

SNAPS

Smuggled sub-standard cement

BSS, Chapainawabganj
Smuggled sub-standard cement from across the border has flooded markets in the district.

Violating rules, a section of dishonest traders are smuggling in such cement from India.

Houses built with these cement may collapse any time, construction workers fear.

People are deceived as they are not aware of supply of adulterated and sub-standard cement in markets.

Deed writers

rally held

A CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali
Deed writers held a rally in front of the deputy Commissioner and brought out a procession in the town on Thursday demanding cancellation of the Registration Act, 1908.

They also submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner.

Patuakhali unit of Deed Writers Association organised the programmes.

'Suicide is no solution'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari
The International Day for Protecting Repression on Women was observed here yesterday.

Durban Network Programme, a local NGO organised a press conference at the Nilphamari Press Club to mark the day.

The speakers in a written statement said 'suicide is no solution. They urged women to face life with courage.'

Prominent among the speakers were Nargis Rebeka Khanam and LN Rokeya.

BSF hands over body to BDR

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira
The body of a Bangladeshi, allegedly killed by Indians on October 14 at a bordering village, was handed over to BDR by BSF on Friday following a flag meeting.

Habitur Rahman, 15, son of Hazrat Ali of South Bhadiari village in Kalaroa upazila was called out of his house by some persons. He was missing since then.

BSF later recovered his partially decomposed body from near the border.

On the victim's father request, BDR asked BSF to return the body.

On receipt of the body, BDR handed it over to police, who sent it to Satkhira hospital for autopsy.

27 years RI for keeping arms

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

One persons has been sentenced to 27 years RI for possessing illegal arms.

Special Tribunal Judge AMM Sayeed handed down the punishment to Ensan Ali, 32, of Kuptola village under Gibandhan sadar upazila. The verdict was pronounced in absentia.

Police raided his house on June 22, 1997 and recovered a shutter gun, eleven bullets and police uniform.

He was given 20 years RI under Section 19 (A) and seven years RI under Section 19 (F) of the Arms act.

BAU roundtable on India's river-link project told

Bangladesh will lose 80 pc surface water

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Experts at a roundtable at Bangladesh Agricultural University in Mymensingh said Bangladesh will turn into a desert if India implements its river-link project.

Renowned hydrologists, agronomists, geologists and farm specialists highlighted the impact of the project on environment, soil, ecology, cropping systems and the livestock.

They called for creating public awareness and forging a national unity irrespective of political affiliations to campaign abroad to compel India not to unilaterally divert waters of international rivers.

Hydrologist Prof Dr L R Khan of the department of Irrigation and Water Management presented the keynote paper.

The discussants included Prof Dr Md Samsul Alam; Prof Dr SM Altaf Hossain of Agronomy department, farming system specialist; Prof Dr Md Shahjahan Ali of Agri-Chemistry

department; Prof Dr Md Hasanzaman of Irrigation and Water Management; aquatic ecologist Prof Dr Md Abdul Wahab of Fisheries Management.

Shaheed Zia Gobeshona Parishad organised the roundtable recently. It was presided over by Prof Dr Md Iqbal hossain, President of BAU Zia Gobeshona Parishad.

Prof LR Khan said the Ganes/Padma basin contributes 15 per cent of the surface water resources in Bangladesh while the Brahmaputra/Jamuna basin accounts for 65 per cent.

In total, 80 per cent of the surface water come through the two international river systems originating from the Himalays and passing through Nepal, Bhutan, and India.

The Brahmaputra contains 1520 trillion cubic metres (TCM) of water (65 per cent of the total surface water of Bangladesh). If India implements its project, 1340 TCM water (approximately 90 percent) will be diverted,

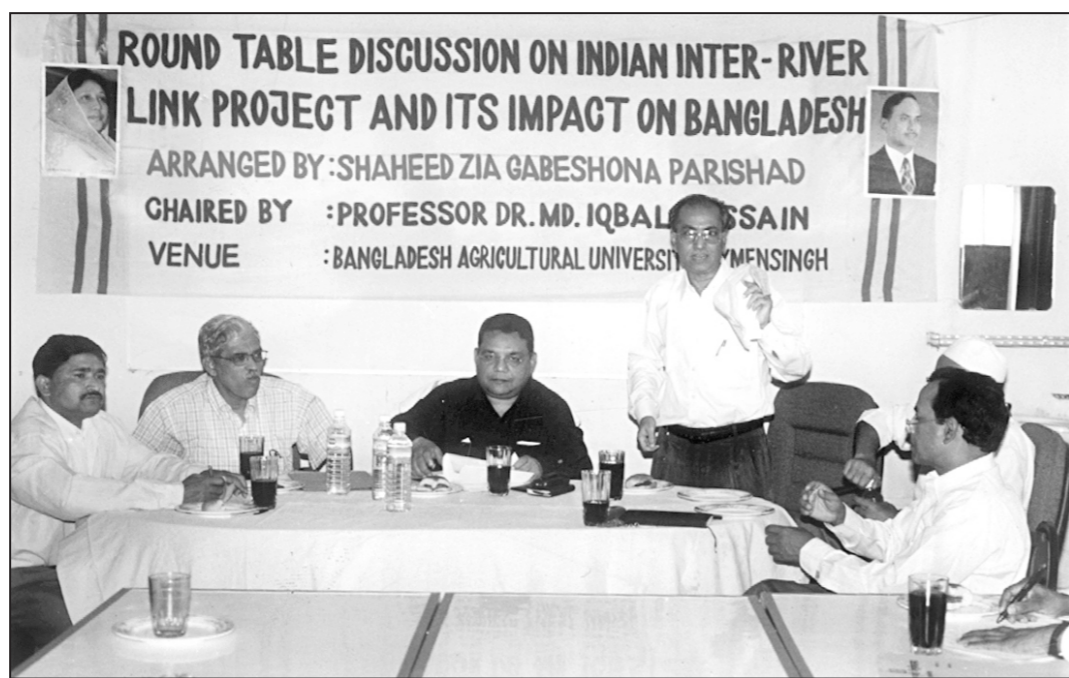
which means Bangladesh will lose about 60 per cent of its surface water.

Prof Dr SM Altaf Hossain pointed out that underground water will also dry up, destroying the flora and fauna including cereal crops, vegetables, fruits, fisheries and livestock. Salinity will increase in the coastal regions and crop production will be heavily affected.

Prof Dr Md Shahjahan Ali, a renowned agricultural chemist, said withdrawal of water will increase contamination of the underground water with heavy metals. Arsenic contamination has already posed a serious problem, he said.

Prof Dr Md Abdus Samad of Animal Science department said livestock will be seriously affected because the ecology will be damaged.

Dr Md Bahnur Rahman, general secretary of BAU Teachers Council expressed his concern that Bangladesh will be turned into a desert if India implement the anti-environmental



A roundtable on India's river-link project and its impact on Bangladesh was held recently at Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh under the aegis of Shaheed Zia Gobeshona Parishad.

Rupsha Bridge may open next year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Rupsha Bridge is expected to be opened for traffic by November next year.

According to Rupsha Bridge Project (RBP) authorities, despite a lot of hurdles including security problem, at least seventy percent work of the project has been completed.

The remaining work will be done before November next year, the scheduled time, they said.

The RBP authorities expressed satisfaction at the progress of work.

Construction of 700 out of 1200 slabs required for the approach

bridge have been completed. Two out of eight pile caps are under construction, while all pillars of the bridge have been constructed, they said.

There is no problem in getting funds. The government has already given Tk 34 crore out of 70 crore during the current financial year, they said.

Construction of the Tk 100 crore 17 kilometre long Khulna bypass road started this year and will be completed within the scheduled time, they said.

The work was delayed by 18 months, due to bureaucratic tangles.

Outlaw killed in Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

An outlawed party cadre was murdered in Kotchandpur of the district on Thursday.

Police sources said Ali Hossain Mandal, 32, a cadre of Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) was shot and slain near Senpara village under Kotchandpur upazila on Thursday evening.

The victim was returning home from Jalalpur Bazaar. When he reached near Senpara, a gang of armed men numbering four to five shot him and slain him. Internal feud might have caused the murder, police said.

A case was filed with Kotchandpur police by the wife of the dead, Jayeda Khatun. The body was sent to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

None was arrested.

Police-pirates clash in Meghna, cop among 4 hurt

A CORRESPONDENT, Bhola

Three pirates and a policeman received bullet injuries in a gunfight between police and pirates in the Meghna on Thursday late night.

The injured policeman was identified as Jibon Krishna, 26, while the bullet-hit pirates were Rafiq, Mehedi and Bubul.

Fishermen Bazlu, Hannan, Mainuddin and Salam were fishing in a fishing boat in the Meghna near Bhabanipur shoal when a group of pirates led by Joynal Speaker attacked the boat and hijacked it.

Being informed Daulat Khan thana police led by its Officer-in-Charge (OC) rushed there and fired 60 gunshots. Police caught three bullet-hit pirates while other pirates fled away.

Police recovered the boat and a pipe gun from the arrested pirates.

Additional Police Super (ASP) of Bhola visited the spot.

Meeting on bank loan to shoal area people

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A view-exchange meeting on providing bank loans to poor men and women in shoal areas was held at the Gano Unnayan Kendro on Thursday.

The meeting was sponsored by Oxfam, an international NGO.

Presided over by M Abdus Salam, Chief Executive of Gano Unnayan Kendro, the meeting was attended by bankers, journalists, Union Parishad (UP) members and NGO man.

The speakers criticised banks for working out a mechanism to provide loans to the poor. Sheer profit motive should not guide any business institution, they said.

Phulpur UP member Anser Ali Mondal said, "We feel hopeless when banks deny loans to people of char lands (shoals). Such attitude should be changed".

Another UP member Miajan Ali said people of char lands borrow money from moneylenders at interest rates as high as Tk 200 per month for Tk 1000 loan.

Of late, some NGOs have started giving them loans in a limited scale, but also on high interest.

The bankers said they would try to evolve a mechanism to provide loan to char land people.

2 killed by outlaws

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chuadanga

Two persons were slaughtered at Gobindohuda cluster village in Damurhuda upazila Thursday evening allegedly by outlaws belonging to Purbo Banglar Communist Party (Jonajuddho).

The victims are Hobi, 24 son of Abdus Sattar and Selim, 25 son of Kalu district.

Police said the two were playing carom when some youths came. They dragged them few yards away and slaughtered them.

The Chuadanga Police Superintendent and the officer-in-charge of Darmurhuda police station visited the spot. None could be arrested till yesterday.

Three hurt as police, outlaws clash in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

At least three persons were injured in fierce clash between police and outlaws on Thursday morning in Rupsha upazila of Khulna district.

The wounded are yet to be identified.

A group of 15 armed cadres of Janajuddho faction of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) went to Naithati union under Rupsha upazila on Wednesday midnight for carrying out a criminal operation. But they failed due to strong resistance by police and Village Defence Party (VDP).

PBCP cadres exploded two powerful hand bombs and fired several shots during the encounter, eye witnesses said. But they fled away when a large number of villagers joined police and VDP members.

Police Super (SP) Habibur Rahman admitted the fact. Two rounds of rifle bullets were recovered from the spot, he disclosed.

No let-up in diarrhoea

Four more killed, over 300 attacked in

Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Four more persons died of diarrhoea and over 300 were attacked with the disease in Nilphamari Dalmonirhat districts in the last four days.

Our Nilphamari correspondent reported that with two more deaths, the toll is now 50.

The two dead are Ashful Begum, 22, of Nauapara village under Saidpur upazila and Kohinor Begum, 31, of Battala village in ther Sadar upazila.

According to the district health department control room, 179 diarrhoea patients were admitted to the six upazila health complexes and the Sadar Hospital and another 321 were treated there.

Diarrhoea is showing no sign of let-up as the number of patients coming to hospitals daily remains by and large the same.

In seven days from September 28 to October 4, three persons died and 432

were admitted to hospitals. In seven days from October 24 to 30, two died and 402 were admitted.

The control room says 60,663 people have so far been attacked with diarrhoea till October 30 since it broke out this year.

Many of the patients vomit blood, which shows the disease is not typical diarrhoea, doctors said.

There are allegations of irregularities at hospitals though special inspection teams have been formed by the district health department to oversee treatment facilities.

During a visit to Jaldhaka upazila health complex Thursday morning, this correspondent did not find any doctor there. Only one nurse was looking after patients, also lying on the floor without any mat amid vomit and stool.

The situation in Nilphamari Sadar Hospital was slightly better.

Patients were seen lying on the floor but a sweeper was cleaning it. Two nurses were on duty.

"We can not provide bed to every one because of rush of patients. We try to keep the hospital clean", RMO (resident medical officer) Dr Khoshrud Alam said.

A Lalmonirhat correspondent reported that a monir boy and a woman died from diarrhoea on Friday, raising the toll to 26 in the last three weeks.

The dead are Maleka Begum, 30, of Mahisamuri village under Kaligonj upazila and Ashraf, 3, son of Eaham Ali of Jalangi village in Patgram upazila.

Sources said at least 150 people have been attacked in the two upazilas. When contacted Civil Surgeon Dr Sohrab Hossain Sarker said the diarrhoea situation in Lalmonirhat is under control and there was no shortage of saline and other medicines for patients.

1200 marooned in Satkhira

Food, drinking water crises in 15 villages; diarrhoea breaks out

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Over 12,000 people are marooned in 15 villages in Kalaroa upazila as floodwater from Kabodak river remained stagnant there for over three weeks.

Many of the affected people have left homes and taken shelter on high lands and at educational institutions.

Diarrhoea and other water-borne diseases have broken out in the villages due to crisis of food and drinking water.

Local people told this correspondent during a visit on Thursday that over 250 people, most of them children, have been attacked with diarrhoea.

The affected villages include Khan Para, Malo Para, Sardar Para, Kanda Para, Karikar Para, Gazi Para Jelepura Kamar Para, Kashiadanga, Nath Para, Kashiadanga, Khetra Para, Bamankhali, Joyknagar, Jalalabad and Jugikhali.

Most of the markets in the area are also under 3-4 feet water.

Local people and political leaders have appealed for immediate government help. If food and drinking water can not be supplied, diarrhoea will spread, they said.

Crops on over 3000 acres of land and many shrimp farms have reeled under floodwater.

When contacted Kalaroa Upazila Nirbahi Officer Laxman Chandra Devnath said the situation will no improve unless the water-logging problem is removed.

People-transport owners stand-off

Rally at Jaintapur today for resumption of BRTC service

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet.

After hectic mass contact programmes, a rally is being held at Jaintapur upazila headquarter today demanding resumption of BRTC bus service on the Sylhet-Tamabil-Jafflong route.

The Brihattar Jainta Samannaya Samity is holding the rally.

BRTC service was withdrawn in September following strike by private sector transport owners and workers.

But people of Jauntapur, Kanaighat and Gowainghat in greater Jainta region are agitating for resumption of BRTC bus service.

Ahead of today's meeting, the Samity and different local socio-cultural organisations organised a number of mass contact programmes in different bazaars and important places in the last five days.

Leaders of these organisations said fresh agitation programmes would be announced at the rally.

On the other hand, the transport owners and workers have threatened that they would not allow plying of BRTC buses outside the city.

The people of the three upazilas continued boycott of bus and mini-bus services demanding resumption of BRTC service.

They started the boycott on 13th October on Sylhet-Jaintapur, Sylhet-Kanaighat and Sylhet-Gowainghat roads protesting the "unwanted activities" by owners and workers of bus and minibuses.

The Samity last week decided to continue the boycott. The meeting was also addressed by a number of political leaders of all parties and chairmen of different Union Parishads of the three upazilas.

Besides, ruling party MP Dilder Hossain Selim, Director (Administration) of BRTC, Shahjahan Talukder also spoke at the meeting. They assured BRTC service in the route.

2 mysterious deaths in Khulna in 2 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two mysterious deaths occurred on Thursday night in Khulna city and Rupsha upazila of the district.

Sonadanga Police recovered the body of Noor Nahar, 25, wife of Nazrul Islam.

Police said she was strangled by her husband. Nazrul Islam was taken into custody.

Noor Nahar was beaten by her husband on Thursday midnight, according to her neighbours. The dead body bore marks of injuries and strangulation. Alleged killer Nazrul Islam is a rickshaw puller.

In another incident, Rupsha Police recovered the body of Selina, 17, daughter of Khatib Morol of Khajura village on Friday.

Parents said that Selina had committed suicide. But her neighbours alleged that she had been beaten to death. Khatib Morol was arrested by Rupsha Police for questioning.

Doc fired for negligence in duty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cg

A private hospital was forced to fire one of its doctors following his alleged negligence in attending a dying patient on Thursday.

Sources said Joynal Abedin was admitted to Metropolitan Hospital Private Limited last week with respira-

tory problems.

As his condition deteriorated Thursday night, his relatives asked for on-duty doctor Noor Mohammad, but he did not visit Abedin at all. Also, there was no other doctor available at the hospital even to issue a death certificate when Abedin died at 1:00am on Friday.

Angry relatives held up the hospital

ambulance that carried the body to the deceased's house.

Later, the death certificate was obtained from one of the hospital directors. The ambulance was also returned at around 2:30pm after hospital authorities apologised and fired the negligent doctor.



Current nets seized by Fisheries Department in different areas of Manikganj in last few days are being burnt. Use of current net for fishing is banned. The photo was taken on Thursday.

PHOTO: STAR