

NEWS SNAPS

Three unnatural deaths recorded in a day

UNB, Barguna

Three unnatural deaths were recorded in Barguna on Friday.

Locals said Ripon, 22, died on the spot when he jumped from a pickup van at Khejurtola on Barguna-Betagi highway as the driver denied to stop his van at his own village. Bashona Rani, wife of Shukhoranjan of Amtola in Barguna town, took her own life allegedly by hanging herself following a quarrel with her husband. On the same day, Khodeza Begum wife of Abdus Salam of Gobhanga village in Amtoli upazila allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself over a family feud.

Teenage girl 'commits' suicide

UNB, Pirojpur

A teenage girl allegedly committed suicide by taking poison at her house at Kadamtala village in Sadar upazila on Saturday.

Police said Laizu Akhter, 15, daughter of Razzak Sheikh, was rushed to the Sadar hospital where the attending doctors declared her dead. The reason behind the suicide could not be known. An unnatural death (UD) case was filed with the police.

Housewife allegedly killed by husband

UNB, Jhenidah

One woman was allegedly killed by her husband in Jhenidah on Tuesday.

Police said Monirul Islam of village Buddain Mouvasha in Gangachara upazila beat his wife Monwara Begum, 30, to death for failing to bring dowry money Tk 25,000 from her parents. On information police recovered the body and sent it to hospital morgue for autopsy. The killer went into hiding.

Power supply suspended for 35 days

UNB, Jhalakathi

Some 150 subscribers in Kirtipasha area in Jhalakathi on Saturday laid siege to the office of the resident engineer of PDB as electricity supply of the area remained cut off for 35 days.

The consumers said power supply line of the area was suspended on April 6 when a staff quarter of Kirtipasha Hospital was electrified. They alleged that although the supply line of the hospital was restored on April 7, power supply to the area remained snapped. The resident engineer said power supply could not be restored in the entire area due to transformer problem.

Ruhia food godown sealed

UNB, Thakurgaon

The authority has sealed Ruhia food godown in Sadar upazila in Thakurgaon due to alleged corruption in wheat procurement drive and importing Indian wheat.

Food Secretary Abdul Latif Mondol and Director General (DG) of the Food Department Abdus Sattar took the decision on Friday after paying a surprise visit. Local traders alleged that godown officials have realised extra 500gm wheat as bribe in each bag grain. Besides, some of the traders supplied Indian wheat. A two-member probe body was formed with Magistrate Jahangir Alam and AC (Food) Ismail Hossain to investigate into the matter.

Mobarakganj sugar mill exceeds target

UNB, Jhenidha

Mobarakganj Sugar Mill in Jhenidah exceeded the production target in the current crushing season.

Mill sources said the mill started its crushing on November 16 last with a production target of 13,280 tons of sugar by crushing 1.60 lakh metric tons of sugarcanes during its 120 crushing days. But the production of sugarcanes during its 120 crushing days. But the production of sugarcane was higher this year than that of the previous years and consequently abundant supply of the cane forced the mill authorities to extend the crushing days. The mill continued its crushing up to 168 days ending on May 2. The mill crushed a total of 2,22,465 metric tons of cane against its earlier target and it produced a total of 15,500 mts sugar.

Jamalpur BMA for withdrawal of case

UNB, Jamalpur

Jamalpur district unit of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) has demanded withdrawal of a case against civil surgeon and four other doctors filed by a lawyer following the death of a patient.

In a memorandum submitted to the Deputy Commissioner on Wednesday BMA said the "false" case was filed to harass the doctors. It threatened to go for work stoppage if the case is not withdrawn immediately. District Bar general secretary M.Ahmed filed the case accusing the five doctors of negligence causing the death of Advocate Akhtaruzzaman, a member of the bar, at the district General Hospital on May 4.

Number of launch passengers dips after Meghna tragedy

AROOP TALUKDAR, Barisal

After the Meghna tragedy near Chandpur on May 3 night,

the number of launch passengers to and from different destinations of Patuakhali and other southern districts with the capital city of Dhaka decreased remarkably.

Rush of passengers increased remarkably at different bus terminals in the southern districts.

The number of passengers became almost half the passengers before the fatal launch accident, particularly during inclement weather.

Local people in the southern districts became frightened after witnessing the scene of dead bodies of the ill-fated launch MV Salahuddin-2 and that of wailing people through newspapers and electronic media.

Meanwhile, 10 passenger launches, both double and single deckers sank in different rivers in the southern region in 10 years since 1983.

At least 600 people drowned, about one thousand people remained missing and wealth worth about Tk 15 cr damaged.

According to Golam Kabir, port officer, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) in Barisal, MV Samia a double-decker passenger launch sank in the river

Kalabadar in Patuakali on May 4, 1983

leaving 46 people dead. Another double-decker launch MV Soni sank in the Meghna on April 14, 1987. MV Atlas Star, a steel body double-decker passenger launch of the Barisal-Dhaka route sank in the river Meghna on May 18, 1989. More than 200 people were killed in that accident. ML Queen of Patuakhali, a small passenger launch sank in the River Paira on August 6, 1994. This launch sank at least four times in different rivers with different names, sources said. ML Baleswar, a small passenger launch sank in the Kacha river in Patuakhali on June 22, 1998. ML Dweep Kannya sank in the river Meghna in Bhola on May 8, 1999. ML Falguni sank also in Meghna on December 11, 1999. ML Ananda, a small passenger launch sank in the River Bishkhali in Pirojpur on March 14, 2000. ML Jahangir sank in the River Tetulia in Patuakhali on November 29, 2001 while on last Friday ML Salahuddin-2 a medium size passenger launch sank in the Meghna river in Matlab upazila in Chandpur. This launch sailed for Rangabali in Patuakhali from Dhaka with 400 passengers on board.

Among the passengers about 60 passengers hailed from Patuakhali, BIWTA sources said.

Major incidents took place in the rivers of Meghna, Tatulia and Kalabadar.

Reasons behind the accidents are

overloading of the launches with passengers and merchandise caring less about the security of life, negligence of the launch owners in providing necessary life saving equipment in the passenger vessels, absence of skilled 'Sareng' and other launch staffs, regular survey, necessary repair and overall money earning tenderer of the owners is the vital reason of the mishaps.

Death and missing figures of the fatal launch accidents are as follows:

D	e	a	t	h
Missing				
(1) MV Samia				
	170			
	About 100			
(2) MV Soni				
	90		65	
(3) MV Atlas Star				
	95	74		
(4) ML Queen of Patuakhali			30	28
(5) ML Baleswar			18	25
(6) ML DweepKannya			72	
			65	
(7) ML Falguni			45	68
(8) ML Ananda-2			12	15
(9) ML Jahangir			48	26
(10) ML Salahuddin-2			Nearly 400	lives lost.

Tagore's Kuthibari now a centre of corrupt people

3-day Rabindra Joyanti ends at Shahjadpur

AKHTERUZZAMAN BABLU, Sirajganj

Rabindra kuthibari (lodge) at Shahjadpur in Sirajganj wore a festive look during celebration of a three-day Rabindra Joyanti (Birth anniversary of Tagore) here.

Many stalls of various articles were set up in a three-day fair arranged on the occasion.

Former Deputy Prime Minister Prof MA Matin MP, inaugurated the programme as the chief guest. In the afternoon on the first day a cultural programme was held. In the afternoon on the second day another cultural function was arranged and in the afternoon on the third day a discussion meeting was held. At 6 in the evening a cultural function was held at the concluding session.

TMA Mannan MP, and Sirajganj district convener of BNP spoke as the chief guest in the concluding session. Local artistes participated in the three-day programme.

Sirajganj Shilpakala Academy arranged a befitting programme, Ullapara upazila Sangskritik Jote (a local cultural team) staged a drama and a musical programme. The Jote also arranged a dance drama at Rabindra Kuthibari.

However, regrettably Rabindra Kuthibari is now a neglected place.



PHOTO: STAR

A new sapling of Bakul grows fast at the original place of the historic Bakul tala at Shahjadpur kutchery bari (land revenue office of Tagore estate) in Sirajganj where Nobel laureate Tagore used to take rest and write many of his world famous stories, poems.

It has become a centre of corrupt people. It has been learnt that Kazi Emdad was in-Charge of the Kuthibari from 1989 to 1997 while Shrab Ali served there as the librarian. Most of the furniture and necessary articles of Tagore were stolen and damaged during their period.

Of the stolen things most important was a bowl made of gold. Precious round stones which the poet counted while composing lines of any verse. His tooth brush made of wood were also been stolen.

At least 300 portraits of Rabindranath Tagore in different poses were already destroyed. When this correspondent asked about the broken peacock size stand of the cot, the authority concerned could not reply whether it was stolen or destroyed.

The precious 'Palki' which Rabindranath used to travel and observed the condition of his subjects is now in a deplorable condition.

An amount of Tk 20,000 was sanctioned for repairing the 'Palki' (palanquin), but the authority concerned misappropriated the fund by repairing the palanquin only with very inferior quality wood.

Meanwhile, the construction work of Rabindra Kuthibari at Shahjadpur was completed at a cost of Tk 2 crore 60 lakh. But before handing it over to the authorities

concerned, frequent gambling, anti-social activities were going on. It is also alleged that many miscreants bring call girls here from outside.

The concerned employees who are engaged in selling tickets among the visitors, adopt unfair means. He allegedly made money through bad practice. As a result the government is being deprived of a huge amount of revenue.

Now the small river Jaygeer which runs near the Kuthibari is being dried up and local influentials started grabbing the area belonging to Kuthibari. In this small river Rabindranath Tagore used to take bath and engaged in fishing.

Beside this river Tagore composed famous poems like Sonartari, Chitra, Chaitali and Kalpona. From here he wrote short stories like Galpoguchho, Postmaster, Ramkanaiyer Nir, Buddhita, Babodhan, Tara Prosanner Kirti, Chhuti, Sampati, Khudito Pasan, and Othiti including Chinopatro, part of essay Panchabhat and a drama Bisarjan.

He composed the remarkable verses "Amader Chhoto Nodi Chole Bake-Bake Baishak Mashe Tar Hatu Jal Thake Par Hoyejay Goru Pary Hoy Gari Dui Dhar Uchu Tar Dhalu Tar Paree Chik Chik Kore Bali Kotha Nai Kada Dui Dhare Kashban Fule Fule Sada" beside this charming river which is now being occupied by the unscrupulous people.

PDB-REB dispute in Pabna yet to be settled

40,000 eagerly waiting for power supply

UNB, Pabna

The delay in settling the dispute over transfer of PDB lines to REB deprives hundreds of rural families of electricity in Pabna.

Installation and expansion of electricity lines and providing new power connections to villagers remained suspended for long as the Power Development Board (PDB) is delaying the transfer of its lines outside the municipality areas to the Rural Electrification Board (REB) as per the government instruction.

The government has decided to hand over all PDB lines outside the municipality areas to REB by 2004 as suggested by the World Bank.

According to the government decision, PDB has formulated a programme titled "The Fifth Action Plan" to hand over electricity lines to REB in phases. The action plan, containing separate deadlines for various districts for handing over lines, has been sent to the REB secretary.

Accordingly, some 96 kms of PDB line in Pabna was scheduled to be handed over to Pabna Palli Biddyt Samity (PBS)-1 during January-April 2002, but PDB handed over only 18 kms of line in

Himayetpur and Komedpur areas.

Some 78 kms of electricity line in Hemayetpur, Dapunia, Malonchi, Maligacha unions in sadar upazila, and Salimpur, Dashuria, Muladuli, Sahapur unions in Ishwardi upazila outside the municipality areas are yet to be handed over to REB.

Now PDB cannot install new lines and provide new connections in the rural areas where over 40,000 consumers are eagerly waiting for power supply.

When contacted the REB Executive Engineer and the General Manager of Pabna PBS-1 said officials of both the REB and PBS met several times with the Executive Engineer 1 and 2 of PDB Pabna circle, but their meetings ended inconclusively.

PDB officials were learnt to have suggested the PBS officials to give connections to the 40,000 new consumers by installing new lines from the PBS headquarters located 20 kms off the upazilas. "We cannot accept this unrealistic proposal," said a REB official.

When asked PDB Executive Engineer (Transmission and Maintenance) of Pabna circle Idris Ali said PDB was handing over its lines to REB according to its plan.

Late President Ziaur Rahman established the Rural Electrification Board (REB) in 1977 to give a boost to the rural economy.

Elephants kill one, damage 50 houses

UNB, Sherpur

A farmer was killed, and more than 50 houses and crops on a large area of land in 8 border villages of Sribordi upazila were damaged by wild elephants in three days.

Residents said Mofizul Islam, 55, of Balijuri village was crushed under the feet of the elephants when he along with villagers tried to prevent them from attacking the village.

They said the elephants from across the border attacked the villages recently and continued their rampage through the area.

The villages which came under the attack are Balijuri, Rangajani, Malakucha and Kharamura of Rani Shimul union, and Hariakona, Bablakona, Jhulgaon and Chukchukia of Shingaboruna union.



Kanailal Rabidas Mohanta, direction general (DG) of Bangladesh Guru Rabidas Mission speaks at a meeting held in Joypurhat recently in celebration of the 111th anniversary of birth of Dr BR Ambedkar, the legendary leader of low caste Hindu underprivileged community.