

Upazila roundup

Manikganj 3 killed in road accidents

From Our Correspondent
January 14: Three persons including a store officer of Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation were killed and 25 others injured in three separate road accidents on Dhaka-Aricha Highway yesterday, police said.
BRTC Store Officer Md. Alam Khan (45) of Uthuli Bus Depot and driver of a baby-taxi died on the spot when a night coach of Hanif Paribahan on its way to Chapainawabganj hit a baby-taxi at Tepra bus stand in Shivalaya Upazila last evening.
Twenty others were also injured in the accident.
Police said one person was killed and five others were injured in two other accidents involving trucks at Savar and Muljan on Dhaka-Aricha Highway in the morning.
Separate cases have been lodged in this connection.

Satkhira Bank dacoity

January 14: Two single-barrel guns and Tk 56,000 were robbed from a branch of Rupali Bank on Saturday night, police said, reports UNB.
A gang of 12 armed men tied the guard of the bank at Arikhola Bazar, about eight miles from the district town, before committing the dacoity.
The miscreants broke open the strong room and looted the money. They also committed dacoity at a jewellery shop beside the bank and fled with ornaments worth about Tk 2,600.
Two separate cases were lodged. But no arrest could still be made.

Sylhet Housewife electrocuted

From Our Correspondent
January 14: A housewife was electrocuted and two other inmates were injured when a live overhead electric wire collapsed setting ablaze some suburban houses near airport here late Saturday evening.
Saleha Bibi died instantly and other two received burn injuries while escaping through blazing doors.
Seven huts of the Nayabazar were completely gutted before firemen from Sylhet could extinguish the fire.

Brahmanbaria 94,000 acres put under rabi farming

January 14: About 94,000 acres of land have been brought under intensive rabi cultivation in seven upazilas of the district, reports UNB.
According to sources, high-yielding variety of Boro will be cultivated on about 24,000 acres, Mustard on 35,000 acres, Wheat on 29,000 acres and Potato on 5,000 acres.
Meanwhile, Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation has distributed seeds, fertilizers, insecticides and other necessary inputs at fair prices among the farmers to make the scheme a success.

Dinajpur Principal assaulted

January 14: Principal of a local Homoeo College was assaulted by some unknown miscreants at Bahadur Bazar in the town on Friday, police here said, reports UNB.
The victim, Mokarram Hossain was beaten up as an act of vengeance.
Mokarram expelled a student of the college for adopting unfair means in the examination a few days back.
He was admitted to Dinajpur General Hospital.

Power supply to 130 deep tubewells snapped

From Our Correspondent
THAKURGOAN Jan 14: Power disruption and lack of electric connection to deep tubewells under the Bangladesh Water Development Board at Thakurgon, Panchagarh and Dinajpur districts, have created a great problem to the farmers, hindering the winter cultivation.
It is reported an agreement between Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) and Gramen Bank was signed as per agreement the (BWDB) would hand over 965 deep tubewells to the Gramen Bank at a cost of Taka 280 crore, payable to the BWDB within 25 years with a grace period of 10 years at the rate of interest taka 7.5 percent.
Accordingly, an order was issued by the Ministry of Irrigation and Flood Control, during the Ershad regime to disconnect the electric lines. Meanwhile, electricity supply to 130 deep tubewells snapped with a view to stopping the operation until the handover is made.
But, resistance by the farmers handing over of the deep tubewells to the Gramen Bank could not be done.

Barisal 2.88 lakh sets books to be distributed

January 14: A total of 2,87,900 sets of text books will be distributed among the students of 942 government and 193 non-government primary schools in ten upazilas of Barisal district this year under universal primary education programme, reports BSS.
According to District Education Officer the books will be distributed free of cost from nursery class to class V students.
Of the total, 37,100 sets of books are for Class Five, 46,700 sets for Class Four, 50,100 sets for Class Three, 52,600 sets for Class Two, 85,650 sets for Class One and 15,600 sets for nursery classes.
The text book distribution committees have been formed for smooth distribution of books, which has already been started.

Chittagong Better facilities assured

January 14: Mr Rafiqul Islam, Adviser in-Charge of Civil Aviation, Tourism and Shipping, visited Chittagong Airport yesterday evening, reports BSS.
He saw the existing facilities made available to the passengers and asked the officers and staff to further increase those within the limited resources.
Mr. Islam also saw the feasibility report of the project plan to develop Chittagong Airport as an International Airport with the help of Japanese assistance.
Later, he visited Chittagong Medical College Hospital to see the students of Chittagong University who were injured in recent disturbances. He enquired about the welfare of the students and asked the attending physicians to ensure their best possible medicare.

Permanent HC branch demanded

A meeting of the Supreme Court (High Court Division) Bar Association, Chittagong held here on Sunday demanded establishment of a permanent High Court branch and holding of a High Court session immediately in Chittagong, an association Press release said.
The meeting was presided over by the Association President Barrister S H Khan Milky, and addressed by senior lawyers Mozammel Hussain, Faridul Alam Chowdhury, Muazzem Hossain, M. Saleh Zahor, Mustafa Kamal Pasha, Abdus Salam Mamun.
According to a separate Press release of the Association, a delegation of the Association headed by Barrister S H Khan Milky called on the Acting Chief Justice M H Rahman here on Sunday and apprised him of the demands of lawyers in Chittagong.

Narail AL leader dead

January 14: Advocate Afzaruddin Ahmed, an elderly Awami League leader and social worker, died here recently at his village home. He was 82, reports BSS.
Born in 1909, Advocate Afzaruddin was the longtime President of Narail Bar Association and Chairman of Tularampur Union Board. He was also Secretary of Narail Congress during undivided India and was also associated with Awami League since 1952.
He suffered imprisonment several times, and took part in the War of Liberation. In 1971, his eldest son Deputy Magistrate Saif Mizanur Rahman was killed during the war of Liberation. He was associated with a number of socio-political and cultural organisations.
Afzaruddin left behind his widow, two sons and three daughters.



Not a victory procession but a candidate is being led to election office by his supporters at Narayanjanj for filing nomination on Sunday. —Star photo

A paradise for smugglers

From Our Correspondent
KHULNA, Jan 14: Raghunathpur and Daulatpur, two bordering areas under Sharsha upazila, have become smuggling spots by ghat owners.
It is learnt that Abdulla and Akher with other accomplices are engaged in massive smuggling of different items under the guidance of ghat owners.
According to reliable sources, goods like VCP, VCR, Bangladeshi polyester, old clothings, earrings are smuggled everyday out of the country. On the other hand old cotton sarces, cheap cosmetics, etc. are being smuggled into the country from India.
Besides, Navaron Hat, a weekly market, has become a business spot of cattlehead brought illegally from border areas of Raghunathpur.
Moreover, people of the areas alleged that Golam and Tunu, well-known leaders of smuggling party assemble every evening in the teastalls and hold fair of smuggled goods under the guidance of ghat owners near Daulatpur border.
The residents of these areas seek immediate action by BDR to check massive smuggling.

Traffic rules violation makes life risky in Maulvi Bazar

From Our Correspondent
MAULVI BAZAR, Jan 14: Frequent traffic rules violation by the drivers has made the journey hazardous, to and from the district headquarters.
Passengers complained that most buses plying on different routes are over-loaded making life risky. Moreover, reckless driving and over-taking are reasons behind the frequent accidents.
Drivers stop their buses at different points according to their wish for unlimited time causing delay in reaching destinations. They often charge high fare leading to frequent altercation with the passengers.
District roads are also in bad condition, causing trouble to vehicular movement. Cracks and pot-holes have developed at many points of the roads.

Teachers demand early payment of dues

From Our Correspondent
MUNSHIGANJ, Jan 14: Non-payment of government benefit money to the teachers of private high schools evoked much annoyance among the teachers of the district which may affect the education in the institutions.
The benefit money for the months of November and December last year is yet to be disbursed among the non-government school teachers causing much inconvenience to their families.
The sufferings of teachers in these days of hardship may cause a tremendous havoc on the S.S.C. candidates and on the newly promoted or newly admitted students of the high schools and Madrasahs.
The private high school teachers are the victims of many disparities as the government has been following a step-motherly attitude towards them in respect of salary and other benefits in comparison with the government high school teachers. It is alleged.

N'ganj needs urgent rehabilitation Dundee of the East belies its name

From Our Correspondent
NARAYANGANJ, Jan 14: Will Narayanjanj regain its past glory? This is a question long felt by the members of the public here. Narayanjanj was once the most important riverine port town of Bengal. But now it has been relegated to a small township. Long neglect has undermined the importance of this once glorious port town substantially.
With the suspension of all mail trains from Narayanjanj since the commissioning of Kamalapur Railway Station in Dhaka in the year 1968 as the terminal for all such trains the people of Narayanjanj are facing immense troubles.
The withdrawal of Mail trains, parcels and delay in booking of goods has already dealt a crushing blow to the travelling passengers and to trade and commerce of Narayanjanj in particular. The daily business turnover of hosiery, fish and many other consumer goods compared to the period before reduced by 80 per cent. Many small industries such as washing soap mill, flour, ata, oil and thousands of small shop keepers are on the verge of closing their business and others are finding their existence threatened.
Narayanjanj is the twin city of Dhaka. There were schemes to connect the two cities but expansion towards Narayanjanj slowed down. Rajdhani Unayan Kartipakha (RAJUK) realised a big amount of revenue from Narayanjanj but spent a very little fraction of that for the welfare of the town. The people of Narayanjanj have reasons to believe that RAJUK has many things to do for the development of the city by taking various plans and programmes. It is also to be mentioned here that besides RAJUK, various departments and organisations should finish their unfinished work like Gymkhana playground, Chanmony Game Complex, Narayanjanj Osmani Stadium, and reconstruction and expansion of various roads. The people of Narayanjanj demand to upgrade Tolarum College into university college.
Narayanjanj remains the most important river port of Bangladesh, though some of the mail steamers no longer steam off from here.
Narayanjanj was once called the dundee of the East. In spite of the sign of decadence people believe that it will progress. A good number of jute and cotton mills, other factories and commercial establishments are located on both banks of the Sitakahya. The population of this town is about six lakh. The traders and businessmen of Narayanjanj revealed that the attention of the Railway Authorities was drawn many a times to remove the bottle necks and to ease the situation but no appropriate measures have yet been taken.
Before withdrawal of mail trains from Narayanjanj the people from different parts of Bangladesh used to find this town as a profitable commercial hub. Now the direct communication link between Narayanjanj and the rest of Bangladesh has been cut off. The traders of the suburbs of Narayanjanj cannot transport their goods to Narayanjanj and now they have begun trading elsewhere. Traders of Narayanjanj are incurring a huge loss as they have to transport their goods to Kamalapur Railway Station for quick delivery at a much higher cost.
Trading hampered
The cumulative result of all these factors is that the trading activities in hosiery, cotton yarn, cotton textiles, washing soap and handloom cloth have almost come to a stand still. The trading circle of Narayanjanj is grave concern over this.
Since the withdrawal of mail trains, steamer services from here, the miseries of the jobless workers increased manifold. The present number of trains running on Dhaka Narayanjanj line cannot cope with the fast increasing number of passengers and volume of trade and commerce.
However, some development work were undertaken by the RAJUK during the year 1988-89.
The development programmes included installation of sodium lights, removal of the unauthorised structures and widening and carpeting of the main roads of the town.
The people are of the opinion that the authorities should increase frequency of district road, railway and riverine transports for passengers and cargo. The also feel that number of local trains should be raised between Narayanjanj and Kamalapur to cope with the growing number of daily passengers.

Flood victims of '88 yet to be rehabilitated

From Our Correspondent
JAMALPUR, Jan 14: About five lakh people of ebar areas of the district have been rendered homeless following floods and river erosion during the last three years.
The affected upazilas are Dewanganj, Islampur, Madaraganj, Melandah, Bakshiganj, Sarishabari and Sadar.
These homeless people took shelter on flood control embankments. Many of them even died due to lack of medical facilities and government aid. They did not get any house-building grant. A few of them have erected shacks and the rest are virtually living under the open sky. Official sources said that at least 95,700 kutcha houses were totally damaged during the devastating flood of 1988. About 4,312 families became shelterless at that time.
It is learnt that different NGOs distributed some house-building materials among 2000 families, but these people are still passing their days in agony for want of help.
Deep tubewells need power connection
Meanwhile, Irri-Boro cultivation on two lakh acres of land in six upazilas of the district has become uncertain due to lack of power supply to deep and shallow tubewells.
It is learnt that on the assurance of power connection by the Power Development Board (PDB), 80 deep and 70 shallow tubewells were installed in 1983, but power supply has not yet been provided. As a result cultivation is being hampered to a great extent. The cultivators who took loans from agricultural department have been facing utter inconvenience.
In Melandah Upazila a scheme was taken by the higher authority of (PDB) under Annual Development Programme (ADP) for providing power supply to the irrigation projects, but later it was kept pending. It is alleged that due to over pressure on two transformers, power supply could not be extended to the tubewells. The pressure was caused mainly due to illegal connections.
The farmers are not getting Irri-Boro seeds at government rate from the officers of Agriculture Development Corporation.
Besides, the improved variety of seeds are being sold in the blackmarket at an exorbitant rate. The seeds distributed among the farmers are not germinating. It is alleged, but no steps have been taken by the authorities to solve the problem.
It is apprehended that Irri-Boro farming in the district may suffer a serious setback this season for want of seeds and power supply.
Jhenidah
UNB from Jhenidah adds: Irri-boro production in the district may suffer a setback this year due to lack of irrigation facilities and price hikes of necessary inputs.
Agriculture Extension Department brought 61,160 acres of land under irri-boro cultivation over the current season.
Farmers fear that price hikes of fuel, seeds and fertilizers will force many of them to leave vast areas uncultivated causing shortfall in production.
Besides, a large number of deep tubewells rendered inoperative due to shortage of spares and poor maintenance have hampered irrigation facilities.
Gaibandha
A report from Gaibandha adds: Cultivation has been hampered by price rise of diesel, fertilizer, seeds and pesticides in the district.

Political scene

Sporadic violence during nomination filing

Star report
As the date for parliamentary polls is drawing nearer reports of election violence are being received from different parts of the country. Political activists are engaged in hectic electioneering almost round the clock.
There has been a competition for capturing important public places for displaying posters and inscribing slogans and party symbols.
The saner section of the people everywhere are trying to maintain calm among the political rivals. The last date for filing nomination expired on Sunday. The violence on the day mostly occurred among the rival processionists.

20 hurt in Rangamati
BSS from Rangamati adds: At least 20 persons were injured and a car was burnt when supporters of two political parties clashed here Sunday, political sources said.
Eleven of the injured were admitted to the hospital while the rest were given first aid.
The clash took place at the time of filing nomination papers by candidates belonging to different political parties.
Local police took immediate measures to prevent spread of the clash.

11 injured in Faridpur
UNB from Faridpur adds: At least 11 people were injured in pre-poll clashes between workers of Awami League and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) here this evening, police and witnesses said.
The clash ensued following an explosion at a meeting of Awami League held at Goalchamat Sunday afternoon in which five persons were injured.
Two crackers were exploded at the meeting when District Awami League President Imamuddin Ahmed started delivering his speech. The Awami League beat Ali Pagla, said to be an activist of BNP, blaming him for the incident.
Protesting the incident, a group of Awami League workers attacked the BNP office and ransacked it. BNP workers, in retaliation, also attacked the nearby office of Awami League, local people said.

Meanwhile, Humayun Kabir
Vice-President of Jubu Dal received severe injuries in a clash between two rival political groups on Sunday in the city following a brawl over writing on walls.
Police said that the clash took place between the supporters of Awami League and BNP when some supporters of Awami League tried to write party slogans on a wall allegedly wiping the sheaf of paddy, election symbol of BNP at Belayet Hossain Road at Rupsha, causing severe injuries to Humayun Kabir. He is now undergoing treatment at hospital and a case has been registered with Khulna police.

Nominations at a glance

- Feni**
A total of 34 candidates including four independents have filed nominations from three constituencies of the district, reports UNB.
Nominees from major parties are: Awami League, BNP, Five-party Alliance, Jatiya Party, United Communist League, CPB and Jamaat-e-Islami.
Begum Khaleda Zia is contesting from Feni-1 constituency where former Minister and JP leader Zafar Imam is also a candidate.
Awami League leader Jafar Hazari is contesting from Feni-2 where other prospective candidates are BNP's Shahiduddin Ferdous and Jamaat's Maqbul Ahmed.
- Netrakona**
A total of 51 candidates submitted their nomination papers on Sunday to contest for five seats in the parliament. Of the total, seven candidates submitted their nominations from Netrakona-1 (Durgapur-Kalmakanda), 13 from Netrakona-2 (Sadar-Barhatta), ten from Netrakona-3 (Atpara-Kendua), 12 from Netrakona-4 (Mohanganj, Modan and Khalafur) and nine from Netrakona-5 (Purbadhala-Dhubaura).
- Rajshahi**
In all 58 nomination papers were submitted to the Returning Officer here on Sunday from five constituencies of the district, official sources said.
Of them, 11 nomination papers were submitted from Raj-1, 15 from Raj-2, 11 from Raj-3, 10 from Raj-4 and 11 from Raj-5, the sources said.
The prominent candidates who submitted nomination papers today include Mohammad Mohsin (AL), Aminul Haq (BNP), Mujibur Rahman (Jamaat) and Durul Huda (JP) from Rajshahi-1, Mahbubuzzaman Bhui (AL), Kabir Hossain (BNP), Fazley Hossain Badshah (UCL) and Ataur Rahman (Jamaat) from Rajshahi-2, Rakhal Chandra Das (AL), Enamul Haq (BNP), Abdul Ahad (Jamaat) and Sardar Amjad Hossain (JP) from Rajshahi-3, Tajul Islam Mohd. Faruq (AL), Abdus Sattar Mondal (BNP), Mohammad Ayeuddin (ML-Ayen) and Moksed Ali (Jamaat) from Rajshahi-4 and Dr Alauddin (AL), Azizur Rahman (BNP), Abdul Mannan (Jamaat) and Nurunnabi Chand (JP) from Rajshahi-5.
- Madaripur**
Thirty-two candidates have submitted nomination papers for three seats in the district.
BAKSAL General Secretary Abdur Razzak submitted nomination to contest from Madaripur-2. Former State Minister Abdur Mannan Sikder is prominent among his rivals in the same constituency.
- C'Nawabganj**
A total of 34 candidates have filed their nomination papers for three constituencies of the district.
All the major parties including Awami League, BNP, 5-party, Jamaat and Jatiya Party have tendered nominations.
- Narsingdi**
Different political parties including the three major political alliances on Sunday submitted 63 nomination papers from five constituencies of the district. The candidates include Awami League, BNP, JSD, JP, JSD (Rab), Sramik Krasak Samajbadi Dal, Jagodal, BAKSAL, Zakir Party, National Congress, CPB and Independents.
- Rangpur**
Nomination papers were filed on behalf of former President Hussain Mohammad Ershad in five out of the district's six constituencies for the coming parliamentary elections, local officials said. But the Election Commission in Dhaka confirmed nomination papers from the ousted President had been submitted in two constituencies- Rangpur-2 and 5.
A total of 64 candidates from all the major political parties submitted nomination papers in the district.
- Panchagarh**
Two dacoits were beaten to death by the villagers at Boda upazila of the district while they were trying to flee away after committing a dacoity, police here today, reports UNB.
According to witnesses, the dacoits numbering eight to 10 entered the house of Dabiruddin of village Jhalalishal of the same upazila and looted four baulances and other valuables on Monday.
At one stage, the house-owner raised alarm and the villagers rushed to the spot and caught two of the dacoits red handed while others managed to escape.