

37 DEEP TUBE-WELLS WITHOUT POWER CONNECTION

3,000 boro farmers denied cheap irrigation

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

Around 3,000 boro farmers in Saidpur upazila under Nilphamari district have to count more than double the usual cost for irrigation this season as 37 government-owned deep tube-wells did not get power connection from the Rural Electrification Board (REB).

The tube-wells belong to Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) and Barind Multipurpose Development Society (BMDS).

Three hundred deep tube-wells, including 225 belonging to BMDC and 75 others of BADC, are in operation in six upazilas of the district in the ongoing boro season for irrigating the command area comprising 24 thousand acres of land, said sources of the Department of Agriculture Extension.

Each of the tube-wells has a capacity to cover 80 acres of land.

Despite sending several request notes, 31 tube-



PHOTO: STAR

A deep tube-well of Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation lies inoperative as the set-up at Kashiram Belpukur union in Saidpur upazila under Nilphamari district did not get electricity connection from the Rural Electrification Board.

wells of BADC and six others of BMDC have not got power connection from Rangpur Palli Bidyut Samity-2 at Paglapir village in neighbouring Rangpur district under the REB, said officials.

As a result, around 5,000

farmers in Khata Modhupur, Kashiram Belpukur, Bangalipur, Kamar Pukur and Botlagari unions of Saidpur upazila are deprived of cheap irrigation in about 3,000 acres of land.

Irrigation in one bigha

(30 decimal) of land with government owned deep tube-well water costs only Tk 800 to Tk 1000 in a season, whereas farmers have to pay Tk 2200 to Tk 2500 for getting water from a private-owned shallow tube-well to irrigate the same area, said farmers Abdul Bari and Al-Amin of Kashiram Belpukur union.

It was not possible to give power connection to 37 deep tube-wells of BADC and BMDC as the existing electric lines cannot transmit the overload power to such a long distance, said Sohrab Hossain, general manager of Rangpur Palli Bidyut Samity-2.

"In collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica), renovation work of the power lines and setting up a new sub-station at Chikli near Saidpur upazila is going on. After its completion, we will be able to give power connection to additional deep tube-wells," he added.

Arms, ammo seized in 4 districts, 9 arrested

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Nine people were arrested with nine firearms and 82 bullets in Jessore, Sunamganj, Joypurhat and Natore districts yesterday and the day before.

In Jessore, members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested five arms traders at Ichhapur village in Sharsha upazila early yesterday, reports our Benapole correspondent.

They also seized three foreign made pistols, 12 petrol bombs, three magazines and 17 bullets from their possession, said Shahed Ahmed, assistant director of Rab-6.

The arrestees are M Mohsin, 35, son of Atiar Rahman, Shafiqul Islam, 26, son of Shamsul Haque, Kenarul Islam, 36, son of Sirajul Islam, Mortazul Haque, 41, son of Harun Mollah, and Abdul Kader, 38, son of Orjit Mian. They all are from Mohosakura village in the upazila.

The elite force, acting on a tip-off, raided the bordering village at around 1:00am and arrested the five along with the arms, bombs and bullets, said the Rab official.

Away in Sunamganj, three firearms and three bullets were seized from Tahirpur and Doarabazar upazilas in the district in the last two days, reports our Moulvibazar correspondent.

Members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) seized a pipegun, two bullets and eight bottles of Indian wine from Charagaon village in Tahirpur upazila early yesterday.

On secret information, the border guards raided the house of Hasan Ali at village in and seized the firearm and bullets.

Meanwhile, Rab arrested a young man along with two revolvers and one bullet in Ambari area under Doarabazar upazila on Saturday.

The arrestee is Tajul Islam, 32, son of Abdul Hamid of Rongarchar village in Sadar upazila, said Major Abdullah Al-Mamun, company commander of Rab-9.

A patrol team of Rab arrested Tajul along with the arms and bullets in the area at around 12:00pm, said the major.

In Joypurhat, two teenage

boys were arrested with a pistol and six bullets at Atapara village in Panchbibi upazila yesterday.

The arrestees are Md Babu, 18, and Md Roky, 18, of the village, reports our Dinajpur correspondent.

A team of Rab-5 in a drive arrested the duo along with the pistol and bullets in the area in the morning.

According to our Natore correspondent, police arrested a man along with a revolver, a pistol, one magazine and 56 bullets in Barogasa area of the district town early Saturday.

The arrestee is Sohel Rana, 35, son of Abul Kalam Azad of the area. He is an accused in several cases, including one for murder, said Superintendent of Police Basudeb Banik.

On secret information, a police team raided Sohel's house on Friday night. Sensing the presence of the law enforcers, he fired four bullets, targeting the law enforcers. However, none was injured.

Later, additional police joined the team and arrested Sohel from his house. They also seized the arms and bullets from there, said the SP.

3 siblings hurt in bomb blast

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bhola

Three siblings were injured as a bomb, which they took for a cricket ball, went off near Charjangla area in Bhola municipality yesterday.

The injured are Jannat, 14, Sufia, 11, and Fatema, 8, daughters of Abul Kalam of the area.

They sustained injuries in hands and legs, said Biswajit Kumar Pal, resident medical officer of Bhola Sadar Hospital.

The three were going to a local maktab (Arabic learning centre) in the area at around 7:00am, said the victims' father.

On the way, they picked up two objects, thinking those were cricket balls wrapped in red scotch tape.

As the siblings started playing with the objects, one of them exploded, leaving the three injured, said police.

They were later rushed to the hospital, said Mobassir Ali, officer-in-charge of Bhola Sadar Police Station.

1 dies, 3 missing in Meghna trawler capsized

A CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

A man died and three others went missing as a trawler capsized in the Meghna River in Ashuganj launch ghat area of the district yesterday morning.

The deceased was identified as Muslim Mian, 50, of Humayurpur village in Bajitpur upazila of Kishoreganj district.

Md Abu Zafar, officer-in-charge of Ashuganj Police Station, said the trawler carrying at least 10 people and a large amount of stationery goods sank in the river at around 7:00am.

On information, police and fire fighters rushed to the spot and salvaged the trawler. They also recovered the body of Muslim Mian.

Six of the passengers managed to swim ashore while the rest three went missing.

Illegal sand lifter fined

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A mobile court yesterday fined a man Tk 10,000 for lifting sand illegally from the bank of the Teesta River at Shibdev Char village in Pirgachha upazila under the district.

The sand lifter is Rafiqul Islam, 50, a hardware trader of Paotana Bazar area in the upazila, police said.

INT'L WOMEN'S DAY IN FRAME



PHOTO: STAR

FROM TOP: Mymensingh district administration in cooperation with several non-governmental organisations bring out a colourful procession in the district town, female students take part in a cycle procession organised by NGO Manob Kalyan Parishad in Thakurgaon town, Rangpur district administration organises a large procession in the city, and women workers form a bahushair at Kachari Bazar Zero Point in the same city, marking International Women's Day yesterday.

Illegally felled sundari logs seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

Members of Bangladesh Coastguard recovered around a hundred illegally felled valuable *sundari* logs in Nesarabad upazila under the district on Saturday.

Tipped off, a team of coastguard from Kawkhali camp in the district raided a trawler anchored on the bank of Boninag canal

linked with the Sandhya River in Nesarabad upazila around 12:30pm, seized the logs there and took it to Kawkhali in the evening, coastguard sources said.

"Thieves kept these logs for sale. As no one was found in the trawler, we could not arrest anyone in this connection. We have informed the forest department for measuring the logs," said Md Abul

Hossain, chief petty officer of coastguard in Kawkhali.

A section of people often illegally fell *sundari* trees in the Sundarbans and bring those to Nesarabad upazila that sees large-scale sale of logs.

Setting surveillance teams in the Balshwar River and near Majher Char in Mathbaria upazila of Pirojpur is essential to save valuable trees in the Sundarbans, said a forest official.



PHOTO: STAR

Coastguard members seized around a hundred logs of *sundari* trees from a canal in Nesarabad upazila under Pirojpur district on Saturday. The trees had been illegally felled in the Sundarbans.

PABNA, LAXMIPUR

Ex-UP member, farmer hacked to death

STAR COUNTRY DESK

A former union parishad (UP) member and a farmer were hacked to death by unidentified gangs in Pabna and Laxmipur districts on Saturday night.

Our Pabna correspondent reported that police recovered the body of Md Mukul Hossain, 48, ex-member of Nandanpur Union Parishad in Santhia upazila, from Daramridha village in the morning.

Mukul went out of his house at the village at around 6:00pm on Saturday and did not return at night.

Officer-in-Charge

Shahed Mahmud of Santhia Police Station said Mukul might have been killed by outlaws as he severed links with outlawed Nakshal Bahini a few years ago.

"We are investigating the murder and trying to arrest the culprits involved," the OC said.

In Laxmipur, farmer Md Hasundul Ahammed, 40, of Abandai village in Sadar upazila was hacked to death the same night.

Police arrested three people of the village, suspecting their involvement in the killing. The arrestees are Mostafiz, Nasrin Akhter

and Abul Hassain. They are from the same village, reports our Noakhali correspondent.

Alim's son Rakib Hossain said unknown criminals swooped on his father while he was returning home from local Basubazar at around 10:00pm.

They hacked him with sharp weapons and left the scene, Rakib said, adding that his father succumbed to his injuries on way to Laxmipur Sadar Hospital.

Assistant Police Superintendent Junayet Kawser said Alim's body bore stab injury marks.

Drug addict son handed over to police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A widowed mother handed over her drug addict son to police in Birampur upazila of the district yesterday.

Mezbaul Hossain, 27, son of late Abdul Karim of Doshra Palashbari village, used to torture his mother Rehana Begum for realising money to buy drugs, said family sources.

Yesterday morning, Mezbaul beat up his mother as she refused to give the money, said Md Amiruzzaman, officer-in-charge of Birampur Police Station.

Being informed by mother, police rushed to the spot and arrested the son.