

NEWS SNAPS

Girl killed in Gazipur road accident

UNB, Gazipur
A little schoolgirl was killed in a road accident on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway Thursday. Police said Sharmin Akhter Panna, 6, daughter of Abdus Salam of Sadar upazila, died on the spot when a bus knocked her down on her way to school.

7 critically injured in N'ganj road mishap

UNB, Narayanganj
Seven municipality employees were critically injured in a road accident near Fatulla thana here Thursday. Witnesses said the mishap took place when a municipality truck carrying garbage plunged into a roadside ditch in the area at noon. Of the injured, Shantu, 25, was admitted to Pangu Hospital in Dhaka while Muhammad Ali, 40, Fazar Ali, 40, Bashar, 30, Shangi, 34, Dulal, 28, and Mokhles to General Hospital.

Magura college bldg work completed

UNB, Magura
A three-story academic building for Magura Government Hossain Shahid Suhrawardy College has been constructed at a cost of Tk 65 lakh. Facilities Department of Education Ministry constructed the building in the last fiscal year. The department has completed the construction of another academic building for Jagia College in Sadar upazila under its non-government college development project involving Tk 45 lakh.

Scheme for renovation of education instts

UNB, Sylhet
The Facilities Department has taken up a scheme for renovation of 24 educational institutions in Sylhet and Sunamganj during the current fiscal at a cost of Tk 28.50 lakh.

Listed criminal arrested in Tongi

UNB, Tongi
A listed criminal was arrested from the Kaderia Textile Mills area in Tongi Wednesday night. Police said Sohag, 25, who was wanted in a number of cases, was arrested while preparing to commit armed robbery in the area.

Accused slips away from police

UNB, Narayanganj
An accused slipped away from the hands of police while being taken to jail from court Thursday. Court sources said the accused, Helal, was arrested Wednesday night in a robbery case. Police produced him before the court seeking remand.

Conversion of analogue telephones begins

UNB, Munshiganj
Bangladesh Telephone and Telegraph Board (BTTB) Thursday started converting 1700 analogue telephones of Munshiganj into digital ones free of cost. On the first day, 300 analogue phones under Mirkadam Exchange were turned into digital ones, officials said. Sub-divisional Engineer Golam Mustafa Zaki told that some 1300 new digital phone connections would be given in Munshiganj after completion of the conversion programme.

Four rivers in Netrakona need immediate dredging

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Four rivers in Netrakona have silted up and those require immediate dredging.

The Sumashowary, the Mogra, the Kangsha, and the Dhonu have lost depth significantly. So, the rivers can not hold much water during the rainy season, causing flood.

Silt is being gathered in the river beds each and every year. At some places people cross the rivers on foot whereas in many places paddy and jute are being cultivated.

Thousands of acres of cropland go under flood water every year in Netrakona causing huge crop damage.

Moreover, the rivers fail to provide irrigation facilities to arable lands.

According to an official source, out of about 102555 hectares of arable lands in Netrakona, about 60 thousand hectares have been brought under irrigation facilities.

Seven to suffer life-term in murder case

UNB, Jhalakati

A court here has convicted and sentenced seven people to life term rigorous imprisonment in a murder case.

The convicts were identified as Manoranjan Halder, Shushil Mistry, Gopal Chandra Halder, Matilal Halder, Nirmal Chandra Halder, Goutam Halder and Jagadish Halder of Kapurkati village in Sadar upazila. They were tried in absentia.

According to the prosecution, the convicts called their neighbour Makhlanal Shikder out of his house on June 11, 1999 and killed him.

After examining the records and witnesses, the Additional District and Sessions Judge handed down the verdict Wednesday.



PHOTO: STAR

(Left) A vast area of Fulchhari and Gaibandha Sadar upazila has been submerged because of some breaches developed at Sonail embankment at Konarpara in Gaibandha Sadar upazila recently, while (middle) a marooned dwelling house is seen at Chagao in Gaibandha Sadar upazila from where all its inmates had left for safer places elsewhere and (right) some flood victims in the Goderhat area have taken shelter on the Sonail embankment with all their belongings.

Erosion renders 500 families homeless in Faridpur

Fresh areas in Sirajganj flooded, situation improves in Pabna, Bogra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Low-lying areas of Sirajganj have been flooded afresh as the Jamuna burst its banks due to heavy rains and onrush of water from across the border while flood situation has been improving in Pabna and Bogra.

UNB from Sirajganj reports: Officials said another flashflood hit Sadar, Chowhali, Belkuchi, Shahjadpur and Kazipur upazilas, leaving hundreds of people marooned.

Meanwhile, erosion by the river has taken a serious turn as some 100 dwelling houses went into its gorge in two days rendering hundreds of homeless.

The worst affected areas are Char Delua, Majuakandi, Shohagpur and Randhuniabari in Belkuchi upazila, Kojuri, Sonatali, Gala and Jorjana of Shahjadpur upazila, Sodha Chandpur, Birampur and Shool in Chowhali upazila, Khas Rajbari, Tefani, Meghai and Natuarpara in Kazipur upazila, and Mesra, Mallikpara and Bhatpiari in Sadar upazila.

Our Faridpur Correspondent says: Over 500 families of different villages in two upazilas Sadarpur and Char Bhadrans have been rendered homeless while a vast-tract of crop lands have been eroded by the Padma and the Ariyal Kha during in last three months beginning from June.

The erosion-hit families have taken shelter on high lands and embankments nearby. They are passing day in great hardship. Some are leading sub-human life.

The erosion affected villages are Biswas Kandi, Jahir Chairmaner Dangi, Kuddus Roller Dangi, Amirabad Gram, Khalpar and Paschin Diyara in Narikelbaria Union, Dubbar Char, Karal Kandi, Munshi Kandi, Khalifa Kandi and Gaza Kandi in Char Nasirpur Union, Char Ariyal Kha, Fakir Kandi and Char Gazaria in Char Manager Union in Sadarpur upazila, Gazirtek, Molla Dangi and Hajiganj in Char Bhadrans upazila.

Some erosion victims are getting wheat or rice through VGD cards and some are not getting, the affected people told this correspondent who visited the erosion recently affected areas.

BSS from Pabna reports: Floodwaters have started receding from Pabna leaving a trail of devastation.

According to unofficial account, 2,03,156 people of 36 unions in six upazilas have been affected by the flood causing damage to standing crops and property worth about Tk 70 cr.

District flood control room sources said the flood waters have damaged standing crops on over 3,638 hectares of land completely and 8671 hectares of land partially.

A total of 3,079 dwelling houses have been damaged completely while 10,014 more houses partially by the flood.

Besides, onrush of waters have washed away 75 kilometres of road completely and 268 km partially, 5.5 km of embankment completely and 33 km partially.

In all seven educational institutions have been damaged completely while 123 others partially.

Relief materials including food grains and money distributed among the flood-affected people are insufficient, flood victims alleged.

So far 170 metric tons of rice, cash Tk 1,20,000, 700 pieces of sarees, 700 pieces of lunges have been distributed by ministers and local parliament members among the flood affected people.

BSS adds from Bogra: District administration has so far distributed about 255 metric ton of rice and 700 pieces of lunges among the flood victims.

Flood victims of six upazilas Bogra sadar, Shariakandi, Shonatala, Sherpur, Dhurat and Gabtali -- received the relief materials.

Flood situation in Bogra started improving day by day, but the water level in the Bangali river has still been flowing about 29 centimeters above the danger mark.

Farmers practise organic farming

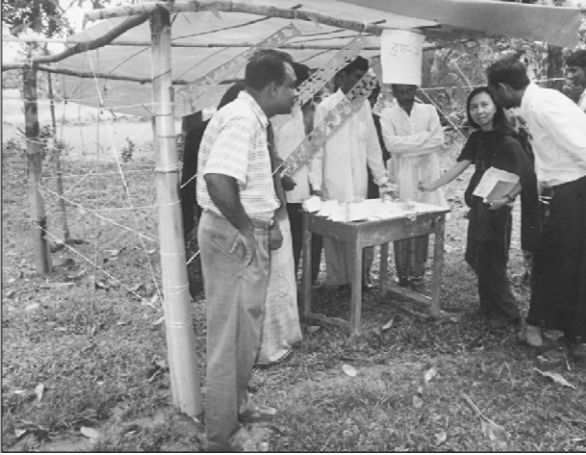


PHOTO FEATURE: DELWAR KABIR

Soil fertility has been decreasing very fast due to indiscriminate and unwise use of chemical fertiliser by the farmers in Jhenidah. This has created an alarm among the growers. But a Non-governmental Organisation (NGO) in Jhenidah with the active support of EU, FAO and Cotton Development Board (CDB) has come forward to help the cultivators overcome the problem. The NGO organised the local growers recently who attended a field day programme at village Kastosagra in Jhenidah Sadar upazila. There they practised the art of organic farming by preparing compost with banana plants, cow-dung, grass and wastage. (1) A farmer unloads water-hyacinth in a compost pit, (2) farmers being taught how to place compost materials in a pit, (3) a farmer attends a participatory class at a farmers' field school on cotton IPM, (4) an expert inspects a compost pit, (5) participants examine temperature and moisture of a heap of compost, (6) Alma Linda C Morales, Cotton IPM Country Officer in Bangladesh visits a compost stall at the first ever compost farmers' field school at village Kastosagra.

Alarming rise in early marriage in Narail

UNB, Narail

The number of early marriage and divorce has been increasing in an alarming proportion in Narail, especially in rural areas.

As per government rules, a girl is fit for marriage at the age 18 while a young man at the age of 20. But the girls between the age of 12 and 15 and boys ranging from 15 to 18 have been marrying rampantly in the rural areas.

The marriage registrars allegedly record the age of immature boys and girls as 20 and 18 respectively in the registers in exchange of gratification.

According to a survey by a non-government organisation, these types of marriage are mostly being solemnised for dowry or for protecting the chastity of adolescent girls from criminals.

In some cases, a section of affluent people usually marry the poor girls as substitute for housemaids, the report said adding about 50 per cent of the early marriages are solemnised following love affairs among the immature boys and girls.

The survey report said about 50 per cent of marriages are registered in irregular ways while the rest 50 per cent remain unregistered.

In case of unregistered marriages, the divorced wife does not get any legal aid. The married underage girls are mostly subjected to physical and sexual harassment leading to rampant divorces.

AL office ransacked: 20 BNP men sent to jail

UNB, Khulna

A court here Monday sent 20 BNP leaders and workers, including a ward commissioner, to jail hajot, cancelling their bail granted earlier in AL office ransacking case.

They were chargesheeted in the case under Explosive Substance Act.

According to prosecution, the accused exploded bombs during the attack on the Awami League office at Natun Rasta crossing in the town on January 27, 1996.

The BNP men, including ward commissioner Khairuzzaman Khoka, president of Sechchasebak Dal Fazle Halim Liton, general secretary of Bastuhara Dal Ashraf Hossain and JCD leader Sohel Mollik, appeared before court and prayed for bail.

The court has fixed August 18 for pronouncing the verdict in the case.

85 killed in road accidents in July in 14 dists

BSS, Joypurhat

Eighty five persons were killed and 208 others seriously injured following a total of 53 road accidents during the month of July in 14 northern districts including Joypurhat.

According to police sources, two persons were killed in two separate accidents in Joypurhat, 24 were killed and 48 others seriously injured from 12 accidents in Bogra, eight persons were killed and 17 injured in four accidents in Sirajganj, four killed and 24 injured from three mishaps in Pabna, two killed and five injured from two accidents in Naogaon, 17 killed and 66 seriously injured in three accidents in Rajshahi, 10 killed and six injured from nine accidents in Natore, two killed and 20 injured from four accidents in Gaibandha, two killed from two accidents in Dinajpur, five killed and 17 injured from three accidents in Rangpur, two killed from two accidents in Nilphamari, two killed and four injured from three accidents in Kurigram, three killed from three accidents in Thakurgaon and two killed and one person was injured from an accident in Panchagarh during the month of July.

Sixty persons were killed and 70 injured in April, 78 killed and 150 injured in May and 42 killed and 65 injured in June last in the northern districts from a total of 163 road accidents.