

NEWS SNAPS

Warm clothes for cold-hit people

UNB, Thakurgaon

Muslim Aid Bangladesh, a non-government organisation (NGO), has started distribution of warm clothes among cold-hit people in 11 northern districts.

The NGO officials said warm clothes worth Tk 50 lakh will be distributed in Thakurgaon, Panchagarh, Gaibandha, Dinajpur, Nilphamari, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Pabna, Rangpur, Bogra and Rajshahi districts.

Tk 19.47 cr bridge construction project

UNB, Netrakona

Two bridges will be constructed in Netrakona at a cost of Tk.

Officials said a 224-metre bridge would be constructed at Shuknakundi on Birishiri-Shishong-Durgapur road at a cost of Tk 10.45 cr while a 299-metre bridge at Shomeshwari on Brishiri-Purbadhola-Shyamganj road costing Tk 9.02 cr.

Two alleged robbers nabbed

UNB, Brahmanbaria

Police arrested two alleged armed robbers in army uniform from the town Monday night.

The arrested were identified as Mohsin of village Noapara and Qudus of village Atta. Police said Mohsin was arrested from Kancharpur and Qudus from Kachhait areas.

Two 'bandits' caught

UNB, Keraniganj

Villagers caught two alleged armed robbers at Ikuria Pashchimpara Monday night.

Police said the villagers caught Arshad, 30, and Montu, 28, while they were preparing to commit robbery in the area along with their other associates.

The youths were later handed over to police after a mass beating. They were being treated at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in police custody.

Illegal drugs recovered

UNB, Brahmanbaria

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) troops recovered huge drugs, including Indian phensidyl, worth over Tk 2 lakh from an inter-city train here Monday night.

The BDR personnel raided the Dhaka-bound Upaban Express from Sylhet at local railway station in presence of a magistrate. They recovered 400 bottles of phensidyl, 37 kgs of hemp and 2,000 tablets.

Irrigation project in Gopalganj stalled for years together

ALIMUZZAMAN MIAH, Gopalganj

The Madaripur Bell Route (MBR) Project of Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB), Gopalganj is yet to be fully implemented. Only about 50 per cent work of the project has been completed.

As a result about 20 acres of land remain uncultivated every year depriving thousands of farmers in Gopalganj and Madaripur districts of modern method of cultivation.

If the project is completely implemented a vast tract of area in Gopalganj and Madaripur districts will be saved from flood waters resulting in production of three-crore maunds of surplus food meeting the demand of two-crore people of the southern region of the country.

Twenty lakh people of the two aforesaid districts will be protected from the scourge of flood. The two districts will be brought under massive fish cultivation. A good boat communication can be established among the people of the two districts and growers will be able to cultivate crops on the same land three times a year.

About 10 lakh cultivators in Kotwalipara upazila, eight unions of Gopalganj Sadar upazilla, one union in Muktudpur upazilla and three unions in Rajoir upazilla will be directly benefited.

About 100 years ago the British government adopted the MBR project. During that period embankments on the northwest and southern side of the project site were

constructed while 18 sluice gates were completed.

During the regime of Pakistani rulers no work on the project was done. After the independence of Bangladesh, five lock-cum-sluice gates were constructed.

In 1975 the project was submitted anew to the authorities concerned, but it is yet to be approved and implemented.

In the new plan there was a provision for 38-kilometre embankment and five wide lock-cum-sluice gates, three sluice gates, 138-kilometre.

Usually in the rainy season flood waters through the Ghagar River inundates vast areas of land and damage crops. In dry season irrigation is being hampered. Because of absence of proper drainage as well as sewerage system the cultivators are losing huge crops every year.

There are many low-lying areas in the project site. Here lobsters can be cultivated with the help of "Lagshai Project". The lands in the project area are very fertile. The dwellers around the project area are poor. They live from hand to mouth. Most of them earn a living through fishing and cultivation. They live on "Shaluk" and "Dhyap." There is no facility of modern cultivation. If the project is implemented, their fate can be changed.

No land will be damaged for the completion of the rest 50 per cent work of the project. The construction of the embankment will be done with soil of the canals.

The FODI project was pending at DPS-2 of ADB under the Ministry of Water Resources. During the previous regime people's representatives met at the office and urged the authorities concerned for immediate implementation of the project.

The Minister-in-Charge of Water Resources assured them implementation of the project. The BWDB officials are very eager to implement the MBR project. On August 7, 1999 the chief engineer of BWDB, Gopalganj paid a visit to various parts of Kotwalipara for examining the prospect of the project. The project is greater than the Meghna-Dhanagada project and has a brighter future.

Twenty lakh people of Gopalganj and Madaripur districts are still hopeful that the project will draw the attention of the Prime Minister and their heartfelt demand will be fulfilled.

A town of posters



PHOTOS: HOSSAIN SERAJ

After nine years, election to Magura Pourashava (a municipality) will be held on January 18. Legal complication was the reason behind the stalemate. At present a hectic campaign is going on all around the district town. Three candidates named Khan Monwar Hossain (BNP led 4-party alliance), Abdul Gafur (Awami League) and Iqbal Akhter Khan (Independent) are in the race for chairmanship of the municipality. Their supporters have pasted colourful posters, festoons and constructed large size election symbols everywhere in the municipality area to draw attention of 45,243 voters in nine wards. The entire municipality is now vibrating with electioneering.

Boat carrying police capsizes in Meghna

UNB, Munshiganj

A mechanised boat, carrying police, capsized in the Meghna River in Gozaria upazila as it was hit by a cargo Monday night.

Three policemen were injured in the accident. They were admitted to local hospital.

Witnesses said the cargo hit the boat at Ismanirchar and then sped away.

Three tribals with firearms caught

UNB, Khagrachhari

Local people caught three alleged tribal criminals along with firearms at Lalchhari in Ramgarh upazila Saturday.

Police said the three tribal men -- Bikash Chakma, 20, of Matiranga upazila and Aongajai Marma, 32, of Lalchhari in Ramgarh -- were caught as they terrorised a villager brandishing firearms. They were handed over to police.

36000 MTs of wheat output target fixed in Mymensingh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), Mymensingh has taken up a massive programme of rabi crops cultivation this year.

The rabi crops included wheat, maize, potato, mustard, onion, garlic and ginger.

According to DAE sources, wheat will be cultivated on 16000 hectares of land, with a production target of 36000 metric tons (MTs) of wheat in all 12 upazilas of the district this year.

The DAE sources said, 1200 hectares of land will be brought under wheat cultivation with a production target of 2700 MTs of wheat in Sadar upazila, 1500 hectares in Muktagachha with a production target of 3375 MTs, 2500 hectares in Phulbaria with a production target of 5625 MTs, 1000 hectares in

Trishal with a target of 2250 MTs, 800 hectares in Bhabluka with a target of 1800 MTs, 1000 hectares in Gafargaoan with a production target of 2250 MTs, 2250 hectares in Nandail with a production target of 5625 MTs, 1000 hectares in Ishwarganj with a target of 2250, 800 hectares in Gouripur with a production target of 1800 MTs, 1500 hectares in Phulpur with a target of 3375 MTs, 1400 hectares in Haluaghat with a production target of 3150 MTs while 800 hectares in Dhobaura upazila with a production target of 1800 MTs of wheat.

According to DAE officials, 6000 hectares of land will be brought under cultivation of mustard with a production target of 4800 MTs, 900 hectares for maize cultivation aiming at a production of 4050 MTs, 500 hectares of land for potato cultivation fixing a production target

of 3500 MTs, 1000 hectares for sweet potato cultivation targeting a production of 10,000 MTs, 500 hectares for ground nut cultivation with a target of producing 750 MTs, Musur on 600 hectares with a production target of 432 MTs, onion on 1000 hectares of land with a production target of 8500 MTs, 800 hectares for garlic fixing a production target of 4800 MTs, chili on 4000 hectares with a target of production of 8000 MTs, ginger on 500 hectares with a target of 3500 MTs, turmeric on 800 hectares with a target of 6400 MTs.

However, DAE has so far distributed 8,18,000 saplings of different varieties against its target 8,73,307 in the ongoing season of tree plantation this year. Of them, 6,20,000 are saplings of fruits bearing trees while 31,000 are herbal sapling, added DAE sources.



PHOTO: STAR

Minister for Posts and Telecommunications Barrister M Aminul Haque hands over a certificate to a meritorious student of Rajshahi University at a function at the Senate building of the university on January 11. Meritorious students of the university and different medical colleges received awards and certificates on the occasion of the Agrani Bank Gold Medal awarding ceremony on the day.

Agrani Bank Gold Medal for RU talents

RU CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The Agrani Bank gold medal and various university trophies were distributed among the meritorious students of Rajshahi University (RU) in a formal ceremony held at the campus on Saturday.

The Agrani Bank Gold Medal was given to the meritorious students who can secure the first position among the first class firsts in a faculty. At least 25 student of various sessions were awarded with the Agrani bank gold Medal for their

outstanding results.

Each of them was given a gold medal worth Tk 5000. Among the 25 students, 12 were selected for their outstanding results in their honors course of the years -- 1995 and 1996 while 10 were selected for their Masters course results in the years 1994 and 1995, one student was chosen from LLM course of 1996 and two were selected from the MBBS course of May, 1998 and September, 2000.

The different university trophies are 'Akbar Hossain Scholar' award worth Tk 15000, 'University Trophy' worth Tk 1500 for honours, Tk 2000 for masters and Tk 6000 for more than 73 per cent mark carriers in masters, 'Dr AK Khan Gold Medal' worth Tk 5000, 'Nur Zahan Nesa' worth Tk 1500, Dr Momtaz Uddin Ahmad gold medal, 'Muhammad Ismail Memorial Stipend', 'Rehana Mahtab Scholarship' and 'Sayeeda Khatun Merit Scholarship'. At least 122 students were chosen for these awards.

Post and telecommunication minister Md. Aminul Haque was present at the ceremony as the chief guest while Rajshahi City Corporation Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu as the special guest with the vice chancellor Professor Faisal Islam Faruki in the chair.

Professor Murshida Ferdous Binte Habib of the Psychology department conducted the ceremony.