

NEWS SNAPS

Two killed in road mishaps

UNB, Sylhet
Two people including a little boy were killed in separate road accidents in Sylhet on Thursday.

Al Amin, 9, son of Liakot Ahmad of village Asampara while passing the road was crushed under the wheels of a Jaflong bound truck on Sylhet-Tamabil road in the evening. At the same time an unidentified man aged about 40 was crushed under the wheels of a Sylhet bound bus near Fulbari union on Sylhet-Jakigoni road. Both the drivers along with their vehicles managed to flee from the scenes.

Boy killed in road mishap

UNB, Munshiganj
An adolescent boy was killed in an accident at Delubari in Tongbari upazila on Dhaka-Tongbari road on Saturday.

Police and witnesses said the accident took place when a tempo hit the bicycle in the area, injuring the bicyclist, Selim, 14, critically. Later he died on way to the hospital. Police seized the tempo. A case was filed.

Body of housewife recovered

UNB, Brahmanbaria
The body of a housewife was recovered from a ditch beside her house at village Phoobaria in Sadar upazila Thursday.

The deceased was identified as Khodeza Begum, 45, mother of four children. Family sources said she was called out of her house and stabbed to death by the assailants on Wednesday night.

Two girls commit suicide

UNB, Thakurgaon
Two adolescent girls allegedly committed suicide in Sadar upazila on Thursday-Friday.

Police said Shirbala, 14, daughter of Laxminder of village Bandigarh Kartiktala allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself with scarf on Friday. Besides, Sarathi Rani, 14, a student of class IX, of village Sindhurana, committed suicide by taking poison on Thursday morning. Separate unnatural death (UD) cases were filed.

Two held with forged notes

UNB, Barisal
Detectives arrested a police constable along with his two accomplices with forged currency notes amounting to Tk 51,000 from the town on Thursday.

Detective Branch of police arrested Mahtab Hossain, 32, a cop of Barisal camp along with his accomplices Bashudev Singh, 32, and Harun Akhand, 25, while they were moving suspiciously in the Sadar road area. Later searching their bodies they recovered the counterfeit notes of Tk 500 denomination. A case was filed against them.

24-man imam body formed

UNB, Thakurgaon
A 24-member district imam committee was formed here on Saturday with Alhaj Tamizuddin Ahmed and Hafez Rashid Alam as its president and general secretary respectively.

The committee was formed at a conference held at Kachari Jam-e-Mosque with Deputy Director of Islamic Foundation Lutfor Rahman in the chair. An 18-member Sadar Upazila Imam Committee was also formed in the conference with Maulana Nurul Alam and Maulana Shafiqul Alam as president and general secretary respectively.

One held with fake 'jarda'

UNB, Jhalakhati
Police arrested a man along with 600 small containers of spurious 'jarda' (scented tobacco) from Masjid Bari area in the town on Thursday night.

Acting on secret information police arrested Abul Kalam hailed from village Daharsankar in Rajapur upazila. He was selling the fake 'jarda' since long in the name of Shahi Jarda of a local registered company.

Workshop for journalists

UNB, Brahmanbaria
A four-day basic training workshop for journalists began in the town at Brahmanbaria Nursing Institute Friday.

Advocate Harun Al Rashid MP inaugurated the training workshop organised by Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB). Some 21 journalists of local and national dailies are taking part in the training workshop.

Sugarcane crushing begins

UNB, Natore
Sugarcane crushing at Natore Sugar Mills was inaugurated Friday with a sugar production target of 20,000 tons from 2.50 lakh mts of sugarcane.

Ruhul Kuddus Dulu, Deputy Minister for Local Government, Rural Development (LGRD) inaugurated the sugarcane crushing as chief guest in the afternoon.



PHOTO: STAR

Some day labourers wait for jobs in the Khamarpara bridge area of Sreepur upazila in Magura. Jobs are very scarce in this district. In many cases day labourers remain half-starved or fully starved due to lack of sufficient employment as most of them are fully dependent on farm work. No small or medium industries have developed in this district which could solve the unemployment problem to a great extent.

Jobless on rise in N dists

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

The number of jobless people in the flood ravaged northern region now stands at 20 lakh.

A large number of them have already become beggar. Out of the total 4 crore people in the northern region, nearly 15 lakh are farm labourers and the remaining five lakh are erosion victims. Nearly 10 lakh of the labourers are either marginal or share croppers.

In the rainy season nearly 13 districts had been affected by flood in the last season. As such the farm labourers have remained jobless for the last few months. They are fully dependent on daily wages and

maintain their families somehow. During the last flood, standing crops on the low-lying areas have been washed away.

Although many of the farmers have transplanted latest variety of aman seedlings, but future of aman crop is bleak.

Besides, river erosion has rendered five lakh people destitute. The victims from different erosion prone areas rushed to Gaibandha town. They have taken place at the railway station and market places. They are in search of food and shelter.

The northern districts are surrounded by 27 rivers including the Brahmaputra, the Jamuna, the Teesta, the Karotoa, the Atrai, the Mohanadha, the Bangali and the

Ghagot.

The erosion victims of the aforesaid rivers have been passing their life in a miserable condition. They are shifting places from here to there in search of shelter and food. Many of them are engaged as day labourers, rickshaw-van puller while others are involved in anti-social activities.

Although the government occasionally grants money and launches Food for Works Programme (FWP), Test relief VGD programmes for the rehabilitation of destitutes, yet the lion's share of the allocation are being misappropriated allegedly by the local public representatives.

Air pollution threatens public health in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

The number of patients suffering from respiratory diseases such as cough, chronic headache, lung tumor and blood pressure are rising in the northern region, particularly in urban areas, due to air pollution, according to physicians.

Inhaling of smoke emitted by diesel-driven vehicles may also cause loss of hearing they said. Unabated marketing of diluted fuel by a section of dealers has posed a serious threat to public health in this region including Sirajganj district. But the authorities have failed to come up with effective steps to crack down on the lawbreakers.

There are a good number of clandestine centres in different parts of the region where petrol and octane are diluted, causing damage not only to the engines of vehicles, but also the environment "said an ecologist."

An anarchic situation is prevailing in oil depots of the region due to

illegal activities by a section of BSTI officials, adulteration of fuel cheating in measurement, extortionism, inaction of law-enforcers and lack of steps to clean up the bottoms of oil depots at regular intervals to keep those free from sulphur and lead.

The diesel-driven vehicles pollute the environment sending suspended particulate matter (SPM) into the air. The SPM that comes out from the fumes of diesel-driven vehicles is smaller than 10 microns, which can easily enter into the lung of human being, causing serious harm to it, according to the doctors. There have been allegations that a section of employees in Eastern Refinery mix lead with crude petrol while some dishonest business people mix it with the imported fuel.

In a bid to check the pollution of environment, the government has undertaken a programme of marketing lead-free petrol and sulphur-free octane across the country. The government has also decided to attach catalytic converters to all

petrol-driven vehicles and particulate filters to diesel-engine vehicles to check the use of lead and sulphur mix fuel.

The government had also directed all the fuel distributors to clean up the bottoms of their depots to help supply lead and sulphur-free fuel. The instruction is never followed by the distributors. Its instruction to attach catalytic converters and particulate filters also went unheeded. The experts said mixing of kerosene with petrol is one of the main causes of air pollution and a large number of depot owners do that in blind pursuit of profit and allegation denied by the dealers.

Dilution of fuel mainly occurs at Baghabari depot but the blame goes to the dealers said a dealer declining to be named. He also accused the law-enforcers of turning a blind eye to the real culprits.

Meanwhile, Fuel Distributors Association demanded protection of their depots and putting an end to toll collection and harassment by



PHOTO: STAR

Pedestrians and cyclists cross a vulnerable point of the Gaibandha Town Protection Embankment cum road which is threatened by the erosion of the Ghagot. A power transformer which is seen in the photo may collapse at any moment resulting in accident. Immediate steps are required to check the river erosion.

Essentials dear in Faridpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Prices of essential commodities have been soaring up unabated to the great hardship of common consumers.

Coarse rice is selling between Tk 12 to 14 a kg while a bit finer quality is being sold between Tk. 15 to Tk. 18 a kg depending on their variety.

Pulses of all kinds have registered a sharp rise. Mushur pulse sells between Tk 40 to 42 a kg. Moog sells at Tk. 48 a kg. and gram at Tk. 38 a

kg.

Mustard oil is selling between Tk 60 to 65 a kg while Soyabean is selling between Tk 43 to 46 a kg.

Vegetables have become scarce in all the markets. Brinjal is selling between Tk 16 to 20 a kg. Green papaya is being sold at Tk 8, potato at Tk 11, bean at Tk 14 and green chili at Tk 30 a kg. A slice of sweet gourd weighing 500 gram sells at Tk 10.

Leafy vegetables are selling at exorbitant prices.

Fishes, though available in the

market are selling at prices beyond the purchasing capacity of common people. Medium size Hilsha is selling at Tk 150 a kg while Ruhi weighing 4 kg sells at Tk 700. Small size Chingri sells at Tk. 200 a kg.

iodised salt is selling at Tk 10 a kg while non-iodized salt, a band item is selling openly at Tk 7 a kg.

Spices of all kinds are selling at prices abnormally higher this year.

Cow milk is selling at Tk 20 to Tk 25 a kg. Molasses at Tk 20 and sugar at Tk 32 a kg.

Rangpur diary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Dengue patient detected

A dengue patient has been detected in Rangpur.

The patient has been identified as Abdur Rezaque, 18, a resident of the local Shahi para area. He got admitted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital (RMCH). According to his family sources, he went to Dhaka for preparation to get himself admitted in any good educational institution. While staying there he was infected by dengue virus. As per advice of physicians, he came back to his parents' house at Rangpur for treatment.

Killers yet to be arrested

The killers of Abdul Majid, 30, of Shadyapushkarni in Rangpur Sadar upazila are yet to be arrested by police.

He was killed by some unknown miscreants on July 10 and on the following day his body was recovered from a jute field. Police acting upon a complaint, arrested three persons, but the actual killers are moving freely before the very nose of the members of the law enforcing agency, it was alleged. The miscreants are now threatening the family members of the deceased and creating pressure on them to withdraw the case. As a result, the helpless family members of the victim are passing their days in great panic, it is alleged.

Housewife killed for dowry

A newly-married housewife was recently beaten to death allegedly by her husband for dowry.

According to police, one person named Shahidul Islam, 23, of Pirgoni upazila married to Rahima Khatun, 18, on August 27 of the same upazila without dowry. But after marriage, the dowry greedy Shahidul claimed dowry and asked his newly married wife to bring dowry from her parents. Failing to meet the demand, of dowry, she had been tortured by her husband resulting in her death recently, it has been alleged by the local people. A case has been filed with Kotwali police in this regard, but the killer husband has been absconding, police said.

Industrial fair concludes

A month long industrial fair concluded at Rangpur Stadium recently.

About 100 stalls had been set up there where a vast quantity of industrial products of the country of latest model and also from Pakistan and Iran had been exhibited. The fair attracted a large number of visitors everyday. The fair had been arranged jointly by Rangpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry and MIDS, Dhaka.

Village policemen deprived of salaries

About 800 village policemen and 'dafadars' are not getting their salaries for a long time due to lack of sanction from the Finance Ministry for reasons best known to the authorities concerned, it has been alleged.

The village policemen and 'dafadars' are serving in 83 unions of the district. A 'dafadar' gets a monthly salary of Tk 1,000 while a village policeman receives Tk 700 per month. Of the total monthly salary 50 per cent are paid by the government and the rest 50 per cent by the respective union parishads. But it is a pity that the government is not paying its 50 per cent share for the long six to seven years and the union parishad authority is not disbursing their 50 per cent amount of money for the last four to five months. Despite non-payment of salary, the 'dafadars' and village policemen have been carrying on their services regularly, it has been reported.

Woman sustains acid burn injury in Moulvibazar

UNB, Moulvibazar

A woman who sustained serious acid burn injuries has been fighting for life at the sadar hospital.

Family sources said Samir Mia, 45, father of four children, of village Golerhaor in Kamalganj upazila was trying to develop an affair with Zobeda Khatun, 35, mother of three children of Kurma tea garden colony in the same upazila since long.

On October 9 he sent a proposal to marry her which she refused. At this Samir became furious and hurled acid on her leaving her critically injured on the same night. She was rushed to Kamalganj upazila health complex and following the deterioration of her condition she was shifted to Sadar hospital.

The father of the victim alleged that police so far took no initiative to nab the miscreant, who is now moving almost freely in the area.

Mahima kidnap, rape case**All documents sent to Supreme Court**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

All the documents and evidences of the judgement of Mahima kidnap and rape case were sent to the high court division of the Supreme Court for approval.

Abu Hanif, judge for the special court for women and children

repression prevention in his judgement on Wednesday ordered the authority concerned under the section 374 of the CrPC to send the judgement to the higher court as soon as possible.

The judgement which awarded all the four rapists of Mahima with death sentence was hailed from different quarters.

Advocate Sitara Dil Chuni, Rajshahi divisional chief of Bangladesh Mohila Ainjibi Samity told The Daily Star that the judgement became a milestone in the current scenario of often corrupt judgement.

"Now we will follow the attitude of the higher court in case of any appeal on the part of the accused", she said.

DAE undertakes extensive Rabi crop cultivation in Mymensingh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), Mymensingh has taken up a massive programme of Rabi crops cultivation in the coming season this year. The Rabi crops include wheat, maize, potato, mustard, onion, garlic and ginger.

According to DAE sources, wheat will be cultivated on 16,000 hectares of land, with a production target of 36,000 metric tons (MT) in 12 upazilas of the district this year.

Six thousand hectares of land will be brought under cultivation of mustard with a production target of 4,800 MT, 900 hectares for 4,050 MT of maize, 500 hectares for 3,500 MT of potato, 1,000 hectares for 10,000 MT of sweet potato, 500 hectares for 750 MT of ground nut, 600 hectares for 432 MT of pulse, 1,000 hectares for 8,500 MT of onion, 800 hectares for 4800 MT of garlic, 4,000 hectares for 8,000 MT of chili, 500 hectares for 3,500 MT of ginger, and 800 hectares for 6,400 MT of turmeric.

Prabarana Purnima celebrated in Ctg

BSS, Ctg

Members of the Buddhist community here yesterday celebrated their 2nd largest festival Prabarana Purnima in the city and elsewhere in the district with traditional enthusiasm and solemn devotion.

Buddhists celebrate the Purnima marking conclusion of the three months long reclusion of the monks inside monasteries for self-education and atonement of their deliement.

In the evening, hundreds of Buddhist devotees assembled the monasteries and released lighted balloons in the sky as part of worship to the hair relics of Buddha, which is the main attraction of the festival.

The day's programmes heralded with hoisting of the national and religious flags atop all monasteries in the morning and chanting the sacred verses from the Tripitaka.

Four sued in Khulna for forgery

UNB, Khulna

The Bureau of Anti-corruption (BAC) has filed six cases against four people for misappropriating nearly Tk 70 lakh through forgery from an Agrani Bank branch.

As per the case, lodged with local police, Lutfor Rahman, a godown keeper of the bank on the city's Iqbal Road, in collusion with some income tax officials embezzled over Tk 69.65 lakh kept against letters of credit (LCs).

Lutfor started withdrawing money through false cheques from 1998.

High BAC and income tax officials came to Khulna to investigate alleged misappropriations several times between 2000 and 2001. Local officials of the state-owned bank, however, expressed their ignorance about any wrongdoing.

Lutfor, also a leader of the Bangabandhu Parishad, has gone into hiding.

Others accused in the case are