

NEWS SNAPS

Girl commits suicide

UNB, Jhalakati

A girl allegedly committed suicide at College Road area of the town on Thursday.

Police said Tania Akhter, 15, a student of class X and daughter of Shariful Islam, killed herself by hanging from a ventilator. Earlier, her mother rebuked Tania when she found a love letter written by her neighbour Mehedi Hasan.

Body recovered

UNB, Jhalakati

Body of an unidentified woman was recovered from behind Bhojanipur School in Nalchhiti upazila on Wednesday.

Five liquor traders held

UNB, Benapole

Five liquor traders were arrested from different parts of the district on Thursday.

The arrested were identified as Noor Islam, Kubad Hossain, Nunu, Suman and Sirajul Islam. Police also recovered 2 kilograms of hemp from Sirajul.

Two arrested with magnet pin

UNB, Benapole

Police arrested two people - Abdur Rashid and Rezaul - with magnet pin from Kolaroa.

Rice for rural uplift

BSS, Joypurhat

The government has allocated a total of 402 tons of rice for Joypurhat under the Test Relief (TR) programme to the current fiscal.

The rice will be utilised soon for the rural infrastructure maintenance programme, official sources said.

Valuables looted

UNB, Manikganj

Highway robbers looted valuables worth about Tk 6 lakh from the passengers of a night coach on Dhaka-Archa highway on Thursday leaving a number of passengers injured.

The bandits numbering 7/8 got into the Jessore-bound bus in the guise of passengers and looted the valuables at gunpoint.

UP polls candidates use forged currency notes to buy votes in N dists

UNB, Sirajganj

Forged currency notes have flooded various places of 16 northern districts creating trouble for buyers and sellers in their transaction.

The forged notes are being used in purchasing votes in the union parishad elections.

Different commercial institutions, including nationalised and private banks and insurance companies, in the region have already taken pre-cautionary measures in the backdrop of the problem.

An organised gang has become active in the area ahead of Eid-ul-Azha since the middle of last month to supply forged notes.

The anti-social elements are supplying the notes of Tk 500, 100, 50 and 20 denominations at various hats and bazaars of rural areas.

Their illegal trading of fake note was boosted with starting of the UP polls.

Agents appointed by the criminal gangs are supplying illegal notes among the villagers with special commission.

Some of the candidates in the UP polls are also giving illegal notes to the voters tactfully in a bid to buy votes.

The fake notes are also being used in a large scale in buying and selling of sacrificial animals in the cattle markets.

Bank officials said the illegal notes are being supplied after printing those in India.

The officials said the notes are printed in such a way that general people could not differentiate those with the genuine ones.

Over 50 fake note suppliers were arrested in the region during the last few months.



A villager catches fish from a shrimp enclosure in a typical manner in Satkhira. Fish culture in shrimp enclosures is a common phenomenon. PHOTO: A K M MOHSIN



(Left) Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman offers 'munajat' after laying the foundation stone of Shahporan Bridge in Sylhet on Thursday. (Right) The design of the bridge which is likely to be completed within two years under Sylhet-Tamabil-Jafiong Road Development Programme. PHOTO: STAR

Motivation, rights awareness, unity of poor change social scenario in Bogra villages

BSS, Bogra

Simple motivation, rights awareness and unity of the poor have visibly changed the social scenario in villages here.

Most veiled women or ignored men have become the guiding force in governance and resource generation in local level.

They are becoming elected representatives in Union Parishad (UP), identifying problems, fixing development strategies, undertaking income generation projects. They are making the authorities concerned accountable to the people at grass-roots.

"Never did I think I would be an elected (UP) member unopposed," said Khaleda Begum of village Uttarpara in Dupchachia upazila here. Her husband is a rickshaw puller in Dhaka. She believes her rights awareness and changed social outlook in the past one year earned her the position.

Khaleda's lone rival, an affluent housewife withdrew herself from the race at Zianagar UP fearing a confirmed defeat. Khaleda, however, was courteous enough in showing respect to her opponent. Soon after the result, she visited her rival's house with homemade sweets.

Hossainpur union of Gobindganj in neighbouring Gaibandha district saw all new faces as UP members in

all its nine wards. Most of them are from vulnerable section of society but aware of their rights, duties and capabilities.

"None of the former members came out this time as they could not fulfil people's expectations. The party politics or money power did not work here," said elderly Syed Ahmed, a small tailoring shop owner in the village. Only the former chairman of the union has been re-elected because he was smart enough to follow the change in people's outlook, Ahmed added.

The people of Shahapur UP in Gaibandha have planted 120,000 saplings of various types giving the entire area a forest-like look in the past two years. They are expecting a return of 10 crore taka in next 10 years.

The changed scenario was the outcome of an experimental project "Building Union Infrastructure for Local Development" or "BUILD" being carried out by CARE Bangladesh in 150 unions across the country. Some 45,000 people at grassroots, 1,950 elected representatives including 450 women and 150 UP secretaries are directly benefited through training and motivation.

CARE workers said they facilitate formation of a group of 34 in every of the nine wards of a union Forty per cent of its members are women, 40 per cent representing vulnerable or poor section and the rest 20 others

are village elite. They are elected or nominated as village representatives in open meetings of villagers.

The group members, who call themselves stakeholders, meet at least once in a month in their court-yards to discuss their individual or collective issues, plan income generation projects and even settle their family problems.

BUILD also effectively involve UP chairman members and employees like UP secretaries and village police under the programme. BUILD imparts training to make them aware of their mandatory duties and authorities and build a bridge between people and the elected representatives.

"Previously like all others we thought that distribution of relief wheat to be our lone responsibility," said Zulfiqar Mahmud Khosru referring to a recent newspaper report that only five per cent of the UP chairman were aware of only 50 per cent of their scopes and responsibilities. Thanks to the BUILD, he said, now everybody knows "what are my resources and what I am doing."

"Unless such capacity building projects are replicated in all unions of the country, the campaign for strengthening local government bodies will remain just slogans," said upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of Bogra.

Man hurt in bomb blast in Munshiganj

UNB, Munshiganj

A 35-year old man was injured in a bomb blast in the local bus stand area in the town Thursday night.

The injured, Dhiren Mondal, was admitted to sadar hospital in a critical state.

The crude bomb went off at about 7:30pm panicking the people who ran helter-skelter for safety.

Two shot dead by robbers in Gazipur

UNB, Gazipur

Two villagers were shot dead and seven others injured by a gang of robbers in Kaliganj upazila Thursday night.

The victims were identified as Bakku Morol, 40, and Andres, 57, of Nagri village.

Police said the robbers opened fire on villagers when they chased them after a robbery at a house in the village. Nine villagers suffered injuries in the attack.

With critical injuries, Bakku Morol and Andres were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where they died.

Tk 1 crore BKB loan yet to be realised

UNB, Dinajpur

Alleged negligence of a certificate assistant results in non-realisation of agricultural loan of a bank amounting to one crore taka.

Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB), Fulbari branch could not realise its outstanding loan of over one crore taka due to negligence of the certificate assistant.

Bank officials said they are sending files to lodge certificate cases against the defaulters and issuance of auction notice for mortgaged assets in some cases to realise outstanding loan. But due to mysterious reasons, the certificate assistant is not taking appropriate measures.

They said only 60 certificate cases were filed against the outstanding loan of one crore taka of Fulbari branch and 45 cases against 18 lakh taka of Barai branch.

One killed by 'brother' in Bagerhat

UNB, Bagerhat

An aged man was killed allegedly by his younger brother over family feud at a remote village in Mongla on Wednesday.

Police said Chan Mia Bepari of Baiddamari village locked into a quarrel with his elder Shajahan Bepari, 65, and at one stage he killed him on the spot.

Police arrested Chan Mia next day.

The body was sent to hospital morgue for autopsy.

Unabated erosion by Kushiya

UNB, Sylhet

Hundreds of acres of land in six unions of Golapganj upazila disappeared into the Kushiya River in the last few years.

As a consequence many people became homeless.

Shops, schools, dwelling houses and a vast tract of crop lands in Budhbari bazaar, Amura, Badepasha, Badeshwar, Sharifganj and Dhakadakhin unions were devoured by the river.

But no initiative has yet been taken to protect the area from river erosion. Many people have left their villages as erosion has taken a serious turn.

Movement of BRTC buses forcibly stopped in 3 districts

UNB, Bagerhat

Bus owners associations of three southern districts forcibly stopped plying of Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) buses running on two routes in the region.

The bus owners of Khulna, Bagerhat and Pirojpur districts forcibly stopped movement of the state-run vehicles on the eve of Eid-ul-Azha.

BRTC buses were held up at the local bus terminal Friday morning halting bus movement on Khulna-Bagerhat-Dhaka and Bagerhat-Pirojpur routes.

Hundreds of homebound passengers are facing serious trouble following the sudden stoppage of the buses.

People availed of the facility of

BRTC buses to travel comparatively at cheaper rate and without harassment.

Fertiliser, seeds for farmers

UNB, Madaripur

Department of Agriculture Extension under its flood rehabilitation programme has started providing fertilisers and seeds among the flood-affected farmers of the district.

Official sources said the department was providing fertilisers and seeds among 880 flood-affected marginal farmers free of cost to help them recoup their crop losses.

The farmers will cultivate boro paddy, wheat, groundnut, mustard seeds, potato, maize and winter vegetables on their crop lands.