

NEWS SNAPS

Two killed by wild elephants

BSS, Bandarban
Two unidentified persons were killed by wild elephants in the government reserve forest in Udalbania area of Bandarban Sadar upazila in the last seven days.

They were cutting woods illegally in the deep forest when wild elephants attacked them, according to villagers. The bodies were sent to their homes very secretly by their accomplices. Some corrupt forest department employees are involved with this illegal job, they complained.

One killed in a train accident

BSS, Chuadanga
Budo Mollah, 55, of village Bajdia in Jibannagar upazila was killed in a train accident on Wednesday.

According to police sources, the victim received serious injury when he was dashed by a Khulna-bound express train near Andulbaria Railway Station. He was returning home by a cycle from Andulbaria Bazaar. On his way to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital he died.

2 die in separate incidents

BSS, Rajbari
A two-year old boy, Sunnyat, drowned in a pond in Rajbari municipality area on Saturday.

According to police, Sunnyat, son of Ashraful Islam Tuhin of Sajjan Kanda was playing near the pond. In another incident, Sohrab Mia, 30, son of Khouz Mia of village Vobodia in Sadar upazila, allegedly committed suicide by taking poison on Saturday. Family sources said Sohrab took poison, as he could not bear his stomach pain. He could not arrange money for treatment, it was reported.

One electrocuted at Jibannagar

BSS, Chuadanga
One person named Lutfor Rahman, 40, of Jibannagar Ashtala Para in Jibannagar upazila was electrocuted by a live wire of an electrified deep tubewell on Tuesday.

He was immediately taken to Jibannagar Upazila Health Complex in a critical condition where he succumbed to his injuries. The victim came to a field of his village for collecting grass for his cattlehead where he was touched by a leak live electricity wire of a deep tubewell and was electrocuted, according to family sources.

Four hurt in clashes over land dispute

BSS, Rajbari
At least four people were injured, one of them seriously, in a clash between two rival groups at south Vobanipur in sadar upazila on Friday noon.

Police and witnesses said the supporters of Afzal Pramanik and Baccu clashed over a disputed land at noon. Rokeya Begum, 35, wife of Baccu was critically injured in an attack by their rivals. Three of the injured, Baccu, 55, son of Zohir Uddin Mondal, Golapi, 70, wife of Rahim Mondal and Rabeya Khatun, 38, wife of Ahmed Ali, were admitted to sadar hospital.



This is Balikandi stoppage of the Dhaka-Sylhet highway which is totally unfit for plying vehicles. But who cares?

Sylhet-Shayestaganj highway in bad shape

RAJAT KANTI GOSWAMI, Moulvibazar

The Sylhet-Shayestaganj portion of Dhaka-Sylhet highway is in bad shape.

Fund shortage has been hampering the maintenance work of the highway, informed an official of the Roads and Highways (R&H) Department to The Daily Star.

Innumerable cracks and potholes have developed at many points of the highway causing great inconvenience to the vehicular traffic and people.

This is due to lack of proper maintenance of this portion of Dhaka-Sylhet highway for a long time. Everyday thousands of vehicles including bus, coaster, truck and other private vehicles ply through this highway which is the only way to connect Dhaka and Chittagong with the divisional head-

quarters of Sylhet. Commodities from other parts of the country to Moulvibazar, Sylhet and Sunamgonj districts are carried through this highway. The dilapidated condition of the highway has been causing immense suffering to the passengers and hindering transportation of goods.

During a recent visit, this correspondent found innumerable potholes and deep breaches at the points of Shahbandar, Balikandi, Jagannath Pur, Gumrah, Giasnagar, Bhairabgonj and Bharaura and on the Sherpur-Srimongal portion of the important highway which cover at least 30 kilometres way at Goalabazar, Tajpur and Doyameer under Sylhet-Sherpur portion and five kilometres of Mirpur and Shayestaganj under Srimongal-Shayestaganj portion.

An unbearable traffic jam is a regular feature at some of these spots.

An Assistant Engineer of the Roads and Highways (R&H) Department of Moulvibazar told The Daily Star that Dhaka-Sylhet highway had been constructed with a capacity for plying a maximum of 7 metric tons of loaded truck. But now even 30 metric tons of loaded trucks ply on the highway. For this reason the highway has been damaged very badly.

The same condition prevails only on the Dhaka-Sylhet highway, but also on the Moulvibazar-Rajnagar-Fenchugonj Road, which is a substitute road towards Sylhet from Moulvibazar.

Inter-district passengers and businessmen have urged the authorities concerned that they would do the needful soon.

Khas land distribution scheme in jeopardy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

The government khas land distribution programme faces a setback in Jhenidah.

This is because of grabbing of khas lands allegedly by the influentials here. The district administration has allegedly failed to ensure possession of khas lands to the allotted persons. As a result the allotted farmers are in problem.

This has been disclosed at a press conference at Jhenidah Press Club recently where Murad Ali, 59, a landless farmer of village Kamanna in Saikupa upazila narrated his

plight. There he alleged that a vested quarter in his village grabbed his 46, out of his total 106 decimals of khas land. The district administration allotted him thye land, according to a valid 'Kabuliat' number 4906 on October 5 in 1976. The vested quarter has occupied his land on 'mouza' number 104.

Murad also alleged that a letter from the office of the Assistant Commissioner (AC) of Land of Saikupa upazila helped the vested quarter to grab his land. Because he further alleged that w the Assistant Commissioner ordered him not to go

to the land due to an unknown reason. Since then he is not in a position to bring the land back to his possession for the purpose of cultivation.

While taking to the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) of Revenue, Jhenidah, he said to The Daily Star that the problem could be avoided if the administration ensured possession of the allotted khas lands to bonafide landless farmers.

He also informed that the district administration may take legal action against the land grabbers.



Murad Ali, a landless farmer at village Kamanna in Saikupa upazila in Jhenidah shows his valid documents of possessing government khas land to the local journalists at a recently held press conference at Jhenidah Press Club. The district administration handed over him the document of khas land in 1976, he informed. He alleged that local influentials grabbed part of his khas land illegally.

Price of raw jute yet to pick up in Chuadanga

BSS, Chuadanga

Prices of raw jute in Chuadanga markets are yet to pick up as each maund of the fibre is now being sold at between Tk 260 and 270, growers' sources said.

An estimated 1,27,000 bales of raw jute were expected to be produced throughout Chuadanga this year. Of the total estimated production, 16,000 bales were set to be produced in Chuadanga sadar upazila, 43,000 bales in Alamdanga upazila, 50,000 bales in Damurhuda upazila and 18,000 bales in Jibannagar upazila.

According to official sources, a total of 17,650 hectares of land were

brought under jute cultivation in all the four upazilas of Chuadanga in the last cultivation season. The land covered in the last season was the highest earmarked so far for jute cultivation in the district.

As the number of direct purchasers are less in markets now, the farias (middlemen) are very active to buy jute either on credit or on half payment. The Bangladesh Jute Marketing Corporation has opened only one jute purchasing center in the district through which it can only purchase 10 per cent of the total production of jute. As a result, the jute growers are now in a quandary with their jute, a number of growers said.

Magura diary

Eyes of youth gouged out

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Eyes of one young man were gouged out by some unidentified miscreants recently.

He was admitted to Magura Sadar Hospital in a critical condition and ultimately shifted to Faridpur Medical College Hospital.

The victim was identified as Farook, 28, son of Farid Molla of village Narayanpur in Jhenidah sadar upazila.

Identified of the victim, Matiar Rahman, son of Golam Kader of village Soyol in the aforementioned upazila said, local people suspected that outlawed party activists might gouge out the eyes of Farook over previous enmity.

He rescued the victim in a critical condition from village Soyol and rushed him to Magura Sadar Hospital, Matiar further informed.

When asked why the victim was brought to Magura, but Jhenidah sadar hospital was near to the spot, he avoided answering the question.

Youth held for possessing fire arms

Police arrested one young man for possessing two fire arms from the Tengakhali bazar area in Sadar upazila recently.

Police said, acting on a tip-off a police team from sadar police station raided the spot and arrested him with two country-made guns.

The arrested was identified as Shishir Kumar Mandal, 25, son of Gopal Mandal of village Thakur-Malitha in Shailokupa upazila in Jhenidah.

Two BNP leaders hurt in factional feud

Two leaders of a BNP faction were injured seriously after being attacked and beaten up severely by rivals at Zaria Kheyaghat (Ferry) in Sreepur upazila recently.

The attack was made by the supporters of Bakiul Alam, leader of other faction of BNP, the injured alleged.

They were admitted to Magura sadar hospital in a critical condition on the same day.

The victims were identified as Shahidul Islam, 35, and Rafiqul Islam, 40, of village Sonaikundi, general-secretary and a member respectively of BNP Ward No. 8 unit (Sabdulpur unit) in Sreepur upazila.

The injured alleged, they were attacked by their rivals over forming of the managing committee of Zaria Junior High School.

35 hurt as AL, BNP clash

At least 35 people were injured, 10 of them critically, in a clash between the supporters of BNP and Awami League (AL) at village Sreefaltala in Raghobdayeer union of sadar upazila recently.

A long-drawn rivalry was prevailing between Abdur Razzak Biswas, vice-president of AL Ward No. 6 unit in Raghobdayeer union and a member of the same unit of BNP Abul Mandal over establishment of supremacy in the village.

Supporters of both the leaders equipped with lethal weapons clashed following a row on a marriage ceremony at the village which lasted about half an hour, witnesses said.

Ten seriously injured persons identified as Asad Biswas, 25, Monirul, 18, Kamrul, 25, Bakul Hossain, 27, Abul Mandal, 55, Mokaddes Mandal, 40, Jalal, 35, Joynal, 35, Hemayet Mandal, 25, and Fulu Mian, 20, were admitted to Magura sadar hospital.

Aman cultivation in Narsingdi crosses target

BSS, Narsingdi

Cultivation of aman in Narsingdi has crossed the fixed target of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) for the current season.

DAE sources said the department has fixed a target to cultivate aman on 50,400 hectares with the aim of producing 1,20,000 tons of rice in six upazilas. But aman was cultivated on 54,200 hectares. Of them, high yielding variety (HYV) on 36,800 hectares and local variety on 17,400 hectares. The department is also expecting a bumper production of amans this year. Last year, aman production was hampered due to bad weather. But, this year from the beginning of the season weather has been friendly and rainfall has been adequate and timely, the sources said, besides availability of seeds and fertiliser are also giving indication of a bumper harvest this year.

Farm labourers in search of better jobs in Faridpur

ABDUL MATIN FAKIR, Faridpur

Farm labourers are in search of better jobs in Faridpur.

As a result an acute shortage of farm labourers has been prevailing the district.

Agriculture labourers have been taking up the job of rickshaw-pullers, rickshaw van pullers, auto-rickshaw drivers and porters, because they get more wages in these jobs than lending their labours on farm-land. As a result the land owners are facing acute crisis of agriculture labourers.

This trend among the agriculture labourers has developed because of construction of roads linking the remotest villages with the district and upazila head-quarters. Rickshaw auto-rickshaw and rickshaw-van stands are found in villages. Young people prefer driving to farming.

A rickshaw-puller and an auto-rickshaw driver of village Hatkrishnapur in Sadar upazila when interviewed told this correspondent that they find much more thrill in driving than working in the field. They also added that in this driving job they come in contact with people of different nature taste, culture and education which is totally absent in agriculture works. Besides, driving is more profitable and durable while agriculture work is dull and seasonal.

A farmer, Siddique of village Haji Dangi in Char Bhadrason upazila having five acres of land told that farming is not at present profitable for those who do not work in the fields rather it is a losing concern for them who are completely dependent on day labourers. They at Tk 115 each day.

People depending on marginal lands are in a miserable.

One succumbs to injuries in Gopalganj

UNB, Gopalganj

A man, injured seriously in a clash between two rival groups on Thursday, succumbed Friday at village Borfa in Sadar upazila.

Police said the clash erupted between two groups of villagers over harvesting sugarcane from a disputed field that left 51 people injured, eight critically. Both the groups used lethal weapons in the bloody clash.

The critically injured were rushed to the sadar hospital where Shahid Sheikh, 35 succumbed the next day. The other injured were admitted to Kalia and Narail health complexes.

Additional police forces have been deployed in the area to avert further untoward incident. A case was filed.

Sherpur-Jamalpur feeder road devoured by Old Brahmaputra

UNB, Sherpur

About 1.5 km area of Sherpur-Jamalpur feeder road near Sherpur ferry ghat (terminal), went into the gorge of the Old Brahmaputra river within a span of one hour Saturday morning.

Direct traffic movement on the route remained disrupted causing sufferings to the commuters.

All sorts of transports are now forced to stop at Balughat area, 4km away from the ferry ghat and passengers are compelled to reach the ferry ghat by foot.

Concerned authority said communication through this ferry route would remain suspended until construction of an alternative road.

The panic-stricken villagers began to shift their houses to safer places as erosion took a serious turn in the area.



A citizens' gathering at Kishoreganj railway station. Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) and Nagarik Committee, a committee of conscious citizens, jointly arranged the gathering recently to remove irregularities and enhance the standard of railway service at the station.