

Power outages hamper production in mills, boro cultivation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Frequent power outages in Khulna and Bagerhat districts are seriously hampering production in mills and factories and boro cultivation.

The victims say that hardly a day goes without load shedding of electricity at short intervals.

According to chief engineer Abul Kalam Azad of West Zone Power Distribution Company Ltd. (WZPDCL), around 100 megawatt of electricity is being supplied against the requirement for 140mw in Khulna and Bagerhat districts everyday.

As a result, 33 fish processing and ice factories of these two districts have become the worst victims of severe power crisis which has also hit irrigation work in 88,000 hectares of land meant for boro cultivation.

Superintending engineer of WZPDCL Anil Chandra Halder told this correspondent yesterday that only

60mw is being supplied against the total need for 100mw in Khulna metropolitan city.

Chairman of Sonali Jute Mills in Khulna city SM Emdadul Hossain said his mill is incurring a loss of at least Tk 5 lakh a day as it has to buy fuel for generator to keep the wheels running.

Load shedding has severely hit production at my jute mill which it never experienced before, he said.

The mill that produced 18,000 metric tonnes of jute goods a month now produces less than 3,000 metric tonnes because of frequent load shedding, he added.

Assistant engineer of Palli Biddyt Samity (PBS) Anit Kumar Roy said, severe power crisis had been affecting boro cultivation in almost all nine upazilas of Khulna district.

Khulna Wasa engineer Md. Ashekur Rahman said frequent load shedding had also hit normal water supply in the city.

Our Gaibandha corre-

spondent adds: In the last few days, boro seedlings at many places of the district dried up for want of adequate water.

This is because of the erratic power supply and voltage fluctuation, as the grid stations are not getting adequate power supply in the peak period of boro cultivation, sources said.

Everyday, power supply remains off for about eight to ten hours hampering boro cultivation, industries, trade and education of students, they said.

According to local PDB sources, although the requirement of power is 16mw a day, the district gets only six to seven mw. Sometimes, the supply comes down to only two mw, they said.

Farmers in different upazilas of the district agitated several times demanding steps to stop erratic power supply and frequent load shedding at least in the boro season, but to no effect.

Criminals kill Jubo League leader in Lalmonirhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Criminals strangled a Jubo League leader at Jurabandha village in Gokunda union under Sadar upazila yesterday.

Police picked up five aides of the victim in this connection. They are Mithu Hossain, 38, Selim Hossain, 34, Ali Hossain, 42, Abdul Motin, 35 and Foysal Hossain, 34, of the upazila.

However, Mithu and Selim were freed after a primary interrogation, said police.

The deceased, Iqbal Kabir Ripon, 35, son of local Awami League leader Ruhul Kabir of the village, is the secretary of Gokunda union Jubo League in the upazila.

On information, police recovered the body of Ripon from a tobacco field beside the Rangpur- Kurigram Road at around 7:30am, said Zamir Uddin, officer in-charge of Lalmonirhat Sadar police station.

The body was sent to Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Quoting the five, the OC said a gang of 12/15 attacked Ripon, Ali, Motin and Foysal around midnight yesterday while they were



Iqbal Kabir Ripon

gong to Barobari Bazar by two motorbikes.

The gang picked up Ripon from there, killed him and dumped the body in the field, they said.

Protesting the killing, leaders and activists of AL, Chhatra League and Jubo League staged roadblock for about five hours and vandalised at least nine vehicles in Mostofi and Teesta bus stand area.

The road communication resumed at around 1:00pm.

They also ransacked Gokunda BNP office at Mostofi village in the upazila.

District BNP president Asadul Habib Dulu said, Ripon might have been killed due to internal party conflict.

Fisherman caught in crossfire, killed

A CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

A fisherman was killed in crossfire when two groups of robbers locked in a gunfight at Chandpie Range of the Sundarbans in the district on Monday evening.

The gunfight took place between the members of 'Gama Bahini' and 'Raja Bahini', two notorious gangs of robbers, over establishing supremacy in the area.

The victim, Biswanath Sutor, 34, had gone to Chandpie Range for fishing taking permission from the forest department, said Sahabuddin Ahmed, an assistant forest conservator of Chandpie Range.

Other fishermen, who fled the scene unhurt, informed the people at Andharmanik camp of the forest department about the gunfight Monday night.

Later they found the body and took it to Geodhora station of the forest department in the morning.

Later, the body was sent to his residence at Kalibari village in Morelganj upazila.

Masud Alam, officer in-charge of Morelganj police station, told this correspondent that they heard about the incident but no case was filed in this connection.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Dalit Banchito Jonogosthir Adhikar Andolan forms a human chain in front of the deputy commissioner's office in Chapainawabganj town marking International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination yesterday.

Students boycott classes to protest attack on teacher

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Students of Adampur Fazil Madrasa under Dashmina upazila started boycott of classes yesterday protesting attack on a teacher of the madrasa.

The students also brought out a procession demanding punishment to the culprits.

Students and locals said, Zahid Hossain Titu, brother of UP chairman of Bahrompur union decided to cultivate Irri paddy on a plot near Adampur Fazil Madrasa. One Delwar Hossain, a close aide to Titu

later set up a power pump machine about only five yards away from the madrasa. When the machine runs, it makes a noisy sound, disturbing classes at the madrasa.

Madrasa authorities requested them not to use the machine during class hours but to no effect.

At about 10 am on Tuesday, some students went to spot and stopped the machine as it hampered their classes.

Hearing the news, Titu along with 10-12 people entered the madrasa with sticks and beat up the students. They also assaulted

Moshiur Rahman, a teacher of the madrasa as he protested the matter.

Later over 100 students of the madrasa brought out a protest procession at Adampur Bazar on Tuesday afternoon demanding immediate arrest of all attackers.

The assaulted teacher also filed a case accusing four people including Zahid Hossain Titu with Dashmina upazila judicial magistrate court yesterday. The court issued a warrant for arrest of Titu on the same day.

This correspondent tried to contact Titu several times for his views, but his mobile phone was found off.

Traders keep their shutters down to protest attack

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Traders and shopkeepers of Belka bazaar in Sunderganj upazila observed a half-day shutdown yesterday protesting attack on shops by local students on Sunday.

Agitated traders blocked road and brought out a procession demanding punishment of the students who ransacked shops and business establishments causing huge loss to the traders.

After parading the main streets of the town, the protesters held a rally at a road crossing.

Among others, Anisur Rahman, president of Belka Bazar committee, Mahmudul Islam Pramanik, Abdul Karim, Abdul Hannan, Alam Mia and Tara Mia spoke

at the rally.

The speakers called upon the authorities to bring the unruly college students to book within 24 hours, otherwise they would launch greater movement.

The speakers said, over a past few, one Maidul Islam of the area beat up college demonstrator Shamiul Islam on Sunday. Protesting the incident, students of Belka Degree College brought out a procession and went on rampage, damaging several shops at the bazaar.

During the traders' programme, road communication between Belka-Gaibandha-Sunderganj was hampered for about three hours.

Man killed for protesting torture on sister for dowry

A CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur.

A man was murdered on Sunday night as he protested torture on his sister for dowry.

The incident took place at Baradargah Bazaar of Pirgachha upazila.

Victim Tozammel Hossain, 34, was son of Kafir Uddin of Fakira village under Kalyani union in the upazila.

Police and witnesses said, Abdul Baten 35, son of Nocker Uddin of Chhoto Kalyani village of the same union married Nazma Begum 16 years ago.

After the marriage, Baten started torturing his wife for bringing dowry from her parents.

At a stage, Kafir Uddin managed Tk. 45 thousand and gave the amount to Baten.

But Baten demanded Tk. 20 thousand more. As her parents could not arrange it,

Baten began to torture Nazma regularly for the money.

His brother-in-law Tozammel Hossain protested it several times.

On Sunday last, Baten severely beat up Tozammel over the issue leaving him seriously injured at Baradargah Bazaar.

Locals rescued Trammel and rushed him to Pirgachha upazila health complex. As his condition deteriorated, he was referred to Rangpur Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to injuries at night.

Nuruzzaman, uncle of Tozammel Hossain filed a murder case against three people including Baten with Pirgachha police station.

Zahidur Rahman Chowdhury, officer in-charge of Pirgachha PS said they arrested Baten on Monday and court sent him to Rangpur jail.

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS

Outlaw held in Meherpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Police arrested a cadre of an outlawed party and recovered firearms from his possession in Meherpur district. A team from Bamundi police camp, led by SI Osman Gani, raided the house of Kalu Sheikh at Bamundi in Gangni upazila at about 5.30am and arrested Kalu. Police seized a country-made pistol and two bullets from his possession. SI Gani said, Kalu was a cadre of Lal Pataka faction of the outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party. He is also accused in two cases filed with Gangni police station, Gani said.

Primary school torched

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidaha

Unidentified criminals on Tuesday night torched Nishchintapur Bhusan Registered Non-government Primary School under Kaliganj upazila town. Umme Salma, headmistress of the school, said a gang that torched the school had also torched another part of the school on Monday night. Established in 2002, the school has two hundred students. The result of the last class five terminal examinations was very satisfactory, she said. Assistant teacher Mabiya Parvin said, a few local youths play cards in the classroom of the school on holidays. Education officer (TEO) Mostak Ahmed of Kaliganj upazila said he will try to take action against the culprits.

Teenage boy murdered

UNB, Noakhali

Police on Tuesday recovered the decomposed body of a teenage boy who went missing 12 days ago from a field at Char Torab Ali in Subarnachar upazila. The deceased was identified as Riyad, 17, son of Jamal Uddin of Char Boishakhi village in the upazila. Police and locals said, Riyad went out of his house with his motorbike on March 8. Since then, he remained missing. Local people smelt bad odour at a bush in Char Torab Ali area and informed Char Jabbar police station. Later, the law enforcers recovered the body and sent it to Noakhali General Hospital morgue for autopsy.



PHOTO: STAR

An engine of a Rajshahi bound passenger train derailed at Chapainawabganj railway station in the town yesterday morning.

College vandalised for toll

A CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Extortionists on Monday vandalised a workshop of Rangpur City Technical and Business Management College in Tajhat area, on the outskirts of town, demanding Tk one lakh toll. Following the incident Md Asaduzzaman, principal of the college, lodged a case with Kotwali police station on the day. Hearing the news, the criminals yesterday again attacked the college and vandalised classrooms, teacher's room and physically assaulted a few teachers. At this, the students of the college brought out a protest procession yesterday.

Two children drown

A CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Two children drowned in a pond in Pirgachha Sadar upazila of the district on Tuesday afternoon. The victims were identified as Bipasha, 3, daughter of Biplab Miah of Guabari village and Shuva, 3, son of Ashraful Islam of the same village. Police and locals said, both of them were playing beside the pond. At one stage, they slipped into water and drowned as they did not know how to swim. Later locals found the bodies floating in the pond in the evening and recovered them.



PHOTO: STAR

A large number of Hindu devotees throng Madhabkunda in Baralekha upazila under Moulvibazar district to have their yearly holy dip, locally known as Baruni Snan, on Tuesday as the water body created from Madhabkunda waterfall is considered sacred among the community people.