

Upazila roundup

MAGURA

Aman procurement drive begins

Dec 2: Aman paddy procurement drive has got underway here in four upazilas of the district from November 15, reports UNB.

For the success of the programme, district food department has opened six purchasing centres in different areas of the upazilas.

District Food Controller said, the procurement target of this year has been fixed at 2,300 metric tons.

The upazila-wise target is as follows: 500 metric tons will be procured in Sadar centre, 400 tons in Alokda centre, 500 tons in Binodpur centre, 200 tons in Sreepur centre, 300 tons in Arpara centre and 400 tons in Mohamadpur centre.

KHAGRACHARI

Skeleton of kidnapped tribal recovered

Dec 2: Police recovered the skeleton of the kidnapped tribal Prodig Chakma (32) from the deep forest at Dighinal upazila of the district Friday, reports UNB.

Pradip Chakma, husband of Champa Rani (25) was kidnapped on August 14 last. Earlier, on suspicion, police arrested Champa and her two accomplices Anil Chakma (28) and Paodut Chakma (30), of the same upazila.

The accused at last admitted Friday that they killed Prodig immediately after the abduction and three the body into the deep forest and police on the basis of their confessional statement managed to recover the skeleton. It is alleged that Champa had illicit affairs with the two accomplices.

Earlier it was presumed that Prodig was killed by the tribal insurgents.

PATUAKHALI

Betel leaf growers to get BKB loan

Dec 2: Bangladesh Krishi Bank has taken steps to disburse loans for betel leaf farming in the southern region of the country, reports UNB.

Bank sources said, all the branches were instructed to distribute Tk 60,259 for one acre of land brought under betel leaf.

Betel leaf growers in the region demanded financial help to rehabilitate the "pau-bara" in greater Patuakhali, Barisal and Faridpur districts, which had been battered by the April cyclone and subsequent flood.

Betel leaf abundantly grows in Bauphal, Dashmina, Mirzapur, Kalapara, Galachipa and Patuakhali Sadar, Babuganj, Uzirpur, Gournadi, Agoljehara, Muladi, Hizia, Mehendiganj and Bakerganj of Barisal district, Daulat Khan, Borhanuddin, Tajumuddin, Lalman, Char Fashion and Sadar of Bhola district, Amtali, Betagi, Bamna, Patherghata and Sadar of Barguna district, Kalkini, Rajor and Shibchar of Madaripur district, Nalchiti, Kathalia, Rajapur and Sadar of Jhalakathi district and Sadar, Maria, Bedarganj and Jashirhat in Shariatpur district.

KISHOREGANJ

Kader Siddiqui demands repeal of Indemnity Ord

Dec 2: Awami League leader Kader Siddiqui demanded the repeal of the Indemnity Ordinance of 1975 and urged all to be united against the infamous Ordinance, reports UNB.

Addressing the two separate public meetings at Tarail and Nandail upazila headquarters here Thursday he also said the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will not go unpunished.

He called upon the Awami League workers to mobilise public opinion against the Ordinance and launch greater movement to achieve the cherished goal.

Siddiqui also said the sufferings of the people have increased manifold with the rise in the prices of the essentials. Stability can only come through the implementation of the policies of Awami League, he added.

The meetings presided over by Abul Wahab Toa Mia, convener, Tarail thana Awami League and Abdul Matin Bhuyan, President of Nandail thana Awami League respectively were also addressed by the local leaders.

SIRAJGANJ

20 held for illegal power consumption

Dec 2: A mobile court of the local Electric Supply arrested 20 people and realised a fine of Taka 40,000 for illegal power consumption, reports UNB.

The court also snapped a sizeable number of illegal electric lines in the Pourasava and Belkuchi areas in last few days.

With this, officials said, electricity worth about hand-some amount of Taka has been saved.

RAJSHAHI

Slum development work begins

Dec 2: Development work has been geared up on two slum areas — Baze Kazia and Hatem Khan Harizanpara — of the city, reports UNB.

The "slum area development project" was undertaken at an estimated cost of Tk 7 lakh by Rajshahi City Corporation with assistance from UNICEF and Local Government Engineering Bureau, according to official source.

The on-going project covers construction of 1200 metres of pucca roads, 800 metres of drains, 4 dustbins, sinking of 24 tubewells and supply of electricity and sanitary latrines.

Six more slums will be taken up for development on completion of the existing project, the source added.

JHENIDAH

Mukul Smriti Sangha win soccer trophy

Dec 2: Mukul Smriti Sangha became champion in Shaheed Sergeant Enayet Karim Football League — 91 defeating Abahani Krira Chakra by a solitary goal held Friday at Jhenidah stadium, reports UNB.

Zakir scored the goal at eighth minute of the first half. Tushar and Ratan of the winners' team were adjudged as the best player and highest scorer of the league respectively.

Jhenidah Zila Krira Sangha organised the tournament while eight teams participated in the league.

Al-hah Moshtur Rahman PM distributed the prizes among the winners.

BHERAMARA

People urged to take part in canal digging

Dec 2: State minister for Irrigation, Flood Control and Water Development Musarrat Hossain Shahjahan urged the BNP workers to actively participate in the programmes of canal digging and mass literacy initiated by Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman, reports BSS.

Addressing the biennial conference of Bheramara thana BNP here last afternoon, he asked them to motivate the people for participating in all programmes as laid down by President Zia to forge a greater national progress could not be achieved without eradicating the ills of terrorism, corruption and smuggling from the society.

He also sought cooperation of all quarters in resolving the national problems on priority basis.

The State Minister further said steps would be taken to protect the villages of greater Kushtia district from the erosion of the river Padma.

NETRAKONA

Work on 548 uplift projects in progress

Dec 2: Works on 548 development projects area going on in full swing in ten upazilas and two municipal areas under Netrakona district, reports BSS.

According to an official source, 834 metric tons of wheat worth about Taka 40 lakh were sanctioned by the government for implementation of the projects.

The upazila-wise projects are: Alpara 109, Barhatia 40, Durgapur 72, Khalinjuri 18, Kamalkanda 20, Kendua 35, Madan 30, Mahanganj 73, Netrakona Sadar 86, Purbadhala 55, Netrakona Pourashava nine and Madanganj pourashava one.

The projects include repair of roads, construction of embankments and excavation of ponds and canals.



KHULNA: A view of the site selected to construct a motel 23 years ago at a place three miles off the town to develop tourism in the region is lying uncared for. — Star photo

Shoals in rivers threaten river communication

PABNA, Dec 2: Fast emerging shoals on the rivers Padma and Jamuna have been seriously threatening river communication with the northern districts, reports UNB.

About 5,000 shoals have been located on the 120 km route between Daikhwa at Kurigram and Goalanda at Rajbari, hydrological experts said.

Over 3000 of these shoals have surfaced making the mighty river look like a narrow stream at some points, they said.

The Rail ferry transport of Sirajganj-Jagannathganj and Bahadurabad-Fulbari take double time than before due to emergence of chars, said a railway source.

Sharp fall in water level in the Jamuna at Nagarbari has caused the ferry ghat to be transferred to Raghunathpur, two kilometers south ward.

The Irrigation and Rural Development Project of Pabna has been threatened by the excessive fall of water level of the Jamuna. The water flow of Jamuna which was 1900 cusec in November last year has come down to 1700 this year.

Low level of the Jamuna near the Bera Pump Station has disrupted water supply for irrigation — affecting 8 lakh acres of land in Pabna, Natore and Sirajganj districts, where winter crop valued at about Tk 10 crore may be lost.

The water level of the Padma which was 12.06 metre at the Hardinge Bridge point in November last year has dropped to 8.96 meters this year and the flow has dwindled to 11500 cusecs from 14000 cusecs last year.

Nearly 1500 chars have emerged in the 85 km route between Kansari at Chapainawabganj and Kazirha reducing navigability to an alarming level.

Excessive fall in the water level by the Padma has also threatened the north-Bengal paper mills as well as the "Ganges-Kobadkha Irrigation Project."

Hydrologists of the water Development Board attribute the abnormal fall to withdrawal at Farakka and large scale erosion in the rivers Padma and Jamuna this year.

At least 5 lakh people of the northern region were ren-

dered homeless by the erosion this year.

Experts said that the rivers need dredging in a massive scale and on an emergency basis to offset, at least to some extent, the adverse effect of Farakka Barrage.

Kalazar claims 6 lives

Another report adds: At least six people died of kalazar and 20 others were attacked by the deadly disease in three villages of Faridpur upazila of the district during last four days.

According to villagers the disease that broke out in an alarming proportion two weeks back has been engulfing new areas. They said acute scarcity of medicine has been prevailing in the affected areas.

The deceased were identified as Taher Kha (45), Akhtar Uddin (29) and Shadul Hasan (35) of village Kalia, Shamsul Haque (45) of Banowainagar village, Ilamdi (22) and Ahshan (30) of Sonahora village of the upazila.

Local people have urged the authorities to take immediate steps to combat the disease.

Intensive rabi crop farming plan in Brahmanbaria

BRAHMANBARIA, Dec 2: An intensive scheme has been taken up to bring 3.33 lakh acres of land under rabi crops cultivation in seven upazilas of the district in the current season, reports UNB.

According to Agriculture Extension Department, high-yielding variety of boro will be cultivated on 2.20 lakh acres of land. Among them, 60,000 acres of land will be brought under cultivation in Sadar, 38,000 acres in Sarail, 26,700 acres in Kasba, 34,000 acres in Nabinagar, 28,500 acres in Nasirnagar, 20,000 acres in Bancharampur and 13,300 acres in Akhaura upazilas.

Wheat will be cultivated on 40,000 acres of land. Among them, 8,000 acres will be cultivated in Sadar, 2000 acres in Sarail, 5,000 acres in Kasba, 16,000 acres in Nabinagar, 16,000 acres in Bancharampur, 3000 acres in Nasirnagar and 1000 acres in Akhaura upazilas.

The mustard seeds will be cultivated on 45,000 acres of land. Besides, potato will be cultivated on 9000 acres of land, pulses on 4000 acres of land and vegetables on 7000 acres of land.

Test relief work in progress

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDIA, Dec 2: Test relief works under 927 projects to repair and reconstruct the damaged roads and bridges are going on in full swing in the district.

A total of 2050 metric tons of wheat have been allocated for the implementation of the projects.

Out of the total, 193 projects will be implemented in Gobindaganj, 181 in Sunderganj, 132 in Sadullahpur, 111 in Palushbari, 95 in Sangatha, 107 in Fulcharia, 79 in Gaibandha sadar upazila and 127 in Gaibandha pourashava.

Besides, 700 metric tons of wheat has been allotted as an additional amount for smooth completion of the projects.

Potato cultivation

A total of 67 thousand and 50 hectares will be brought under massive potato cultivation in 16 northern districts of the country during the current dry season.

Under the intensive Rabi Crop Cultivation Programme, High Yielding variety of paddy will be cultivated in 3,700 hectares and 29,150 hectares will be brought under local variety.

Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation will supply adequate quantity of seeds and fertilizers to make the programme a success. The local banks will provide credit facilities to the potato growers.

Meagre accommodation in hostel

From Our Correspondent

COMILLA Dec 2: Nursing Training Institute hostel at Kuchaital is facing acute accommodation problem. The two-storied hostel building has 23 rooms where 80 trainees can be accommodated. But 140 students are accommodated in the hostel now.

Besides, inadequate and irregular water supply, poor maintenance staff shortage and absence of gas connection have aggravated the situation. Actually the institution has no water supply of its own as such it gets water supply from the

Medical Assistant Training School (MATS) while MATS since 1986 has remained closed and its pump is operated irregularly. As a result, the inhabitants of the nursing hostel are facing much inconveniences.

They urged the authorities concerned to take remedial steps to minimise their sufferings.

Comilla Journalists Union executives

Principal Dilwar Tohid,

district correspondent of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) has been elected President of Comilla Union of Journalists recently.

Mr Tohid is also the Editor of weekly Samaj Kantha and president of Bangladesh Foundation of Human Rights. He is connected with journalism for more than 15 years.

Mr Nazrul Islam Babul district correspondent of Daily Dinkal has been elected Secretary General.



KUSHTIA: Members of Bangladesh Sikhak Samity Federation, Kushtia Sadar upazila unit brought out a procession recently in support of their demands. — Star photo

Border belts now paradise for smugglers

From A Correspondent

SYLHET, Dec 2: Smuggling of both incoming and outgoing goods has been going on unabated in all the border areas of the greater Sylhet region comprising Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Sunamganj and Sylhet districts.

Almost all the hats and bazar of this region especially those situated close to the border areas are found flooded with the smuggled goods.

The incoming goods like sugar, salt, sarces, clothes, cumin seed, onion, blades, crockeries, cosmetics, blades, bullocks, pulses, orange and others have flooded the markets, while the outgoing goods like, brass, betelnut, silver, fish, VCR, VCP, coconut and soyabean oil and old garments are being smuggled out every day causing substantial loss to the hard-earned foreign currency.

It is observed that, the smugglers transport the smuggled goods by trucks and passenger minibuses on road routes and country and engine

boats in the river routes. They also use the local trains as a safe means of transport in carrying the smuggled goods. They use the child labourers and poor widows as carriers for the purpose.

Smuggled sarces are sold in the houses of rural and urban areas of these districts openly. Thousands of bags of Indian sugar are smuggled into Bangladesh through different routes along border. Everyday, a large number of trucks and minibuses are seen carrying the smuggled goods towards the towns and commercial centers.

In connivance with the railway staff the smugglers stop the trains at unscheduled places for few minutes and load their commodity in luggage-vans. These are unloaded at different places in the same way.

It may be stated here that Indian sugar are brought to the scheduled places near the border and original bags are changed and packed again in

Bangladeshi gunny bags before these are sent to the destination.

In Sylhet District, the important markets and commercial places where the smuggled goods are easily available and seen being sold openly are, Jaktiganj, Kuliganj Bazar, Bcanibazar, Charkhat, Chandganj, Sutarkandi, Tanabli, Gollaganj, Dhakadakhin, Balaganj, Tajpur, Jafflong, Kanaihat, and Jointapur.

In Moulvibazar district the markets where these goods are openly being sold are, Barlekha, Shabajpur, Kulaura, Komolganj, Srimangal, Bhanugachh, and Shamsheharagar.

In Habiganj district, Madhabpur, Chunarughat, Shaistaganj, and Ballah are now turned into the important points for the smugglers.

main centres for running the smuggling.

Dacoit killed

The leader of a gang of dacoits was killed in the hands of his accomplices while they were distributing the booty among themselves. The incident took place at village Majidpur under Jagannathpur Upazila.

According to the reports, the gang of dacoits had a quarrel among themselves while were engaged in distributing the looted goods at a place near village Khalishpur and at one stage, the other members hit the gang leader, being injured seriously he was taken to the Sylhet M A G Osmany Medical College Hospital. He died on the next day there.

The victim was identified as the son of late Ismail Ullah of village Majidpur under Jagannathpur upazila. A case in this connection had been lodged with the police.

Tourism development plan shelved

From Khulna Office

KHULNA, Dec 2: A tourism development project taken up by the erstwhile Pakistan government in 1968 at Mujgunni only three miles off the town is yet to be implemented.

After the Liberation War, Parjaton Corporation was entrusted with the project.

The Taka 2 core project also included construction of a motel to promote tourism in the region. About ten acres of land were acquired for the purpose. The project was shelved during the Liberation War. An office was also set up at Khulna in 1973 to materialise the project. Requisite number of staff were posted in that office. But in 1976 the then government took a giant scheme centering on the Sun-

darban forest and transferred all the staff members excepting four guards to Dhaka closing the Khulna office. UNDP conducted a survey in 1987 to promote the tourism in the region but did not advise construction of the project-motel at Mujgunni.

Meanwhile, the local people have urged the government to return their acquired land to them as the government has no scheme there. Some of the influential people take soil from the area. A portion of the land turned into tank. Extraction of fruit-bearing trees is also going on at random from the project area. The parjaton corporation has changed the signboard of the projects five times in the last twenty years.

Madaripur town needs development

From Our Correspondent

MADARIPUR, Dec 2: Civic life in the district pourashava town has become miserable due to deplorable condition of roads, absence of proper drainage system, lack of sanitation, poor arrangement of recreation and mosquito menace.

Most of the roads in the pourashava areas are narrow. The numerous cracks and pot-holes of the roads have been impeding the movements of the traffic and pedestrians.

Besides, the roadside ditches remain filled with garbage causing bulk breeding of mosquitoes. Even after a slight rainfall water remains stagnant on many roads for days together due to absence of proper drainage system.

Street lights are also inadequate and as such vast areas of the town plunge into darkness just after sunset.

Housing problem has also become acute with the increase population in the town. Even rented houses are inadequate of cope with the rising demand.

In the absence of adequate recreational facilities the youths of the town face it difficult to pass their leisure hours. The only children park in the town has become unfit for use lack of proper maintenance.

Mosquito menace has made the life miserable. The students of the town are the

worst sufferers. They cannot concentrate to their studies owing to mosquito bites.

The local people have the concerned authorities to take immediate steps to mitigate the sufferings of the town inhabitants.

Bar executives

Advocate Mujibur Rahman Khan and Advocate Fazul Haq were elected President and Secretary respectively of the Madaripur District Bar Association in the general meeting held recently.

The other elected office bearers are Advocate A. Latif—Vice-President, Advocate Lutfur Rahman—Vice-President, Advocate Keramat Molla—treasurer and Advocate Mazharul Anwar, Advocate Nikhil Chandra Munshi, Advocate Motallib Goura, Advocate Arabindia Chakrabarti and Advocate Mujibur Rahman Nannu as members.

Lawyer dead

Advocate A. Khalique Jannadar a reputed lawyer of Madaripur died of heart attack in Suhrawardy Hospital recently. He was 71.

His names-e-janaza was held in Madaripur Pourashava Idgh and his body was laid to rest at his family graveyard.

He left behind his wife, six sons, four daughters and many others to mourn his death.

Proper maintenance needed

Embankment at stake

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Dec 2: The absence of proper maintenance likely to cause heavy damage to the Brahmaputra Flood Control Embankment.

The 240-kilometer long Brahmaputra Flood Control Embankment, completed in the middle of 1960, protects the crops of the vast tract of land of the region.

A Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) source informed this correspondent that they had a plan for massive afforestation on the embankment. The afforestation plan is yet to be implemented for unknown reasons, it is alleged.

The embankment earlier was damaged at 70 points due to the recurrent floods and erosion of the river Jamuna. The total damaged area stood at 150 kilometers, a BWDB source informed.

Hundreds of affected people of the region have constructed houses on the embankment to take shelter.

Most of the affected people of the region are poor and have no other place of their own where they can rehabilitate themselves.

Some unscrupulous businessmen of the area have also constructed houses for running their business there. A number of the influential of the locality have also taken possessions of some areas. They are selling possessions and are carrying a lot, it is alleged.

The use of the embankment by about one lakh people for their housing and commercial purposes is no doubt causing huge damages to the embankment.

When contacted, a BWDB source informed this correspondent that the authority has not yet taken any steps in this regard.

The regular and indiscriminate use of the embankment may leave it at stake, experts expressed.

Bhasani's death anniversary observed

MYMENSINGH, Dec 2: The 15th death anniversary of Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani was observed throughout the district with due solemnity, reports BSS.

Different socio-cultural and political organisations chalked out various programmes including discussion meetings and mlad mahfil to mark the occasion.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), Mymensingh District branch organised a discussion meeting at its office on November 17. Presided over by Mr AKM Fazul Haq MP, the discussion meeting, was participated among others by Prof. Abul Kashem, Prof. Tafazzal Hossain Chowdhury, Mr. Delwar Hossain Khan and Mr. MA Halim Suruj.

The speakers said that the great leader fought against all sorts of oppression and exploitation for the emancipation of the toiling masses.