

Upazila roundup

MAULVI BAZAR

Road needs repair

From Our Correspondent
January 21: Maulvi Bazar Shamsheer Nagar road, a vital communication link between the district headquarter and Kamalgonj upazila has developed cracks and pot holes.

This road connects Kamalgonj upazila with district headquarter via Shamsheer Nagar. A huge quantity of essential commodities is carried through this road. The dilapidated condition of the road has been causing immense sufferings to the passengers and hindering transportation of goods.

Considering the situation people of the area expect early renovation of the road.

Telephone office

Telephone and Telegraph office of the district is beset with manifold problems due to inadequate staff, telephones and accommodation facilities.

According to the sources, people who come to the office for telephone and telegraphs have to remain outside due to absence of adequate waiting room.

Besides, privacy of the telephonic conversation cannot be maintained as the office is housed in a very old and small room.

Inadequate number of telephone sets can hardly cope with the rising need of the people. Moreover, staff shortage has further aggravated the situation.

It may be mentioned that Maulvi Bazar telephone and telegraph office is the second largest revenue earner of the greater Sylhet and third largest in Chittagong district.

JHENIDAH

Brother, sister die in road mishap

From Our Correspondent

January 21: Brother and sister both were killed in a road accident at New Market of Jessore town on Dhaka-Khulna road on January 16.

Police said victims Rashida (7) and Sharif (5) children of Mr. Manjur Ali died on the spot when Jhenidah bound bus Jessore BA 933 ran over them.

Eye witnesses said that they were playing on the road side. Bodies of the victims were sent to Jessore Hospital.

A case has been filed with Jessore Kotwali Thana.

NABINAGAR

Fish disease

From Our Correspondent

January 21: Different kinds of fish like kot, magur, shol, gajar, taki, tengra have been attacked with ulcerative disease in different areas of Nabinagar and Bancharampur upazilas.

The diseased fish are being sold in the markets side by side with the other fish, which have not yet been attacked with the disease.

Apart from this, the diseased fish are also being dried up in the rural areas much to the concern of the common consumers.

Power failure

Frequent failure of power supply and fluctuation in voltage are regular feature in this upazila.

As a result, the upazila sadar and other areas incur financial loss. Owners of mills and factories are also facing inconveniences.

Besides, fluctuation of voltage also causes damage to electronic materials.

SATKHIRA

3 women commit suicide

January 21: Three women committed suicide here in separate incidents last week due to family feuds, dowry problem and failure in love affairs, police sources said, reports UNB.

The deceased were identified as Debra Kanti (30), wife of Rabindra Mandal of Maheshkhur village, Kallyani Sarkar (22), wife of Radha Sarkar and Anshulata Basar, wife of Arun Basar of Bardali village of Ashantia upazila of the district.

Minor girl killed

Another report adds: A running minibus Saturday knocked down a rickshaw near Laboni cinema hall in the town killing a minor girl and injuring her mother, police here said.

The victim, Fahria Khatun (3) was killed on the spot while her mother was sent to sadar hospital.

KHULNA

Chamber chief concerned over price rise

January 21: President of Khulna Chamber of Commerce and Industries Shaikh Abul Kashem and Vice-President Iqbal Hossain Nanna in a joint statement on Sunday expressed their deep concern at the phenomenal rise of prices of the essentials on the pretext of Gulf war, reports BSS.

They called upon the trading community not to make money on miseries of people by increasing price-level of essentials.

The Chamber leaders also urged upon concerned authorities to take effective steps against any such attempt by unscrupulous traders.

SIRAJGANJ

Father-in-law, husband jailed for dowry

January 21: Father-in-law and husband have been sent to jail custody for illegally demanding dowry, reports UNB.

Sources said, Sadar Upazila Magistrate court took the decision, recently under Dowry Provisions Act, 525 BPC.

According to sources, Kobad Ali had taken recourse to oppression to realise Tk. 25,000 from his wife Milton Begum of Elong village under Raiganj Upazila.

Milton Begum filed a case against her husband and father-in-law, Jalal Khan in the Upazila Court. Accordingly court issued warrants of arrests against them.

Later the case was transferred to Sirajganj Administrative court. Her father-in-law and Husband appeared at the court and was sent to jail by Magistrate Abdul Malek.

CHITTAGONG

Annual exercise of Navy held

January 21: The annual training exercise of Bangladesh Navy concluded in the Bay of Bengal on Sunday, reports BSS.

About 25 ships of various types took part in the exercise. Chief of the Naval Staff Rear Admiral Amir Ahmed Mustafa was on board BNS Osman to assess the effectiveness of the exercise, an ISPR press release said.

On the concluding day of the exercise on Sunday surface to surface missile firing, anti-submarine rocket firing, anti-aircraft firing and other exercises were carried out. For the first time guided missile frigate BNS Osman successfully launched guided missiles and effectively hit the assigned target.

The exercise was also witnessed by Chief of the Army Staff Lieutenant General Muhammad Nooruddin Khan, Principal Staff Officers of the services headquarters and other senior army, airforce and naval officers.

The exercise was planned by the naval headquarters and was executed by the Commodore Commanding BN Flotilla, added the press release.

GAZIPUR

20 kutcha houses gutted

January 21: At least twenty kutcha houses and eight cotton stores were gutted and 12 people were injured in a fire at Tulapaty near Tongi Mill gate last evening, reports UNB.

Firemen from Tongi, Gazipur and Tejgaon fire stations rushed to the spot but failed to completely extinguish flame in two hours.

Four cattlehead were reported to have roasted in the fire.

District police suspect the fire originated from a kitchen and soon spread to kutcha houses and cotton stores.

The loss in the fire was unofficially estimated at Taka 20 lakh.

The injured were admitted to Tongi Hospital.

BRAHMANBARIA

Urs

January 21: The annual Urs of Qutub-e-Zaman Alhaj Syed Akhtarul Hussainy (RA) will be held on January 26 at Khan-dura Hussainia Darbar Sharif in the district, reports UNB.

A Milad mahfil and Zikr will also be held on the occasion. A special muhajjat will also be held on the following morning seeking blessings of Allah for the Muslim ummah.

Sajjada Nashin of the Darbar Syed Mahfuzul Jalal (Sheikhul Hadis) has urged all the disciples and devotees to attend the Urs in time.



With the waters of haors, baors, canals, beels receding in rural areas during the winter, fishermen go for a big catch. They go far across the plains in a hope of earning more to help them during lean period. - Star photo

Thakurgaon blacksmiths face uncertainty

From Our Correspondent

THAKURGAON, Jan 21: Blacksmiths of Thakurgaon district have been facing multifarious problems and this age-old industry of the district is now on the verge of ruination due to lack of patronisation.

It is gathered that having been unable to grapple with the problems, many blacksmiths of the district have already given up their old profession while others are trying to find out other suitable profession.

About 500 families in Shibganj, Baliadangi, Ruhea, Kochabari, Banisankal and Pirganj have been engaged in this vocation from generation to generation. Most of them are blacksmiths by birth and they do not require any other training to earn their livelihood.

The blacksmiths reside in groups in different areas of the district. While talking to this correspondent, some of them informed that the prices of rod, coal and other things have now increased many times which are beyond their purchasing capacity. They lose their customers as there is a hard competition with machine made tools.

Prices and demand of the tools produced by them are not commensurate with the production cost. The cumulative affects of all these have forced many blacksmiths to become day labourers.

Civic life in jeopardy

Meanwhile, Pirganj is an important centre for business, education and communication with a growing population is plagued with numerous problems. Absence of proper drainage system, want of good roads, sanitary arrangement, modern markets, recreational facilities are some of the problems which irritate the people of Pirganj Pirashava under Thakurgaon district.

Due to lack of good drainage system, people of this town are suffering a lot. All existing drains remain open and are full of filthy waters, weeds and garbage. These drains have been turned into ideal breeding ground of mosquitoes. In the populated areas there is no drain to pass filthy water which pollutes surroundings.

Most of the roads in the town are narrow and some of them have developed deep holes and cracks for want of proper maintenance, causing difficulty for vehicles to ply over them. The rain water remains stagnant on the roads causing immense trouble to the people.

In absence of public toilets in the pourashava town and at the bus stand people find it difficult to respond to the call of nature. People thus pollute environment by using roadside, and also nooks and corners of shops. Moreover, most of the roads in the town particularly college hat road remains dirty. Filthy water which comes on the road and bad odour of some manholes, creates trouble to the passersby.

Markets need care

There is only one market in the town for the growing population but, it is not quite sufficient for the buyers and the sellers. The condition of the college hat market is not at all good. In the rainy day, people can not enter the market as there is no good street. Moreover, the floating and permanent shops have narrowed the entrance to the market. Due to Lack of slaughtering house, bad smell spread through the area causing health hazards to the people.

For want of recreational facilities particularly the children of this town are facing much inconvenience. There is no park where the children can spend their leisure time. Some times the students of the local educational institutions use the Dak Bungalow ground.

The people of this pourashava town expect that the authorities concerned should take necessary steps to solve the problems.

Arms licence of II JP leaders to be cancelled

From Our Khulna Office

KHULNA, Jan 20: Khulna Metropolitan Police has asked the District Administration to cancel firearms licences of Jatya Party leaders of the city.

In an official memo the city Special Branch of the (KMP) has asked the Deputy Commissioner, Khulna, the issuing authority of the licences on January 6 to cancel those licences.

The licence holders are Mr. Mukhtar Hossain, former Jatya Party Member of Parliament, Mr. Ikhtiaruddin Ibabu and Mr. Kismatul Alam Kagachi both former Deputy Mayors, Khulna City Corporation, Mr. Monirul Islam, Professor Ali Reza Babu, Mr. Ershad Shikdar, Mr. Moslem, Mr. Nazim, Mr. Mostakim, Mr. Hasibul Haq Babla and Sharif Shaifuddin City Corporation Commissioners.

The firearms licences holders were all J.P. top notchers of Khulna and many criminal cases including murder charges were brought against them, it is learnt from reliable sources.

It is not known why the city Special Branch of the KMP did not ask for cancellation of firearms licences of another dozens of JP stalwarts who were issued firearms during past regime. The police in the memo sent to the Deputy Commissioner Khulna apprehending use of those arms in the ensuing parliamentary polls to disrupt it.

According to a latest information, the District Authority is yet to take any decision to this effect.

Meanwhile, when contacted, the SP Khulna declined to confirm any such request made by his office to the District Administration for cancellation of firearms licences issued to a number of JP workers in different upazilas of the district.

Step to keep prices stable

391 tons foodgrains allotted for Khulna

From Our Correspondent

KHULNA Jan 21: Three hundred and ninety one metric tons of rice have been allotted for Khulna district this month with a view to keeping the prices of food grains stable in the market. Concerned sources said, of the total rice, 35 metric tons have been sanctioned for Rupsha upazila (UZ), 48 metric tons for Dighalia UZ, 30 metric tons for Phulata UZ, 43 metric tons for Terokhada UZ, 31 metric tons for Battaghata UZ, 66 metric tons for Dumuria UZ, 34 metric tons for Dacope UZ, 68 metric tons for Paikgacha UZ and 44 metric tons have been sanctioned for Koira UZ.

During the same period, 40 metric tons of salt have also been sanctioned in the district which will be distributed through the authorised dealers of the district.

Khulna thana unit of Mukti-joddha Sanghati Parishad has been dissolved due to its organisational inactiveness, says a Press release of the organisation.

Photo show
A two-day photo exhibition based on Liberation war organised by Shadhinata Academy began today (Thursday) at local ST. Joseph's School premises.

Deputy Commissioner of Khulna Md. Asaduzzaman (Shutyan) inaugurated the exhibition.

The General election of Khulna Metropolitan Bus Truck Multipurpose Co-operative Society Ltd will be held on March 22. In this connection a three member committee has been formed to conduct the election. Those who are interested to participate in the election have been requested to contact

the society office.

A fort-night long indoor games competition organised by the Engineers Welfare Association of Radio Bangladesh, Khulna concluded on Wednesday through the holding of the final match of the badminton tournament at the Broadcasting House premises.

Additional Divisional Commissioner of Khulna Md. Younus Ali and the Deputy Director of Government Employees Welfare Directorate Abdul Mannan were present as chief guest and special guest respectively.

Kerosene, diesel prices up

Irri, Boro farming faces setback

NARAIL, Jan 20: Cultivation of Irri-Boro paddy on 40,000 acres of land in the district has been facing setback due to acute scarcity of fuel, reports UNB.

According to farmers, acute scarcity of diesel has been prevailing in the district for the last few days. As a result, of the total 806 shallow tubewells and 180 low lift pumps, most of them have been rendered inoperative.

Meanwhile, price of kerosene has also shot up in the markets following the scarcity of diesel. At present per litre kerosene is being sold at Tk 20 as against Tk 15 a few days back.

A large number of power pump and shallow tubewell owners brought out a procession Thursday with empty diesel container in their hands which paraded the main thoroughfares of the town demanding smooth supply of fuel.

Later, they handed over a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner of the district.

Another report from Satkhira said that the price of fuel has shot up suddenly due to outbreak of Gulf war adversely affecting the farmers.

Market sources said kerosene is selling between Tk 40 and 50 per gallon while per liter petrol is selling at Taka 30. Price of diesel also has shot up abnormally.

Political scene

Transport in high demand

Star Report

There has been a heavy rush for procuring transport by the political activists at busy places in rural Bangladesh. Rickshaw vans and bullock carts in northern region of the country are in high demand. These are being used for election campaign.

The vans have been fitted with microphones and horns. Curious crowd gathers around a van when it reaches a neighbourhood.

At times auto-tempos are also hired by party workers to carry on polls campaign at distant places.

Attention of all sections of people is now concentrated on the election day, February 27.

Our Khulna Correspondent writes: Most walls of the city are now covered with colourful posters of different political parties. Meetings, rallies and processions are continuing but to some extent downward trend is being observed in election campaign due to sudden breakout of Gulf war. However, the walls have been written mostly with the slogans of Awami League candidate Advocate Monjurul Imam, B.N.P. candidate Advocate S. Razzak Ali, Jamaat-e-Islami candidate Alhaj Shamsur Rahman and Five Party Alliance candidate Advocate A.B.M. Nurul Alam. But Jamaat-e-Islami is much ahead in writing on walls. Some walls have been occupied in favour of Shaikh Abul Kashem, an independent candidate, but his election campaign has not yet begun.

From this constituency (Khulna-2) only a journalist Alhaj Lyaquat Ali, Editor, the Daily Pubanchal, is contesting the Parliamentary election. From Khulna-3 constituency Awami League candidate Begum Monnujan Sufian, B.N.P. candidate Ashraf Hossain, Jamaat-e-Islami candidate Maulana A.K.M. Yousuf and Jatya Party candidate S.M.A. Rob have begun their election campaign in following which include writing on walls, pasting of posters, meetings, rallies and processions.

Our Jhenidah Correspondent adds: A meeting arranged by all political parties was held at Agrani Bank square of Jhenidah town in protest against price hike of essentials.

It is reported that after the spreading of the news of Gulf War unscrupulous businessmen have started creating artificial crisis, selling essentials including fuel at high prices. Kerosene is now being sold at Taka 95 per gallon as against Taka 56 earlier. Prices of rice and soyabean have marked a sharp rise. Panic stricken customers seen gathered at the fuel depot.

Presided over by Golam Sarwar the meeting cautioned the dishonest businessmen not to create artificial crisis.

Another news from Jhenidah adds: About 400 people brought out a procession against American attack on Iraq, on Friday.

The processionists also burnt the effigy of President Bush, they paraded the main streets of the town chanting various slogans in favour of Saddam.

The discussion meeting was held on Saturday at a local hotel in the city under the joint auspices of Zia Parishad, Khulna and Jatyaatabadi Samajik Sangskritik Sangstha in observance of 55th birth anniversary of late President Ziaur Rahman.

Former Minister advocate A. H. Deldar Ahmed was the chief guest at the discussion while central leader of BNP advocate Sheikh Razzak Ali was the special guest.

Others who participated in the discussion included messrs Sadiquillah, Khan Hatab, Shamsur Rahman, Amly Pal and Shaah Abu Baker Siddique.

The discussion meeting was presided over by Syed Afzal Baker, President of Khulna unit of Zia Parishad.

Rajshahi
Our Rajshahi Correspondent adds: Eight upazilas of the district are now poised for hectic electioneering following the

submission of nomination papers by different political organisations.

A series of processions and rallies are being held regularly by different parties.

Wall writings, posters, miking and banners with the party symbols are displayed everywhere in the district in favour of candidates to capture the attention of the voters.

The candidates are visiting their respective constituencies of mobilise support. Campaigners are seen moving door to door requesting the voters to cast their votes in favour of their candidates.

A total of 55 candidates will contest for five seats from Rajshahi district. The constituencywise breakup is -- 8 candidates will contest for Rajshahi-1 constituency, 17 candidates in Rajshahi-2, 10 in Rajshahi-3, 9 candidates in Rajshahi-4 and 11 in Rajshahi-5.

Among the prominent candidates Barrister Aminul Haque (BNP), Professor Mojibur Rahman (Jamaat), Mohammad Mohsin (Awami League) and former Mayor of Rajshahi city Durul Huda (JP) will contest from Rajshahi-1. Son of late Kamruzzaman (Ex-minister of Mujib government), Kheyruzzaman Liton (AL), Advocate Kabir Hossain (BNP), Ataur Rahman (Jamaat), Ayenuddin (Muslim League) and ex-(RUCSU) VP Fazley Hossain Badsha (UCL) will contest from Rajshahi-2.

Enamul Haque (BNP), Rakhil Chandra Das (AL), Ahad Ali (Jamaat) and former minister of Jatya Party Sardar Amjad Hossain will contest from Rajshahi-3.

Abdus Sattar Mondal (BNP), Tajul Islam Faruk (AL), Professor Moksad Ali (Jamaat) and Ayenuddin (Muslim League) will contest from Rajshahi-4. Dr. Alauddin (AL), Azizur Rahman (BNP) and Professor Abdul Mannan (Jamaat) will contest from Rajshahi-5.

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Meanwhile, Rotary District Boalmari- Monipur Nilmoniganj, Rotary Village Crops sponsored by Rotary Club of Dhaka has initiated a programme to protect the nature from pollution and tree plantation in rural areas, says a Press release.

For this a tree plantation programme has recently started on the 4 km stretch of fallow land beginning from Kulchura railgate to Betharia railgate along Khulna-Parbatipur railway track.

A senior officer of the Bangladesh Railway West Zone was present when the 22 acres of fallow land was physically transferred to RVC BM Nilmoniganj on January 6 at a meeting held at Monipur (Nilmoniganj).

Presided over by Mr. Shaiful Islam Pinu, Upazila Chairman of Chuadanga Sadar the meeting was attended by Rtn. Dr. Akhtaruzzaman of Rotary Club of Dhaka, who is the contact Rotarian of the same project as chief guest.

The programme was earlier inaugurated by the Joint Secretary Dr. Md. Khalilullah.

Meanwhile, Rotary District Governor Mostafa Zaman Abbasi inaugurated Rotary Village Park-1 and RVC Park-2 and Botanical Garden on the west side of Mominpur Railway Station, Rtn. President Md. Salimullah, Rtn. P.P. Sanaullah Shaik, Rtn. Secretary Dr. Rakibul Hossain Rumi, Rtn. Dr. Akhtaruzzaman visited the project and officially handed over the document of memorandum of understanding signed in the office of the Railway Secretary.

The allotted 22 acres of land is divided into 14 blocks and 14 RVC members are entrusted to supervise the respective blocks. Approximately 10,000 timber trees i.e. Shisso, Mahogoni, Garjan and others suitable for railway sleepers will be planted.

Besides, plantation of fruit trees, floriculture, pisciculture, agro forestry programmes will be undertaken to check environmental pollution.

Maulvi Bazar
Twelve degree examinees were expelled at Maulvibazar Government Coll-ge.