

Upazila roundup

RAJSHAHI
Shaheed Siraj Day observed

From Our Correspondent

Dec 28 : The Shaheed Siraj Day was observed here recently with a pledge to consolidating democracy for building an exploitation-free society.

Shahjahan Siraj, a RU student and JSD (Inu) backed Bangladesh Chitra League leader was killed on December 22 in 1984 near RU Railway Station Area when BDR personnel opened fire on procession of RU students in support of 48-hour-long anti-autocratic hartal call by SKOP.

In observance of the day, different political parties, student organisations, and socio-cultural organisations chalked out different programmes including placing floral wreaths at the Shahjahan Siraj Monument on the RU campus, rallies, discussion meetings and cultural functions.

Speakers at the meeting held at RUCSU Building paid rich tributes to the memory of Shahjahan Siraj and called upon all to make united efforts to materialise the dreams of the martyrs of anti-autocratic movement for giving democracy an institutional shape.

The meeting was addressed by RUCSU General Secretary, Ruhul Quddus Babu, BCL (N-S) RU unit President, Ahsanul Kabir Badal, RU Senate Member and Chitra Moitree leader Sadakat Hussain Khan and Bangladesh Students Union RU unit leader Abraham Lincoln.

RU Sanskritik Jote also organised a cultural function on the campus to mark the day.

CHITTAGONG
Call to help restore peace

Dec 28 : Chittagong Metropolitan Police Commissioner on Monday sought cooperation from journalists in restoring law and order in the port city and elsewhere in the district, reports UNB.

The journalists were invited by Commissioner Abdus Salam, who took over recently, for a courtesy call at his office on Monday morning.

He urged the journalists for extending cooperation in weeding out smuggling as well as restoring law and order in the city, a hotbed of trouble.

The CMP Commissioner assured that police would help the government with the highest degree of sincerity in eradicating the menace of smuggling.

Replying to a question, he said traffic-jam in the port city had also increased as a result of public meetings on different streets.

BARISAL
Number of migratory birds falling

Dec 28 : The visits of the migratory birds to the southern districts are falling gradually due to indiscriminate hunting and scarcity of fishes in the areas, reports BSS.

According to naturalists previously about 1000 species of birds used to come to these districts. The figure has now dropped to 400 species and all of them used to come from the Siberian region to avoid the biting cold.

The birds locally known as balishush, dighari, kaladighari, saralis, pankauri, barstorks, herons, dahaks, kunjory, koras, etc were found abundantly in the canals, rivers, beels in the districts of Barisal, Bhoila, Patuakhali, Borguna, Jhalakati and Pirojpur during the winter season. But scarcity of fishes, the main food of these birds, has compelled large flocks to fly elsewhere.

On the other hand, a large number of hunters are found killing guest birds indiscriminately in these districts despite government ban.

Local people urge the government to take measure for the protection of these birds.

SIRAJGANJ
UP Chairman held

Dec 28 : Raitaulatpur Union Parishad Chairman Shamsul Haque (38) was arrested from his Dolewar village residence Wednesday on charge of a criminal case filed against him, police said, reports UNB.

According to police, on Tuesday afternoon, Shamsul Haque and some of his accomplices allegedly ransacked Kamarkhand Upazila Engineer's office, assaulted the Engineer, typist and other staff members. He also allegedly took away some confidential documents from the office forcibly.

PATUAKHALI
Works on 25 plans complete

Dec 28 : The Local Government Engineering Bureau has completed 25 projects under the post-flood rehabilitation programme in the district, official sources said, reports UNB.

The 25 projects were implemented with 775.83 metric tons of wheat sanctioned under the 'World Food Programme' assistance.

Sources said, 65 metric tons of wheat were distributed for two projects in Bapuhar Upazila, 126.89 metric tons for four projects in Dasmina, 112.44 metric tons for four projects in Galachipa, 65.24 metric tons for two projects in Kalapara, 177.19 metric tons for five projects in Marzaganj and 231.96 metric tons for eight projects in Sadar Upazilas.

MAGURA
Centre for procurement of aman demanded

Dec 28 : The people of Hat Dariapur in Sreepur Upazila of the district have urged the Food Department to open a temporary paddy procurement centre at Sachilapur Hat for the benefit of the farmers of the locality, reports UNB.

Though this part of Sreepur Upazila is a rice surplus area, it has no procurement centre in the locality and the one in the Sreepur Sadar Upazila being far away the farmers have to go to it with much difficulty, some Dariapur farmers said.

A big flourishing business centre the hat of Sachilapur has some pucca and semipucca godowns with a storage capacity of about 10 thousand metric tons.

A temporary procurement centre in this hat will immensely benefit the farmers of the locality, besides removing the possibility of smuggling and other problems, they said.

FENI
Tk 50 cr for construction of 9 pry. schools

Dec 28 : The government has sanctioned about Tk 50 crore for construction of nine primary schools which would be turned into temporary shelters in the time of cyclone in the Sadar upazila here, reports UNB.

The money provided from Saudi grant, will be used for construction of buildings for Feni Pilot Primary School, Rampur Primary School, Bejoi Sing Primary School, Fatapur Primary School, North Kashimpur Primary School, Aminganj Primary School, Baligonj Primary School, Dalia Primary School, and Dalia Rajapur Primary School.

Tender for the work has already been called and construction is expected to start soon to be completed by June 30, 1992.

BORGUNA
Implementation of pisciculture plans halted

Dec 28 : Implementation of pisciculture projects in six southern districts has been practically halted by illegal occupants of water-bodies, reports UNB.

The districts are Borguna, Patuakhali, Pirojpur, Jhalakati, Bhoila and Barisal.

According to a survey report conducted by the local Fisheries Department, more than 50,000 ponds, tanks, beels and hundred acres of government land have already been occupied by the local influential persons through false deeds with the help of some dishonest officials.

RAJSHAHI
150 people join BNP

Dec 28 : About 150 people of Poba Upazila of the district led by Chairman-elect of the Naohata Union Parishad, Abdul Gafur, joined BNP on Saturday, reports UNB.

Rajshahi City Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu and the district Secretary of BNP Advocate Kamrul Munir welcomed them at a meeting held on the occasion.

The meeting was addressed, among others, by Dr Zahangir, Enayet Ali, Murtuza Ali, Moqbul Hossain and Muslemuddin.



NAKSHI KANTHA : A village woman in a bid to earn livelihood by sewing traditional 'Nakshi Kantha' (Embroidered Quilt) —Star photo

6,000 shoals on 150 km river bed

River routes under threat

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Dec 28 : Frequent emergence of shoals in the Brahmaputra, Jamuna and Padma rivers hinder navigation and irrigation, of adjoining areas.

It is learnt that with the fall of water level in the rivers, at least 6,000 shoals have emerged in 175 kilometers river route from Doikhawa (Kurigram) to Donladia (Rajbari). Besides, a large number of charlands are originating under the river water.

According to a source of Bangladesh Water Development Board, such growth of charlands happens due to erosion of the rivers. The erasions leave huge quantity of soil heap in the channels of rivers which are not carried away by the stream causing massive under water siltation. In the dry season, the silted parts appear as charlands or shoals.

The emergence of shoals

hinder smooth plying of motor launches, ferry boats and railway ferries. The inter-city express trains can not maintain the time schedule and always run late.

It can be mentioned here that the river routes play a vital role in economic and communication sectors of the river-belt districts including Kurigram, Gaibandha, Bogra, Sirajganj, Pabna, Tangail, Jamalpur, Manikganj and Rajbari districts. Heavy siltation have forced the closure of some important channels of the rivers. Ferry service on Sirajganj-Bhuapur river route is closed and launch services on Sirajganj-Kazipur, Sirajganj-Enayetpur-Shohagpur-Nagarbari route face closure.

Railway ferries on Sirajganj-Jagannathganj, Bahadurabad-Fulchari routes and ferry services on Nagarbari-Aricha-Daulatdia routes take unusual

time to cross Jamuna, Brahmaputra and Padma rivers.

Dredging of the rivers do not bring any positive results as the channels change its route every year. After the rainy season new channels are created siltation of the old channels.

Due to change of channels and emergence of charlands, ferry Ghats are shifted time to time causing much expenditure which include shifting of pilons and construction of new diversion roads.

During last 50 days, Sirajganj and Bhuapur Ghats have been shifted three times and Nagarbari Ghat shifted two times. At present Nagarbari Ghat is established about two kilometers away to the down stream.

Following the emergence of charlands passengers movement as well as handling of goods become troublesome especially during the dry sea-

son. The concerned authorities have been urged to take up long-lasting and planning schemes to solve the problem.

Procurement of aman paddy hampered

Aman paddy procurement is hampered as the demands of the mill owners including the enhancement of crushing and carrying cost are not fulfilled.

It is learnt that target of aman paddy procurement in 16 northern districts have been fixed at 384 lakh metric tons.

It is gathered that at present one maund of aman paddy is sold at Taka 250 to 270 in the market of northern districts. Besides, due to various complexities the growers are less interested to sell paddy to the government godown which cause failure of achieving target of procurement.

Erosion leaves farmers helpless

MAGURA, Dec 28 : The number of landless and unemployed people are increasing in the district day by day as a result of erosion and high cost of living, reports UNB.

According to a survey, 30 per cent of the people are fully unemployed while nearly 60 per cent depend on agriculture. Among the farmers, 60 per cent are landless, 20 per cent have a few acres of land and only 30 per cent have adequate land property.

Erosion by the rivers Gorai, Modhumoti and others have rendered many people homeless. The farmers having a few acres of land can not afford to buy necessary inputs like fertilizers, seeds, pesticides and even bullocks for cultivation.

The marginal farmers are not getting fair price for their produce, which forced them to sell their only possession, the homestead.

The number of educated unemployed is also on rise creating social unrest here.

Intensive vegetable cultivation

JHENIDAH, Dec 28 : An intensive vegetable cultivation programme has been taken up six upazilas of the district during the current rabi season, reports UNB.

According to the District Agriculture Extension Department, 9,954 acres of land will be brought under vegetable cultivation.

Of the total land, 940 acres will be brought under vegetable farming in Sadar, 1,134 acres in Kaliganj, 1,275 acres in Kotechandpur, 3,410 acres in Moksadpur, 2,433 acres in Shaikupa and 760 acres in Harinakundu upazilas.

After the implementation of the programme, it is expected that a total of 75,768 metric tons of vegetables will be produced in the district.

The local Krishi Bank is distributing loans among the farmers to boost the production.

About 66,073 metric tons of vegetable were produced last year on 8,715 acres of land.

Poor farmers deprived of bank loans

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Dec 28 : The farmers of the district are compelled to sell their farmlands as they are not getting bank loans.

The situation further aggravated as the natural calamities damaged the crops and the dwelling houses several times during the last few years. The farmers who lost their crops during devastating floods and cyclones need farm loan to restart the cultivation. But they are not getting the same as they are unable to furnish requisite formalities.

Bangladesh Krishi Bank and other financial institution of the district are disbursing loans to non-productive sectors. It is alleged. The bank employees are taking benefits from the recipient of the non-productive loan, it is further alleged.

It may be mentioned here that most of the marginal and small farmers are in the meantime received notices to clear up the land and other taxes where as they can not in some cases arrange foodstuff for their family.

The existing rules on advancing loans to the small and marginal farmers through pass book are reportedly not working. It is informed. It is learnt that a group of middleman and

rich landlords were taking agriloans in fictitious names depriving the genuine poor farmers who are unable to produce security bonds.

This class of people use to lend money to the poor persons at an exorbitant rate of interest. It is informed.

According to informed sources, a huge amount of loan has already been disbursed to non-productive commercial sectors like cinema halls, fishing process, transportation and hotel construction at the influence of powerful persons.

Bus terminal demanded

Travellers on the Kalligonj-Satkhira and Kaligonj-Munshigonj bus routes have demanded a bus terminal and other requisite facilities at the Kalligonj Upazila Headquarters. Some of the passengers said that hundreds of travellers had to wait under the open sky even in the rainy season for want of a bus terminal. The female passengers suffer more for absence of any water closets for defecation.

There is no parking place for the buses and no traffic control system.

The people of the area have urged the concerned authorities to take immediate steps to construct a bus terminal and

thus mitigate the sufferings of the passengers.

Nine miscreants held

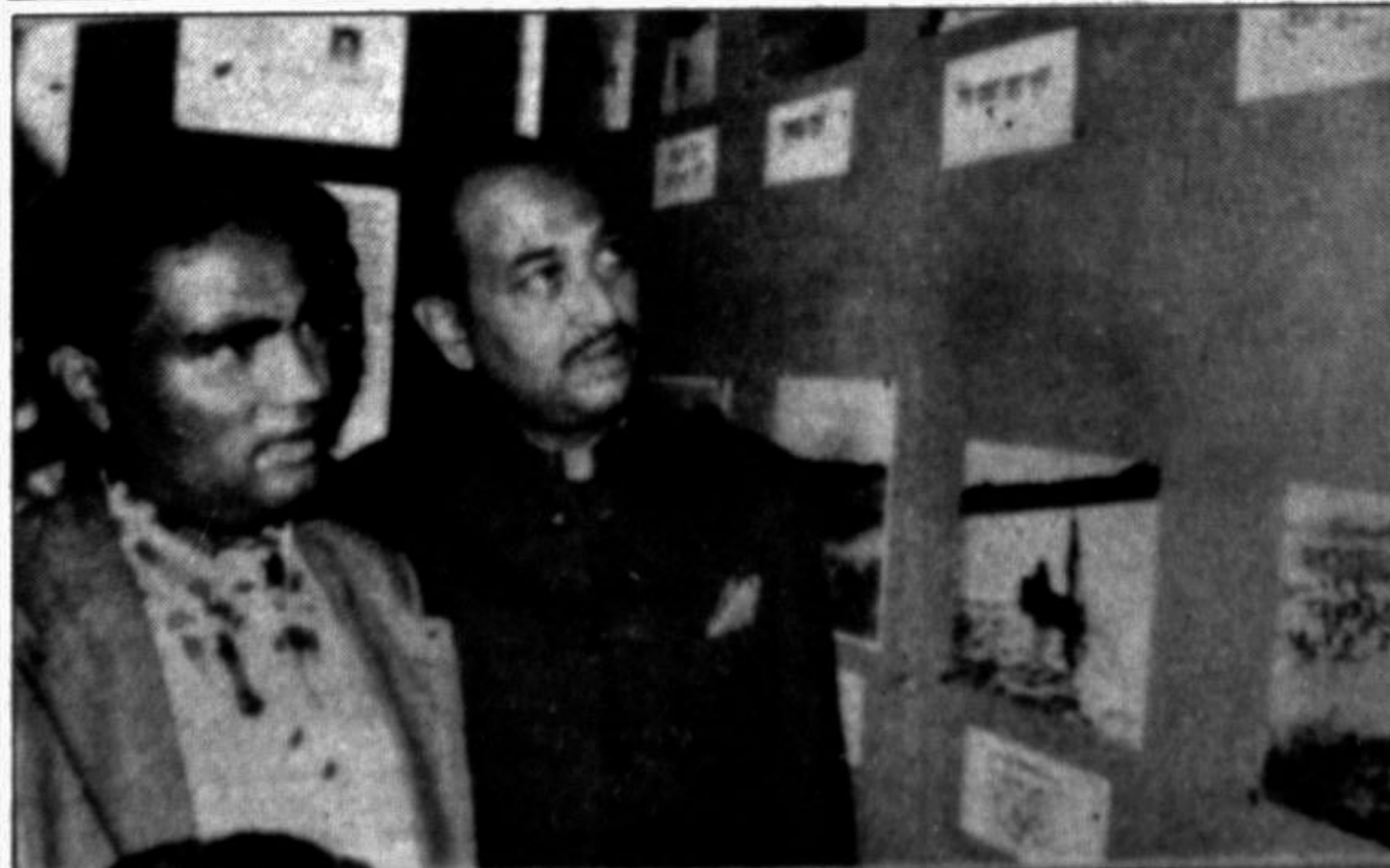
Assasuni Thana police have arrested nine alleged miscreants from Nekrikhal Gher under Assasuni Upazila and recovered one pipe gun, four rounds of cartridges and 20 hand bombs from their possession recently.

According to police sources, acting on a secret information they raided the Gher and arrested Liakat Alim, Moazzem, Moksud, Haradhan, Aziz and four others from there. Police also recovered the above mentioned arms and ammunition from their possession.

A case has been registered with the Assasuni Police Station in this connection.

Government has sanctioned a total of 877 metric tons of wheat for completion of 20 projects in four upazilas of the district under Food for Works Programme during the current dry season.

District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer informed UNB that out of the total projects, 7 will be implemented in Sadar, 4 in Sreepur, 6 in Mohamadpur and 3 in Salikha upazilas.



SYLHET: The visitors are at the solo photographic exhibition of Narayan Dey held at Kulaura recently. —Star Photo.

15 lakh suffer from diabetes

RAJSHAHI, Dec 28: About 15 lakh patients in the country are suffering from diabetes, reports UNB.

Speakers at a seminar on 'Diabetes' held here on Friday disclosed the figure.

Of the total 1.21 lakh patients are registered with the hospitals, while the rest 13.79 lakh people are still unaware about their disease, they stated.

Organised by Bangladesh Diabetic Association, local unit, the seminar was addressed among others by Dr. Sirajul Haque, Dr. Jafar Ahmed Latif and Dr. Habibur Rahman.

Professor Dr SAA Bari presided over the seminar, while Professor Dr. Abdul Kader presented the key-note paper on 'Blood sugar'.

The speakers said, diabetes is not a curable but controllable disease and can be avoided taking preventive measures.

They stressed the need for

establishment of more diabetic hospitals and centres to cope the heavy rush of the diabetic patients.

Earlier, State Minister for Lands Mr. Kabir Hossain inaugurated the seminar.

The City Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu announced a grant of Taka one lakh for the development of the local diabetics association.

Bangladesh Rifles seized smuggled goods worth about Taka 34,45,984 along the border area of the district during the week ending on December 17.

BDR jawans also arrested one alleged smuggler in this connection.

The contrabands included Indian clothes, sarces, onion, sugar, spices and cosmetics.

The smuggled goods were handed over to the local Customs office and the arrested man was sent to jail-hat.

Separate cases were filed with the police.

Tk 6 cr cotton yarn lying unsold

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Dec 28 : Cotton yarn worth about Taka 6 crore has been lying unsold in the godown of Satkhira Sunderland Textile Mills for a long.

According to reports, the sudden enhancement of cotton yarn has left the huge quantity of yarn unsold.

The smuggled Indian cotton yarn has flooded the border-belt districts which price is lower in comparison with the local product, it is informed.

As a result, the mill is facing serious financial crisis for which it may be closed at any moment, it is learnt.

The fate of 1400 workers and staff of the mill are also uncertain. This no doubt will create unemployment problem.

The Indian yarn of count number 32,40,60 and 80 are being sold at Taka 16,000, Taka 1750 and Taka 43,000 per bale as against the local rate of Taka 21,000, Taka

25,000 and Taka 54,000 per bale.

While contacted some cotton yarn traders told The Daily Star that the Sunderland Textile Mills authority should immediately reduce the yarn price to check the smuggling of Indian cotton yarn. The other textile mills of the country are likely to be closed in the near future, they further disclosed.

Dacoities were committed in different shops at Jhowdanga Bazar under Sadar Upazila recently.

The dacoits looted away cash Taka four lakh from the owners of the shops.

According to police, a gang of dacoits armed with sophisticated weapons attacked the bazar at dead of night and looted the said amount of money from the shop owners.

A case had been registered with the local thana in this connection.

Road accidents on rise

From Our Correspondent

COX'S BAZAR, Dec 28 : Number of road accidents in Cox's Bazar district has increased in recent days.

At least 25 persons died and more than 100 others were injured in 42 accidents during the last five months.

Bus journey on different routes has become hazardous due to absence of proper control of respective authorities.

Over-loading, and undesirable competitions on the roads by the drivers have become a regular feature on these routes.

According to the inter-district bus owners association, about 700 buses and minibuses are now plying everyday and carrying nearly one lakh passengers in eight routes.

The time-table and overall management of these routes are controlled by Cox's Bazar Inter-District and Ramur Upazila Bus Owners Association. Due to the absence of proper administration these buses are seen plying at drivers will causing untold sufferings to the passengers, particularly to the children and women folk.

Most of the local and express buses in the name of 'Gate lock' are engaged in

dangerous competition to pick up passengers. Over loaded buses at maximum speed seldom allow other vehicles to overtake them and ultimately cause serious road mishaps.

Although present fare is 40 paise for buses and 45 paise for minibuses per kilometre, it is alleged that most conductors collect fares at their whims, resulting in altercation between the bus employees and passengers. This has become a regular feature on all the routes.

The Cox's Bazar-Chittagong Highway is in a pitiable condition both to the motorists and the pedestrians. This 105 kilometer-long highway was constructed in 1970. The concrete portion of the highway has deteriorated beyond expectation. The metalled portion is also too narrow for the safe passage of the increased vehicular traffic. Accidents are frequent and damage to vehicles are also enormous.

A large number of trucks carrying goods and local buses keep the highway very busy. Drivers are found reluctant to give passage to on-coming vehicles or faster vehicles from same direction.

Uplift of agriculture stressed

MYMENSINGH, Dec 28 : The eminent scientist of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC), Dr Kazi M Badruddoza has stated that development of agriculture and farming community should be the immediate goal of higher agricultural education and research, reports BSS.

Dr. Badruddoza stated this while presenting the keynote paper in a day-long seminar titled 'the unique features of higher agricultural education' under the auspices of Bangladesh Agricultural University Teachers' Association (BAUTA).

Held at the Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Auditorium recently, the seminar was presided over by Dr M Azizul Haque, President of the Teachers Association and attended by the Chairman of University Grants Commission Prof M Shamsul Haque and the Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh Agricultural University Prof M Asadur Rahman as chief guest

and special guest respectively. To attain the end, the Bangladesh Agricultural University should be linked with the main stream of agricultural development activities of the country, he added. He further underlined that the deliverance of higher agricultural education was possible only in effecting integration of education, research and extension education.

He urged upon all concerned to extend their all out supports, including a clearly stated political commitment, in favour of this radical and revolutionary change in higher agricultural education.

In his speech, the chief guest underscored the necessity for proper reflection of the needs and problems of the people in the higher education system of the country and stated that the goal of higher agricultural education could never be achieved keeping it away from the main stream of national development process.