

Upazila roundup

C. Nawabganj

Contraband seized

January 15: Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) in separate raids here seized contraband worth about Taka 58.89 lakh and arrested 17 smugglers in this connection during the last month, reports UNB.

BDR sources said, the goods including sarees, salt, sugar, bicycle, yarn, dry chilly, turmeric, cosmetics, cattle-heads, polyester were recovered from different parts of the district while being smuggled into the country.

Besides, 51 VCRs and baby food were seized while being smuggled out of the country.

The seized goods were later handed over to local customs authorities.

Savar

5 die of cholera

January 15: Four minor girls and a boy died of diarrhoea and several others were attacked by the disease during the last month, hospital sources said on Sunday, reports UNB.

The deceased were identified as Ranu (8), Sharali (11), Kariman (4), Zahura (6) and Tara Miah (16).

Ten others were admitted to Savar health centre and Ganashaysta Hospital.

Doctors attributed paucity of safe water to the outbreak of the disease.

Local people urged the authorities to despatch medical teams to affected areas to check the spread of the disease.

Barisal

7,595 tons wheat distributed

January 15: A total of 1,424 metric tons of wheat have been distributed among 7,595 members of distressed families in six upazilas of Barisal district under Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) programme till December 31, reports BSS.

According to relief and rehabilitation office source, the wheat was distributed among the members at the rate of 31.25 kilograms per family per month through 42 centres.

The government sanctioned 2,848 metric tons of wheat for distribution among these families free of cost in the current fiscal year.

Barguna

6 die of cholera, dysentery

January 15: Gastro-intestinal diseases claimed six lives and attacked 100 others in different parts of the district during the fortnight, reports UNB.

Villagers say diarrhoea and dysentery, which are very common, have been spreading in an alarming proportion and so far claimed 3 lives in Patharghata, 2 in Sadar and one in Betagi upazilas here.

General practitioners attributed the reason to consumption of adulterated food-stuff and impure water.

Meanwhile, scarcity of medicines in hospitals and health centres has aggravated the situation.

Local people have urged the authorities to take necessary measures to arrest the spread of the diseases.

Feni

Shaheed Minar to be constructed

January 15: A Taka 1.42 lakh scheme is underway to construct a Minar here, according to sources, reports UNB.

Undertaken by the Local Pourashava, the minar will be 15 feet in height while the

floor space will have 740 square feet.

Work on the scheme is expected to be completed before this year's 'Amar Ekushey' on February 21.

In addition, the pourashava has also undertaken a project to built five mosques and maktabas in the town at a cost of Taka 10 lakh.

Comilla

Dacoits loot valuables

January 15: Cash and gold ornaments worth about Tk one lakh were looted during dacoits from two houses near Burichang police station in the town here on Wednesday, reports UNB.

According to witnesses, about 10 to 15 dacoits equipped with deadly weapons entered the houses of Begum Rokeya and Zahurul Islam and decamped with the valuables at gun point.

Three people were arrested by police in this connection.

Barguna

Discussion on Moni Singh

January 15: Speakers at a meeting held at Bakalipatti recently condoled the death of veteran Communist leader Comrade Moni Singh, reports BSS.

Organised by Barguna district committee of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) the meeting was presided over by Advocate Abdul Hamid. Messrs Abdul Halim, Tofazzal Hossain Kishu, Dhirendra Dev Nath, Shukharanjan Seal, Anwar Hossain Monowar, Advocate Mujibul Haq and Hasanur Rahman discussed various aspects of the life and politics of the late leader.

The speakers said Comrade Moni Singh played a glorious role in the Communist movement of Bangladesh. His dream was to establish a society free from exploitation, they observed.

Munshiganj

BCL founding anniversary

From Our Correspondent

January 15: The 43rd founding anniversary of the Bangladesh Chhatra League was observed in the Shahid Minar campus of the Munshiganj High School recently. A discussion meeting was held in this connection. Student leader Moazzam Hussain presided over the meeting while Mr. Mohiuddin Ahmad, General Secretary, Munshiganj district Awami League spoke.

The annual congress of Bangladesh Chhatra League, Munshiganj Thana Branch, was held in Binodpur High School maidan recently. Inaugurated by Moazzam Hussain, meeting was presided over by M. Maniruzzaman. A. Karim Bepary a local Awami League leader was the chief guest.

Ex-Chhatra League leader Mr. Mirinal Karim Das Munshiganj district Juba League President Mr. Jamal Hussain attended the meeting.

Chittagong

Admission test postponed

January 15: Admission test for 1st year honours course in forestry of the Chittagong University for the session 1990-91, scheduled to be held on January 17, has been postponed due to unavoidable reason, a university press release said, reports BSS.

Fresh date for the test will be announced later on. The date of acceptance of application forms for the admission will remain unchanged, the press release added.



MUNSHIGANJ: With water in canals receding during the winter, a bigger catch is made easy by the indigenous technique of fence, typical scene in the countryside. Star Photo by Mohsin

Much drinking water unsafe in Bangladesh

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 15: Much of Bangladesh's drinking water is unsafe as it carries larger degree of contamination.

Such remarks were carried by the reports of surveys launched by the Environment Pollution Control Authorities on various occasions.

The Environment Pollution Control Department here warned against the use of drinking water available in some hotels, restaurants, overhead tanks of residential quarters and ponds in the port city of Chittagong.

The warning that signalled the paucity of pure drinking water in this major port city, came after a recent survey launched over those areas by Chittagong Environment Pollution Control Department. The survey reports revealed that the water was carrying harmful virus coliform estimated around 120 in each millilitre instead of the acceptable figure

at four coliforms in each 100 millilitre water which might risk the lives of people causing an outbreak of severe intestinal diseases and jaundice.

The survey reports were prepared after extensive researches into the samples of water collected from different locations of the city. The officials of Environment Pollution Control made another survey one year back both in the city here and 13 districts under Chittagong Division while all the survey reports had revealed the availability of harmful virus in drinking water used there. At that time, 12 hotels of Chittagong city came under the survey and waters of eight of them were found to be containing harmful bacteria ranging from 250 to 2000.

The districts surveyed at that time included Chittagong, Chadpur, Moulavi Bazar, Comilla, Sunamganj, Habigonj, Sylhet, Brahmanbaria, Feni, Cox's Bazar, Rangamati,

Noakhali, and Lakshimpur. The sample of water collected from there also bears symptoms of contamination as the ponds and streams are inundated every year during floods. In rural Bangladesh the main sources of water are ponds and rivers and waters of those cannot be used for drinking without making germfree.

In the city, contamination of waters could be attributed to unclear overhead and underground water tanks, the officials said adding that people are hardly conscious to keep their water tanks clean and that results in growth and multiplication of virus day by day causing contamination.

The environment officials advised the people to be very careful about drinking water anywhere. Meanwhile, Chittagong City Corporation is expected to launch an operation against the use of impure drinking water in the city.

Notes from Khulna

From 'Our Khulna office

KHULNA, Jan 15: Workers of Bangladesh Match Factory staged a blockade Sunday at Rupsha ferryghat for reopening of locked-out factory.

Workers of Dada Match Factory and other industries also took part. AL, BNP, Jamaat, APSU and SKOP leaders of Khulna expressed their solidarity with them.

In a rally, they declared a gherao programme on January 16 and a token hunger strike on January 20.

Arms recovered

After the expiry of deadline of 26 December last for surrendering illegal arms, Khulna Metropolitan Police and members of the district police recovered 10 unauthorised fire arms and 86 pounds of ammunition during the last fortnight. Police Sources said that during the time of General amnesty, only one unauthorised arms was deposited to police while the other arms were recovered in different drives. Meanwhile, the local unit of All Party Students Unity, Jubo Sangram Parishad and the three major political alliances demand recovery of all illegal firearms before the ensuing parliamentary polls.

Killing condemned

The killing of Transport labour leader Kalipada Shaha has been strongly condemned by labour leaders of different transport unions. Kalipada Shaha alias Kalu (40) President of Khulna district Baby-taxi Union was killed last Monday evening in his union office here. The miscreants stabbed him to death while one of Kalus associates one Nuru mistry received severe injuries and now undergoing treatment at Khulna General Hospital.

A case has been registered with Khulna Thana Police.

The Police have arrested two persons in this connection. The arrested persons are Anwar and Hashmat. Meanwhile, Presidents and General Secretaries of Khulna Divisional Truck Workers Union and Khulna Private Car Drivers Union in two separate statements condemned the killing of the labour leader and demanded exemplary panishment to the killers. Condoled meeting of the baby taxi drivers was held here on Wednesday to mourn the death of the labour leader and all the baby-taxies of the city and nearby routes were off the roads on Wednesday in protest against the killing.

Newsman injured

The News Editor of a local English daily Kazi Amanullah received severe leg injury in a road incident here last Tuesday.

He received the injury from the motor cycle on which he was travelling. Mr Aman was taken to Khulna General Hospital for treatment. He is now undergoing treatment at his residence.

Freshers' reception

From Our Correspondent

MANIKGANJ, Jan 15: The Students Union of Government Devendra College, Manikganj, arranged a freshers' reception recently in the college auditorium with Prof. Mohammad Saedul Haque, the Principal of the college was in the chair.

Mr Nurul Alam Khan, the Deputy Commissioner of Manikganj was the chief guest and the special guest was student leader and freedom fighter Mr. Tobarak Hossain Ludu. The reception was followed by a cultural programme

Forged currency notes recovered

From Our Correspondent

NAOGAON, Jan 15: CID police caught red handed Abed Ali (48), son of late Kashem Ali of village, Kalkapur, Naogaon with 29 forged currency notes of 500 taka denomination.

CID constable Md. Azizur Rahman, on secret information, followed the accused and arrested him from Dharmatala ghat of Naogaon town.

Fertilizer scarce

Acute scarcity of different kinds of fertilizer, specially Urea and TSP (Tripple Super Phosphate) for the last few days in the Raninagar and Atrai Upazila is hampering cultivation. When contacted some dealers of fertilizers told me that supply of fertilizer by BADC is insufficient. Fertilizer is being sold at black market in a much higher price.

Immediate supply of fertilizer to meet the target of IRRi cultivation in the coming season is a must.

Ban on export Tk 42 cr froglegs rotting at storages

From Our Correspondent

KHULNA, Jan 15: Froglegs worth about Taka 42 crore now lying in different cold storages of Khulna and Chittagong regions are losing its quality following the decision of the ban on export and processing of froglegs by the past government. It is doubtful whether these huge volume of froglegs will be exported or not.

According to a reliable source, the ban on export of froglegs was imposed in September.

Last year with prior notice. As a result huge quantity of froglegs which has been lying in different cold storages during the last thirteen months, are losing its quality. The froglegs have now lost all their market value.

The source further said the past government imposed the ban on the export and processing of froglegs on the plea of maintaining ecological balance. But the froglegs which were in the cold storages during the time of announcement of the decision, could not get importance for selling it abroad. Besides, no decision was taken to export these froglegs to foreign countries during the last months.

A few months back an Indian Daily 'Aazkaal' published a news item that the export of froglegs will be reconsidered.

But the concerned authority said they were not aware of any such move.

Ill effects of smuggled pesticide alarming

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, Jan 15: In spite of repeated warnings by the Agriculture Department regarding the hazardous effects of imported pesticides farmers are largely using these smuggled items.

Farmers are Sherpur, Jamalpur, Rangpur, Mymensingh and Lalmonirhat are using banned Indian pesticide Thiodine profusely in paddy fields. According to plants protection experts, Thiodine is so toxic that it not only damages crops but also disturbs ecological balance to a great extent. Once applied in the fields, it kills the pests including other beneficial insects and frogs, fish, birds and snakes. After effects of Thiodine is so harmful that it makes cereal plants poisonous. Besides, the straw of paddy plants contaminated by Thiodine has also been proved injurious to cattlehead. Worse still the paddy itself becomes harmful even for human consumption.

When asked farmers of Bakshiganj upazila close to border, admitted that besides Thiodine they procure other Indian pesticides like Thionel,

Hengidal and Vildol. They prefer Indian Thiodine for its effectiveness in combating the pests promptly.

They further added that the price of Thiodine is much lower than the country-made pests killers.

Moreover Indian High Yielding Variety (HYV) paddy is largely cultivated by the Bangladeshi farmers at the bordering areas. IR-50, Ratna and Minicatic varieties are being grown in Bakshiganj, Dewanganj, Fulpur, Ghenaigati, Sreebordi, Nalitabari, Itali, Sanandabari and other upazilas. The seeds of these varieties are being smuggled into Bangladesh frequently.

On the other hand, Bangladeshi varieties special BR-10 and BR-11, are largely used by Indian farmers. Moreover, wheat seeds, Vitkanehon and Sonalika are being smuggled to India.

Drug addicts on rise

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Jan 15: The number of addicts is growing alarmingly in Kushtia town with easy availability of foreign and country made liquor and drugs like morphine, sedative tablets.

Even rural youths are increasingly becoming addicts. As drugs are sold openly in medicine shops and groceries. It is alleged that a well organized gang has been smuggling these items from India.

An unofficial survey reveals that about five per cent of the teenagers in the town are addicts.

Although sale of drugs without prescription is prohibited, dishonest medicine shop owners allegedly carry on the trade for overprofiting.

It is also alleged that the drug addicts are involved in various crimes in the town to raise drug money.

Political scene

Day labourers hired for polls campaign

Star report

The upazila townships have now virtually turned into vast election camps for all political parties. These are all makeshift camps fitted with microphones. Electric bulbs glow all through the night and tea is served to the workers present in each camp free of cost.

In most places there has been shortage of day labourers and also workers for the factories in upazila towns. Political parties have hired them on daily wage basis for election duty. Their jobs will last till the parliamentary polls are over on February 27.

Normal work in fields, factories and offices has been disrupted as the election campaign gaining momentum.

Our Patuakhali Correspondent writes: Political activities in Patuakhali have gained momentum. A good number of candidates submitted nomination papers for the ensuing elections.

There will be a hard competition between Awami League backed candidate Mr. Shahjahan and BNP backed candidate Mr. Keramat Ali, a former Cabinet Secretary.

Jammal-E-Islami candidate is also supposed to bag some votes in his favour. Jatiya Party, a political organisation of the ousted government of President Ershad, did not sit idle. Though at the first stage of mass demonstration they went underground, now they have come out of their hiding as the sentiment of people calmed down. On January 10, former Zila Parishad Chairman and M.P., Sardar Abdur Rashid flanked by his partymen submitted his nomination paper to the election office to Assistant Returning Officer.

Another candidate, Mr. Abdul Bari, has also submitted his nomination paper from Zaker Party. After filing the nomination papers he along with his party men paraded the main thoroughfares of the district in a procession chanting slogans to cast vote in his favour.

Posting, miking, canvassing, procession, colourful rally have become the day-to-day occurrences in the town. Most walls in the town are filled up with posters urging voters to cast their votes in favour of different candidates. No untoward incident has so far been reported.

Witnesses said that Muni's car was damaged and its driver hurt in the incident. The nomination paper, however, was submitted.

Candidates of different political parties submitted a total of 43 nomination papers from three constituencies of the district.

Twenty candidates will contest from constituency-1 (Nazirpur), 12 from constituency-2 (Mathbaria) and 11 from Pirojpur-3 (Kawkhali-Bhandaria).

BAKSAL president Mohiuddin Ahmed and Sudhansu Sekher Halder of Awami League are the other prominent candidates.

Khulna

Our Khulna Correspondent states: Election campaign in Khulna city for the forthcoming parliamentary election is going on in full swing. From this area (Khulna-2) Sheikh Razzak Ali from B.N.P., Advocate Manjurul Imam from Awami League and Alhaz Shamsur Rahman from Jamaat-



PABNA: This is how election campaign taking place in the remotest corners of rural Bangladesh. —Star photo

21,789 tribals in CHT rehabilitated

CHITTAGONG, Jan 15: Khagrachari Local Government Parishad has rehabilitated 21,789 tribals who returned from Indian camps during the past few months, according to an official source here yesterday, reports BSS.

The returnees including members of Chakma, Marma, Tripura and other tribal communities said that they were kept in refugee camps where water, medicine and food were not supplied regularly. They also said that some tribal

refugees had died in Indian camps without proper medicare.

The government has undertaken a Taka 15-crore rehabilitation programme for the tribals returning from India, the source said.

The returnees further said that most of the tribals detained in Indian camps were eager to return home but the so-called Janasanghati leaders were not allowing them to do so.