1996, was admitted to the jail hospital recently as he was suffering from various diseases.

Move to check cheating in HSC exams

UNB, Mymensingh
A view exchange meeting on improving the quality of education and making HSC examinations free from copying was held at Zilla Parishad auditorium here on Tuesday.

Dhaka Education Board organised the meeting in which State Minister for Education Ehsanul Haq Milon was the chief guest. Board chairman Prof M Junayed chaired the meeting. The State Minister narrated the strict measures to be taken by the government to check unfair means during the upcoming HSC examinations. The meeting was also addressed by Deputy Minister for Education Abdus Salam Pintu.

Step to construct dike along Kushiara

UNB, Sylhet
The government has taken up a project to construct a dike along the river Kushiara in Balaganj and Fenchuganj upazilas at a cost of Tk 10 crore. The 50-km dike is being constructed under the supervision Bangladesh Water Development Board. Officials said work on 13 km of the dike from Radhakuma to Fazlipur and 2 km from Kuthrikhal to Hhariaigaon is likely to be finished by the current year. Five sluice gates will also be constructed at different points of the dike, which will reduce the problem of water logging as well as protect the area from flood.

Seminar on arsenic contamination

UNB, Brahmanbaria
A daylong seminar on arsenic contamination in groundwater was held at Ichhamoyi Girls' High School premises in Nabinagar upazila on Tuesday.

Local member of parliament (MP) Kaj Anwar Hossain inaugurated the seminar as chief guest. About 200 people including teachers, health workers and Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) representatives took part in the seminar jointly arranged by Public Health Department, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and CDIP. The speakers stressed the need to create awareness on the danger of arsenic and use appropriate technology for resolving the arsenic-related problems.

Vegetable cultivation on 3,000 hectares

UNB, Madaripur
A total of 3,000 hectares of land were brought under summer vegetable cultivation in four upazilas in Madaripur in the current season.

Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources said they have supplied fertiliser, seed, pesticide and other necessary inputs to the farmers for vegetable cultivation. Besides, different banks have distributed Tk 50 lakh loan among the farmers.

Rain hampers mango output in Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Mango production in Jhenidah and the surrounding districts will hamper greatly in the ongoing season.

This is due to heavy shower in the early Bengali month of Chaitra, said a source related to the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE).

Although there is no exact figure of mango trees in Jhenidah or the surrounding districts, the number mango trees are estimated to be about three lakh in Jhenidah, Magura, Kushtia, Chuadanga and Meherpur. Quality varieties of mango such as Mohonbhog, Khirsabhog, Lengra are produced in Meherpur and Chuadanga. The land of Jhenidah and Magura is not suitable for good quality of mango. Fazlee and some local varieties are produced in

these areas. The farmers here do not produce mango on commercial basis. Mango trees are planted here and there to meet the demand of local people.

Abdul Kuddus, 47, of village Saikupa upazila said only one of his seven mango trees bear fruits this season. All his trees provided fruits last year.

DAE sources said there was heavy shower in early Chaitra which damaged mango flowers badly. As a result most of the trees could not bear fruits this season. Mango tree owners in Jhenidah and Magura are not so much interested in taking care of their mango trees during flowering and other stages. If they had been much interested, the production of mango might have been much higher in the area.

Arsenic panic in Faridpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Arsenic panic has gripped the entire Faridpur district as waters in most of the tubewells are found to be arsenic contaminated.

Ten persons including three of a family died of arsenic contamination at villages Domrakandi, Tambul Khana, Ambikapur and Gangabardi in Sadar upazila. Anwar Molla and his two sons Shahid Molla and Azaher Molla are among the 10 victims of arsenic contamination.

More than 100 persons have been attacked with arsenic related diseases, some fatally.

A survey conducted recently by a Non-governmental Organisation (NGO) has revealed that waters in most of the tubewells in the four aforesaid villages contain excessive arsenic which is very injurious to human body.

The relevant authority of the government should conduct an accurate survey immediately and take steps to avert the danger of arsenic.

Five killers to die in Netrakona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Five persons were sentenced to death and seven others were awarded life-term rigorous imprisonment (RI) on Wednesday by Netrakona District and Sessions judge Istiaque Hussain for murdering a 16-year-old girl after abduction and gang rape.

The five culprits are Abdur Razzaque, Alauddin, Abdur Rouf, Abdur Rahman and Abdur Mannan, all of village Hasania in Kalmakanda upazila.

The case story in brief is that on the night of April 1, 1995 the culprits abducted Helena Akhter, daughter of Rustam Ali, a poor man from his house at village Hasania in Kalmakanda upazila and gang raped her. Following the incident they killed her and cut her into four pieces.

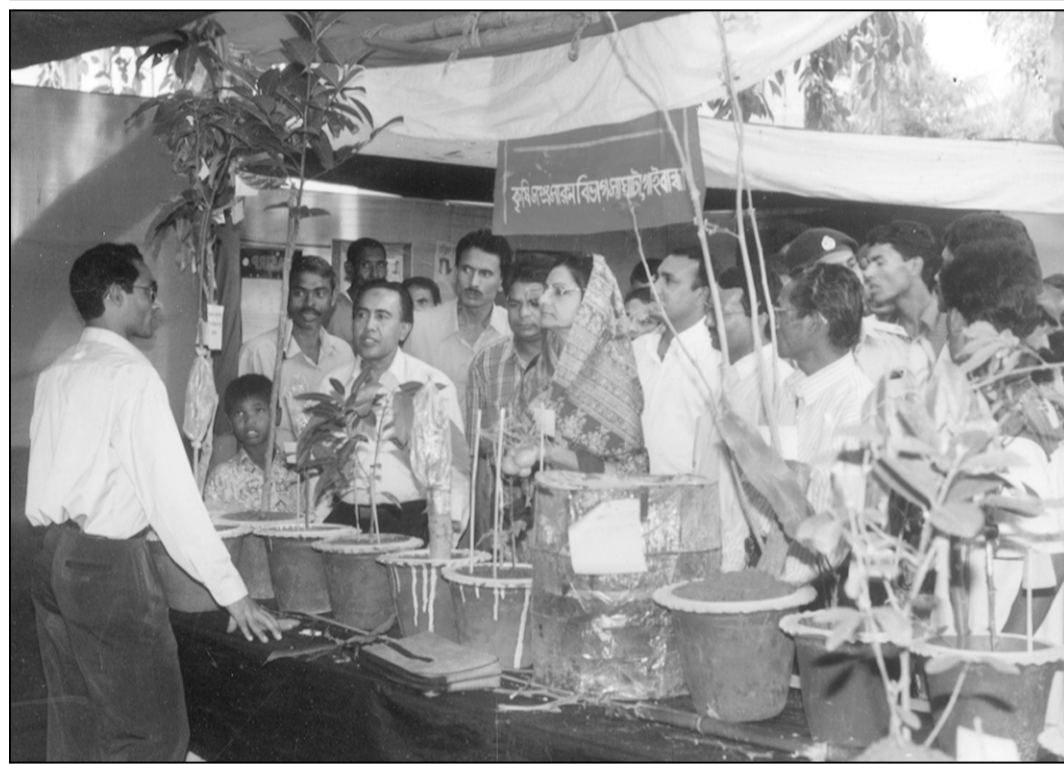


PHOTO: STAR

Begum Rowshan Ershad, MP, and others visiting a stall of 'tree surgeon' Nazrul Islam at an agriculture fair held recently at Bonarpara in Shaghata upazila in Gaibandha.

A 'tree surgeon' turns sour fruits into sweet ones

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Nazrul Islam, a block supervisor of the agriculture department is well-known as "the surgeon of trees" in his locality.

Despite having a diploma in agriculture, Nazrul Islam built his career as an expert botanist through painstaking struggle and constant experiment within the surrounding. He acquired the dexterity of grafting. He turns sour fruits into sweet ones through surgical grafting. He converts wild fruit into quality one.

Nazrul Islam erected a mini botanical garden-cum-laboratory in his residential area.

This devoted botanist most often prescribes the farmers on different problems relating to tree and plants. Besides, farmers from fur flung areas rush to this unsung botanical surgeon for solving their various problems. Hundreds of people are benefitted from Nazrul's suggestion.

An inhabitant of Ullah Bharatkhal in Shaghata upazila, Nazrul rendered maximum services in the field of agriculture. Collection of different spices of tree and plants is his hobby since boyhood.

While served as a block supervisor at Ghuridaha union in Shaghata upazila, Nazrul has been rendering services to the farmers other than his departmental work. Everyday farmers come to his house just for seeking suggestion as well as for collecting quality plants.

Matlubur Rahman of village Jadurtair in Shaghata upazila erected a mango garden on three acres of land and a jack-fruit garden on acres of other plots. There is no such garden in

greater Rangpur.

While talking to Matlubur Rahman, he told this correspondent it is really a hard task for him to erect such large fruit gardens. "It was my dream to establish big fruit gardens. Now I am indebted to Nazrul Islam who helped me with the plan and rendered technical assistance to implement it," said Matlubur.

While contacted Nazrul told this correspondent that he planted a mango sapling with 12 different kinds of mango branches through veneer grafting. This is an exception out of his total output. The variety of mango spices in this plant are Mallika, Fazli, Amrapali, Vastara, Chosha, Lengra, Subarna Rekha, Kirsha, Krishan Bhog, Arjapuri and Gopalbhog.

He acquired dexterity in modern grafting not only of hard fibre but he has also much experience in case of soft plants like flowers and vegetables. Inserting water-melon stalk with pumpkin which results in high yielding production of water-melon. Besides, grafting stalk of tomato with wild thorn plant he got a better result.

His main fields of experiment are root cutting, stem cutting, hardwood, leaf, layering, trench, side grafting, T-budding and eye-patch.

Nazrul told further that he spent nearly five years in bamboo grafting. The process has become most familiar among the farmers. He also told that shortage of fund and difficulty in collection of hormone are the main hindrance for his experiment. He also wants to undergo further training abroad just to improve his dexterity.

3 kidnappers arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Three kidnappers were arrested following a good beating by the villagers while two guns were also recovered by the police of Golapganj Police Station (PS) recently though the kidnapped victim is yet to be recovered.

A gang of miscreants kidnapped Lipi, a young woman from her elder sister's house at village Islampur in broad day light on Tuesday afternoon at gun point. The group again went to the house at 9 pm the same day and fired several gunshots to create panic while demanding a ransom of Tk 10,000 for freeing Lipi. Neighbouring people tried to resist the attackers and caught three of them. They gave them a good beating and later handed them over to the police. The arrested are, listed criminal Anwar Hosain Anor of village Raigarh and two of his associates -- Nanu of Islampur and Helim of village Shilghat.

Two foreign made guns were recovered and one round of cartridge were also recovered from their possession. However, seven others managed to escape this time, police said. All the accused were admitted in Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital.

However, the kidnapped victim Lipi is yet to be recovered. The Superintendent of Police (SP), Sylhet MA Hanif visited the village.

70 Bangladeshis return home from Gujarat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

At least 70 poor Bangladeshi men, women and children escaping from the riot-torn Indian state of Gujarat have crossed into Kalaroa in Sathkhira through the Rajpur and Bhabaly borders of West Bengal.

All these people have taken shelter in the Kalaroa football ground and hail from Kalpa upazila of Narail.

The riot victims said they had gone to Gujarat at least 10 years ago to look for jobs, and lived in Andrad, Chandala and Shah Alam towns of the Indian state.

Some aged riot victims said they were mercilessly tortured at Hakimpur border by jawans of Indian Border Security Force (BSF). Hakimpur is on the Indian side of the border opposite to Kalaroa border. Seventy-year-old Ajjibar Rahman while narrating the harrowing tales of tribulation said the rioters in Gujarat had burnt their houses to ashes and tortured them brutally.

Another old man Abu Fakir said four of his family members -- Solaiman 40, Rowshan, 15, Nasser,

45, and Nazir, 28 -- were burnt to death by a frenzied mob of rioters. He said many other Bangladeshis have been brutally killed and many were roasted alive. He, however, could not give the exact number of Bangladeshis killed in the riot.

Abu Fakir said many others who have fled from Gujarat might be crossing into Bangladesh in a day or two.

According to a reliable source of Sathkhira Police, 70 Bangladeshis have been pushed back by the BSF Saturday morning. Of them, 31 are males, 17 females and 22 children. There are several others in the BSF detention camp at Darkanda border of India.

Hundreds of people crowded the Kalaroa football ground to see the Gujarat riot victims; some brought food for them. Many of the victims left Sathkhira for Jessore by bus with the financial help from some generous local people.

Some women said the rioters of Gujarat not only killed men and women, but also innocent children. Many young women and girls have been gang-raped before being killed, said the victims.