

Production comes to halt at Jamuna fertiliser again

Fluctuation of gas pressure poses serious threat to the biggest plant

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Production came to a halt again at Jamuna Fertiliser Company Limited (JFCL) at Tarakandi under Sarishabari upazila of Jamalpur yesterday due to technical glitches.

Regular fluctuation of gas pressure is posing serious threat to the biggest plant and its costly equipment, sources at the plant said.

Mohammad Ahsanuzzaman, managing director (MD) of JFCL, told this correspondent that urea production was suspended at 11.15am after detection of a mechanical fault at its ammonium section.

The engineers of JFCL are repairing the fault and production will resume soon after the gas pressure gets normal, he added.

JFCL supplies urea to 20 districts including 16 northern through its 1,823 dealers since the unit was set up in 1991.

Sources said urea production at the fertiliser unit faced suspension for 180 days on 11 occasions since January this year due to frequent technical glitches and low gas pressure and lack of overhauling.

Earlier, production suspended on the 1700MT production powered JFCL on October 11 after detection of a leakage on reactor in its urea plant. After repairing, fertiliser production resumed on 17 days.

On January 1, production came to a halt due to low gas pressure and later the unit resumed production after gas pressure came to normal on January 3.

Production halted again on February 16 after detection of a leakage on boiler in its urea plant and production resumed on February 22.

Production at JFCL faced another jolt on March 27 after detection of another leakage on boiler and production resumed later on March 31.

In the face of acute gas

crisis, urea production at JFCL halted again on April 2 and later government directed the authorities suspend production for an indefinite period.

Meantime, an overhauling of the unit took place from April 20 by spending Tk 16 crore. Though the job ended on May 31, JFCL failed to resume production due to short supply of gas.

The gas pressure came to normal after 110 days and the company resumed production on July 16.

However, production suspended again a day later after detection of a mechanical fault in its urea plant and it resumed on July 21 after a repair work.

Production stopped again on August 13 due to low gas pressure and resumed on August 16. After only two days, it returned to square one again due to lack of gas. After closure of 34 days, urea production resumed at JFCL on September 21.

JFCL officials said at least

370 PSI gas pressure is required to produce 1,700MT of urea a day while at present the unit cannot produce more than 482 MT with a gas pressure of only 240 PSI.

As a result, the company is now uncertain to hit its production target of 4,80,000 MT in the current FY (2010-11), company sources said expressing fear of short supply of urea in the upcoming boro season.

On the other hand, regular fluctuation of gas pressure has been causing technical glitches at the urea plant and also damaging of its costly equipments, company sources said.

JFCL MD Ahsanuzzaman told The Daily Star that the plant might face a massive disaster (damage) any moment for running with very low gas pressure.

"I have already informed the matter to the appropriate authorities through four letters in the last four days," he added.



Left in a decrepit condition for long, this bailey bridge at Thakurakona on Netrakona-Mohanganj road collapsed under the pressure of a truck yesterday.

Another bailey bridge collapses

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Road communication of the district with eight upazilas and rest of the country was disrupted as a 120-meter long bailey bridge on the Kongscha river at Thakurakona under Sadar upazila collapsed yesterday morning.

The situation has caused untold sufferings to a large number of people including officials, businessmen and students. Those who used to travel the road regularly are now crossing the Kangsho by

country boats.

Sources at Roads and Highways Department (RHD) and locals said, the bridge collapsed with two over-loaded trucks when the trucks were crossing the bridge.

The railings, pillars and floors of the bridge declared unfit for vehicular movement five years ago, were totally worn out, the sources added.

An amount of Tk 4.53cr was allocated for repair and renovation of the bridge and a contractor was assigned by the authorities to do the work. But the contractor

could not start the work due to the reason unknown, they said.

Contacted, an official of the RHD told the correspondent that pedestrians and the home-bound people rushing from different areas of the country to celebrate Eid at their villages were facing serious troubles due to disruption of the road communication.

We are trying to introduce ferry service on the river Kangso to alleviate their sufferings, he said.

Earlier, a bailey bridge, which was declared unfit for

movement of heavy vehicles three years ago, collapsed on the night of October 30 in Kalmakanda upazila.

The 75-metre-long bridge over a canal at Pasura collapsed when a goods-laden truck was passing through it at around 10:00pm.

Local people said they face immense trouble due to disruption of road communication between the upazila and the district town. A large number of people, who use this bridge to travel on Kalmakanda-Netrakona road, are now crossing the canal by boats.

BSF kills two in Jessore, Satkhira

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) yesterday killed two Bangladeshis in Jessore and Satkhira border areas.

A Bangladeshi cattle trader was beaten to death by BSF at Putkhaliborder early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Majnu Biswas, reports UNB.

BDR said BSF jawans of Indian Angraal camp chased a group of cattle traders, including Majnu, when they were returning to Bangladesh from India along with cattle

through Putkhaliborder in the early hours.

Other cattle traders managed to escape, but Majnu was caught by BSF men who mercilessly beat him, leaving him critically injured.

The Indian border guards later left him at the border thinking him dead.

Local people rescued him and rushed him to Jessore 250-bed hospital where he died after admission.

Another cattle trader was shot dead by BSF at Gazipur frontier in Sadar upazila of Satkhira early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Shariful Islam, 30, son of Motiar Rahman of Gagnia village of same upazila.

BDR sources said BSF jawans of Indian Kalutola camp fired several shots on Shariful when he along with cattle was coming to Bangladesh from India at about 6am, leaving him injured.

Local people rescued him and at first admitted him to Sadar Hospital and later shifted to Khulna Medical College Hospital where he died at noon.

BCL rivals clash at Carmichael College: 15 injured

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

At least 15 activists of Chhatra League (BCL) were injured yesterday as two rival groups of the ruling party's student front clashed at Rangpur Carmichael College.

Among the injured, condition of Debashish Roy, Ripon and Biplob were reported critical. They were being treated at Rangpur Medical College and Hospital.

BCL sources said the clash ensued over formation of committee of Carmichael College unit of the student front.

One group led by Shiblu formed a committee in the face of objection made by the group led by former president of the college unit Nannu.

Shiblu alleged that Nannu and his men attacked them when he along with some BCL activists went to the college campus.

Nannu denied the allegation and held Shiblu responsible for the attack on his associates.

President of BCL of the district unit Taposh Kumar Ghosh said, a number of outsiders led by Shiblu confined him to a mess on Monday at Modern point and asked him to approve a committee of the college unit formed with non-students.

Taposh said Kotwali police later rescued him from the mess.

Savagery!

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police yesterday arrested a 45-year-old man from the city's Seroil Bastuharapara area yesterday on charge of sexually abusing his 14-year-old daughter.

Abu Sayeed, a fruit vendor, was caught red-handed in the early hours by family members and locals and later handed over to police, said Shahadat Hossain, officer-in-charge of Boalia PS.

He said the arrestee was sent to court at noon after recording of a case filed by the girl's mother Shobha Begum Lila. The court sent him to jail custody.

The victim, a Junior School Certificate (JSC) examinee, was now under custody of her mother after examination at the forensic department of Rajshahi Medical College, said the OC.

Sub inspector Abdus Sattar, investigating officer of the case said, the girl was being raped for about one and a half years under threats of murder.

At around 3am yesterday when Sayeed was abusing her, the girl screamed. As her mother and sons went to rescue her, Sayeed beat them up. At this, the mother called locals for help.

Sayeed along with his wife, daughter and three minor sons lived in a room of a thatched house in the area. The man used to drug her wife before going to abuse his daughter after midnight, said the police officials.

4 'friends' remanded in Saiful murder case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Four 'friends' held in connection with the sensational college student Saiful Islam murder case were placed on four-day remand yesterday.

Earlier, police produced the accused before the court of Chief Judicial Magistrate Ashequr Rahman seeking seven-day remand.

The remanded four are Shamsher, 22, son of Babar Ali of Charadangi village, Shakila Akter Barsha, 18, daughter of Imdadul Haque, Shahidur, 20, son of Nurul Islam, Sherifat Hossain alias Sourav, 22, son of Zohirul Islam of Purba Gawalpara in the town's municipal area.

Saiful Islam's mutilated body was found in a bamboo cluster about 2 km away from his home at Deogaon-Cheradangi village in Sadar upazila on Saturday morning.

The deceased was a student of Thakurgaon



Saiful Islam

Technical School and College and son of Belal Hossain of Charadangi village.

On information, police recovered the body from near Jamuri Primary School Saturday morning. His penis was also chopped off.

Victim's uncle Joynal Abedin said Saiful went out of their house Friday evening and remained missing since then. The next day

Belal Hossain filed a case with Thakurgaon police

station in connection with the murder.

After examining the call log of Saiful's cell phone DB police arrested his friends Shamsher, Shahidur, Moidul Islam, Sharafat Hossain alias Sourav and Shakila Akter alias Barsha, a student of technical training college, who had an affair with Saiful. They were taken to custody for interrogation on the same day, a sub-inspector of DB police who is also investigation officer of the case, said.

After primary interrogation, the four friends of the victim were arrested and produced before the court seeking remand for further interrogation, he added.

"We have almost unearthed the clues to the murder", SI Jahangir Alam said, adding that Shakila's brother Biplob and her mother Sharmin Akther went into hiding immediately after the incident.

3 more bombs recovered in Meherpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Police on Monday recovered three more bombs from Tetulbaria field in Gangni upazila of Meherpur.

Police said local people informed them seeing a black polythene bag under a culvert at nearby Tetulbaria bazar at about 4.30pm.

Sub-Inspector Osman Gani, in-charge of Bamandi police camp rushed to the spot and recovered the bombs.

Meherpur Superintendent of Police Sharier Hossain and officer-in-charge (OC) of Gangni police station Motiar Rahman visited the spot.

On Thursday, five farmers were injured in a bomb blast at the same Tetulbaria field.

Police said the bomb went off when they were digging soil there.

Police later recovered two bombs from the spot.

On Saturday, police recovered two bombs from Baliaghat field, adjacent to Tetulbaria field in Gangni upazila of the district.

Robbers loot house injuring 8 in Jhalakati

UNB, Jhalakati

Robbers looted cash and valuables worth Tk 6 lakh from a house injuring eight people at South Chetri village in Kathalia upazila early Monday.

Police and locals said a gang of armed robbers entered the

house of upazila BNP general secretary Rustam Ali Khan breaking the door open at about 1:00am.

Later, they took the house members hostage at gunpoint and looted 19 tolas of gold ornaments and other valuables worth about Tk 6 lakh.

Eight people including house owner Rustam Ali, 58, and his wife

Rebeka Sultana, 50, received bullet wound as the robbers opened fire on them after being resisted by the locals.

Among the injured, Jamal, 25, and Enayet, 30, were admitted to

Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College and Hospital in critical condition.



PHOTO: STAR

Hybrid pangas and telapia are all that this fish trader has to offer to customers at Natun Bazar in Kaliganj upazila town of Jhenidah district as local fishes are becoming scarcer.

Acute dearth of fishes in Jhenidah markets

AZIBOR RAHMAN, Jhenidah

Jhenidah markets are experiencing an acute crisis of fish for the last several months. Neither big nor small fishes are available, thus limiting the consumer's choice to different types of cultured fishes.

Lack of adequate water in the water bodies is the main reason for the shortfall of fish, observe local fishermen and fish traders.

According to locals, both bigger and smaller species of fish were available earlier, more so in the rainy season. But that is no longer true as those have disappeared from the markets.

Recent visits to the weekly kitchen market in Kaliganj upazila as well as district level weekly market in the town revealed severe crisis of local fish there. Only a small quantity of pond-bred pangash, silver carp, fingerlings of ruhi and telapia were being sold at those markets.

No local species of smaller

fishes like raina, pabda, puti, bele, tengra, etc were available in the markets. Medium size fishes like shing, magur, sarputi and bigger size fish like ruhi, katla, mrigel, boal, shoil, chital, foli and gojar have almost disappeared from the market.

Ranjan Kumar, a fisherman as well as a fish trader at Kaliganj fish market said, the fishermen community are running out of work and leaving their traditional profession finding no alternative.

Another fisherman, Ananda said, for fish to be there, water has to be there in the first place!

Most of the water bodies, even the rivers, have been drying up through the past decades. Helpless fishermen are trying to get into other work. A large number of the fishermen community also left the country, he added.

The District Fisheries Officer (DFO) Prafulla Kumar Sikder said the main reason

behind the declining of the fish species is the crisis of water, especially in the twelve rivers of the region.

Some influential people have grabbed the rivers and constructed permanent structures on the riverbeds and banks. Besides, the use of insecticide on the crops is destroying the fish from our water bodies and rivers, he said.

The DFO added that out of total fish produce of 23,126 tonnes, 815.35 tonnes are caught from Nabaganga, Chitra, Begabati, Fatki, Gorai, Karatoa, Isamati, Kali and Dakua rivers in the district every year. The remaining quantity is procured from ponds, beel, haors and ponds.

Total demand of fish for the people of the district was 25,278.75 tonnes a year. The fish traders bring around 2,153.14 tonnes of fish from elsewhere. The area of the rivers was 2,434 hectares, DFO said.