

## Upazila roundup

## NETRAKONA

## Law, order situation reviewed

February 20 : The Secretary of Railway Division, Mr. Nurul Momen Khan held a meeting with the local political leaders, candidates for parliamentary election, chairmen of upazila, pourashava and union parishad and government officials here on Sunday, reports BSS.

The meeting discussed various matters related to Jatiya Sangsad election. The overall law and order situation was also reviewed in the meeting. The Secretary in his speech sought cooperation of all for holding a fair, free and impartial election. He said the election is most important for establishing a democratic government.

## FARIDPUR

## Cultural contest

February 20 : A three-day long literary and cultural competition of Government Sarada Sundari Mahila College held at the college auditorium recently, reports BSS.

The competition was inaugurated by Kh. Nurul Islam, Principal of Government Yasin College. The inaugural function was presided over by Mia Lutfar Rahman, Principal of the college.

In literary competition Zakia Akhtar Hamid and Farida Begum became champion and runners-up respectively. In cultural competition Tania Parvin became champion while Manju Rani Sarkar followed her as runners-up. Shah Mohd. Farhad, Professor in-Charge of Literary and Cultural section conducted the three-day long competition.

## C'NAWABGANJ

## Training course for election officers

February 20 : A one-day training course for the Presiding Officers, Assistant Presiding Officers and Polling Officers of the Nawabganj-3 Constituency was held on Monday in the Shahid Shatu Hall here, reports BSS.

Mr. Ashraf Ali, Returning Officer and Deputy Commissioner, Nawabganj explained the functions and method of conducting election, the duties of these officers. He said that the responsibilities of the Presiding, Assistant Presiding and Polling Officers were very great.

Thirteen hundred officials of various categories attended the training course.

Similar training course was held in Nawabganj-2 Constituency Sunday.

## BARISAL

## Phone exchange building to be constructed

February 20 : A telephone exchange building will be constructed in Mehendigonj Upazila of Barisal district in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the government has sanctioned Taka 35,63,000 for the construction of the building.

Work on the project has already been started and is expected to be completed within the current fiscal year, the source said.

## 3 killed in separate incidents in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Feb 20 : Three persons died on February 16 in Narayanganj and Narasingdi in separate incidents.

According to police source Mr. Tasjuddin (52) of Murgara under Rugganji Upazila was gunned down by unidentified persons. Police recovered his body from Rugganji.

In another incident a minibus (Dhaka-Cha-4923) ran over Ragh Mia (22) while he was crossing the Dhaka-Ghorashal highway and the victim died on the spot. The driver escaped with his bus.

In other incident at Raipura Upazila at Babbar a housewife Anowara Begum (20) was killed by her husband. A case has been registered with Raipura thana in this connection.

The postmortem of the corpses was done in the Narayanganj General Hospital morgue.

## Founding anniversary

The 10th foundation anniversary of the Leo Club of

## MAGURA

## WDB to build embankment

February 20 : Water Development Board (WDB) has earmarked Taka 39.30 lakh for the construction of an embankment at Badanpur in Sreepur upazila during the current fiscal year, officials here said, reports UNB.

The executive engineer of WDB said that the work would start from next month and would be completed within next June.

The main canal of GK project will be saved and erosion of Goral river banks checked after the completion of the scheme.

Meanwhile, Taka 2.11 lakh has been sanctioned for repairing and development of the district sub jail during the current financial year.

According to official sources, the work will start soon and is expected to be completed by next April.

## SIRAJGANJ

## Dawn to dusk hartal observed

February 20 : A dawn to dusk hartal was observed in the town at the call of Businessmen Association and Shop Employees Union to protest the killing of Joyal Abedin, reports UNB.

Joyal Abedin, Manager of Milton Traders, a shop at Station Road was killed by some miscreants at the shop on Saturday.

All business establishments remained closed during the hartal while transaction in banks also remained suspended.

A protest meeting was held Monday demanding arrest of the killers. Police after the incident arrested two youths in connection with the murder and hunt for six others is in progress.

## RAJBARI

## 150 houses gutted

February 20 : At least 150 houses were gutted and goods worth about Taka 30 lakh damaged when a devastating fire broke out at a brothel here on Monday, reports UNB.

Witnesses said that the fire which broke out at around 3-30 in the morning at Daulatdia brothel of Goalunda, originated from a room in the brothel and soon engulfed the whole area.

A gay girl received injuries in the fire.

Fire Service from Rajbari rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control.

The cause of the fire, however, could not be ascertained.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (Gen) and Sr ASP visited the spot after the incident.

## KUSHTIA

## Marfat Ali's killing protested

February 20 : The Nazam-e-Janaza of Mr. Marfat Ali, a JSD (Rob) candidate for the coming parliamentary elections from Kushtia-2 Constituency, who was shot dead Sunday night by unknown assailants, was held at Mirpur College Maidan here, a JSD Press release said.

Thousands of people took part in the Janaza. Demonstrations and rallies, protesting the killing of the Marfat Ali were held at Bheramara and Mirpur.



PABNA: Load of livelihood is heavy for women too. Women and child labourers toiling hard at a road construction site.

—Star Photo

## Fund constraints

## Construction of Islamic varsity bldg. suspended

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Feb 20 : Works on construction of buildings of Islamic University along with different district level government offices in Kushtia, Chuadanga and Meherpur districts have remained suspended during the last five months following fund constraints, it is learnt.

Stoppage of construction of Islamic University Buildings which was given top priority has astonished the people of Kushtia as well as the students studying in the University. The contractors who have finished their job have not yet been paid any money against their bills rather they have been asked to wait till placement of fund. The contractors who started their work have been asked to stop their work until and unless they receive further order from the authority concerned. Their payment have also been held up.

The students and teachers who were scheduled to be accommodated in newly constructed building at the University site of Santidanga Daulatpur have been facing much hardship due to the sudden stoppage of construction of buildings. In this way academic atmosphere of Islamic University have been losing ground causing serious threat to the fate of those students studying there.

## Tk 50 cr crops damaged

Reports of damages caused by unprecedented hailstorm which lashed Bheramara and Daulatpur upazilas on February 4 are pouring in district officials said. Entire standing crops in the areas like wheat, tobacco, betel leaf plantation, newly sown boro paddy and mango sprout along with large number of kutchas houses have been damaged rendering five thousand people homeless.

Deputy Commissioner, Kushtia who visited some parts of the affected areas told that such hailstorm was never seen before in this part of the country and it went like tornado killing large number of birds. Agricultural extension department has roughly estimated the crop damage to the tune of Taka 50 crores.

Deputy Commissioner said that 24 metric tons of rice as gratuitous relief and 100 tons of biscuits have been distributed among the victims. Higher authority has been informed of the damage and further relief would be given after sanction is made by the government.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner held a meeting with all the Upazila Chairmen and UNO and asked them to submit detailed report of damages for onward transmission to Dhaka. Deputy Commissioner also held a meeting with the Bankers and requested them to provide easy loan to the affected farmers who have sustained heavy due to hailstorm.

## 'Zaker Party' contesting polls to save Islam'

FARIDPUR, Feb 20 : Shaheb of Atrashi has said that the 12 crore people of Bangladesh would face a very critical situation if a society based on Islamic values was not guaranteed in the country, reports BSS.

Commenting on the participation of Zaker Party in the forthcoming election Pir Shaheb said that he wanted to bring peace and save Islam through this electoral battle. He said that he had sent the message of Islam to his millions of followers through his election symbol Rose to help him build an Islamic society.

He was talking to a group of visitors Sunday at Biswa Zaker Manzil during Annual Urs Mubarak which started Saturday. The Pir Shaheb said that he would oppose any attempt to delete the terms Allah and Bismillah from the Constitution. He described the attempt of few political leaders to brand him as anti-liberation element as unfortunate.

He said that during liberation war he had provided freedom fighters of his locality with food and shelter. Describing Saddam Hussein as the champion of Islam of present time the Pir Shaheb said that he had told the former President Ershad not to send any army to Gulf. Saddam a tested friend of Bangladesh will win in the long run he said.

## Foundation stone laid

From Our Correspondent

COMILLA, Feb 20 : The foundation of Muslim Primary School (Maktab) was laid by the Deputy Commissioner Comilla Mr. Hedayetul Islam Chowdhury recently. The school will be run by Hazrat Sha Abdulla Gazipuri (RA) Mazhar Sharif. A special munajat was held by Shah Ahmed Piara Bugdadi (RA) seeking blessings of Allah for the Muslim Ummah and the institution. Elite of the town were present on occasion.

A two-day long Training Workshop on election reporting and observation process was held here recently at the auditorium of Bangladesh Foundation of Human Rights (BFHR), Comilla.

The workshop included election rules, its functions, practical aspect and craft of writing and observation procedures.

The workshop was inaugurated by the Director General of BARD Mr. Syed Murguburshed and the concluding function was addressed by veteran journalist Mr. Sanaulah Nuri as chief guest. Both the functions were presided over by Principal Delwar Jahid, President Bangladesh Foundation of Human Rights.

## Storekeeper chargesheeted for misappropriation

From A Correspondent

BAGERHAT, Feb 20 : Bagerhat District Anti-Corruption Bureau submitted a chargesheet to the court against Khan Zakir Hossain, former storekeeper of Fakirhat Upazila BADC (Irrigation) on the charge of misappropriation of machinery parts of BADC (irrigation sector) worth Taka 15,224.

According to the chargesheet, Zakir Hossain received machinery parts worth Taka 15,224 from Bagerhat Sadar Upazila BADC unit against Chalan No. 6745 on December 14, 1975. But the storekeeper did not deposit those machinery parts in the Fakirhat BADC store and misappropriated the same.

In this connection a case was registered with Bagerhat P.S. on October, 19, 1989.

The Anti-Corruption Bureau investigated the matter and submitted the chargesheet to the court recently. It is learnt from a knowledgeable source that the accused storekeeper Khan Zakir Hossain who hails from the village Fatepur under Bagerhat Sadar Upazila has been absconding for long. The Anti-Corruption Bureau requested the appropriate authority to arrest Zakir Hossain and seize his properties.

## Population Day

The National Population Day was observed here in a befitting manner under the auspices of Family Planning Department and Sukhi Pribar.

On the occasion a lively discussion meeting was held in the local office of Sukhi Pribar with Mr. M. Salmullah in the chair. Mr. M. A. Mannan Deputy Commissioner of Bagerhat attended the meeting as chief guest. It was addressed by Deputy Commissioner, Deputy Civil Surgeon, Deputy Director of Family Planning, Swamiji of Bagerhat Ramkrishna Mission and Advocate Meer Shawkat Ali Badsha.

## Political scene

## Durgapur versus Kalmakanda

Star report

Election duel between two upazila Chairmen of Durgapur and Kalmakanda in Netrakona district has added more vigour to the polls campaigns. The fight is between the candidates of Awami League and Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) for Netrakona-1 seat (Durgapur-Kalmakanda).

Awami League candidate for this constituency, Mr. Jalal Uddin Talukder is a resident of Durgapur Upazila. Interestingly, Chairman of Durgapur Upazila, Mr. Abdullah Huq is a local leader of CPB.

CPB candidate for the same seat, Mr. Chhabi Biswas has his home at Kalmakanda Upazila. The Chairman of Kalmakanda Upazila, Mr. Abdul Khaleque is an Awami League leader.

Both the Chairmen have openly challenged each other to secure victory for their respective candidate. People are enjoying the fight with rapt attention.

Our Khulna Correspondent writes : As the date of the Jatiya Sangsad election is coming nearer, the electioneering of different political parties contesting the polls in Khulna have been stepped up. Since the ensuing election to be held under a neutral caretaker government for first time in the country all eyes have been focussed on the outcome of the polls which will have a significant impact on our march to the goal of restoration of democratic government under a new constitutional setup — either cabinet or presidential system of government.

As the situation stands now, the present administration of the neutral government is leaving no stone unturned to hold the polls as free, fair and impartial as possible. The voters, however, still remain apprehensive whether they would be able to exercise their rights without any interference and violence.

Their apprehension is believed to have been rooted as a section of candidates fighting the polls are reportedly trying to win the election by resorting to violence as witnessed in the past during the polls day. When this correspondent interviewed a cross-section of voters in the city recently many voters particularly the women folk showed their reluctance to cast votes in the polls apprehending violence.

Any way the candidates and administration is creating mass awareness among the people for holding of a peaceful election on February 27. Meanwhile, with the election campaigns getting momentum, the city wears a festive look with walls, buildings and boundaries covered with colourful posters, slogans and symbols of different political parties. Besides, banners inscribed with party's candidates and symbols have been hung at most crossings of the city. A good number of election camps and arches have been set up at different wards of the city. The election camps have become a place of recreation for the youths.

Many unemployed young men are earning some money being engaged in milking or peeling of posters. Not only

able to exercise their rights without any interference and violence.

There are in all 33 candidates for 4 seats of parliament in Bagerhat district. Of them 10 in Bagerhat-I, seven candidates in Bagerhat-II, five in Bagerhat-III and 11 in Bagerhat-IV constituencies. The electioneering gives the impression that there will be straight fight between BNP, Awami League and Jamaat in Bagerhat 2, 3 and 4 constituencies while fight will be between Awami League and BNP alone in Bagerhat-I constituency as there is no Jamaat candidate.

The prominent candidates include Lt. Col. (Rtd) A.S.M. Mostafizur Rahman, former Home Minister and central leader of BNP Sk. Abdul Aziz, former Agriculture Minister and a member of Awami League Presidium Meer Sakawat Ali Daru, Principal

Advocate Fajur Rahman Molla (Muslim League), Habibur Rahman (JP) and Advocate S A M Sabur (NAP-Muazzafar).

the city dwellers but also the people from outskirts have been enduring the loud sounds of canvassing on mike. Projection meetings, exchanging of views with public on foot are continuing seeking votes and supports.

BNP, AL and Jamaat-e-Islami are much ahead in their election campaign but in some areas GOJ, Jatiya Party, Five Party Alliance and Independent candidates are also seen active in their polls campaign.

A total of 57 candidates including a female candidate are contesting the February 27 parliamentary election from 6 electoral constituencies of Khulna district and a total of 11 lakh 16 thousand voters will get the opportunity to cast their votes.

Of the total constituencies the highest number of candidates are contesting from Khulna-2 (Khulna town) constituency. But this time it is clear that no candidate is

hoping for a easy win as most of the candidates are having the believe of a free, fair and impartial polls.

Our Kushtia Correspondent adds : Polls observers, from SAARC countries are expected to visit Kushtia during election on February 27 it was learnt. Deputy Commissioner, Kushtia while talking to this correspondent said that two polls observers from SAARC countries are expected to arrive at Kushtia to visit polling centres according to their wishes.

Deputy Commissioner however, said that all precautionary measures are being taken to make the election free fair and neutral and law enforcing agencies are being kept alert all over the district and illegal possessors of arms would not dare to create any obstacle in holding the election.

Processions, slogans and meetings are now common features in the localities. Election camps have been set up in every nook and corners in the town and village hats and bazars.

The tempo of election campaign generally picks up in the evening. The workers of the candidates are found appealing to the voters.

The voters are found discussing themselves, the merits and demerits of the candidates.

The total number of voter in Bagerhat district is 854578, of whom 446031 are females.

## Tebunia hat in deplorable condition

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Feb 20 : The Tebunia hat of Pabna is now in a deplorable condition causing immense sufferings to both the traders and consumers.

Absence of proper maintenance is the main cause behind the gradual deterioration of the hat.

According to the local sources, the hat has not been expanded according to the growing need of the people. Absence of sanitary facilities, shortage of space and scattered stalls of fish and other commodities add to the problems of the consumers. There is no arrangement of pure drinking water, latrines and urinals in the hat.

Shops are installed on both the sides of Pabna-Ishwardi Road causing traffic jam and frequent road accidents.

## Teachers not getting salaries

Twenty one teachers and 31 employees of Kashinathpur Shahid Nurul Hossain College are not getting their salaries for the last six months causing unbearable sufferings in these days of hardships.

It is reported that there are about 10,000 potters who have been engaged in this profession from generations, but are now passing hard days due to lack of necessary material. On the other hand prices of the materials increased manifold while the demand for the products declined considerably in the markets.

As they cannot grapple with the present situation many of them have left the profession while the others are thinking to follow the pursuit.

Some potters complained that previously there was a

## Woes of fishermen

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Feb. 20 : About 20,000 professional fishermen of Pabna district are facing numerous problems like sharp dwindling of fish resources, siltation in river beds, drying of beels, khals, hoars and extinction of some varieties of fish due to unplanned irrigation and arbitrary use of pesticides in the fields.

Besides, due to conversion of lowlying areas into farmlands the fish breeding and nourishing centres have turned into dry lands. The flow of water into the tributaries of the rivers Padma and Jamuna is obstructed by flood control embankments during the flood period, for which river beds remain dry except in rainy season.

The fishermen are not able to purchase fishing materials for want of funds and on the other hand they are not provided with bank loans to run their business. As a result these poor fishermen are forced to borrow money from "Mohajans" (money lenders) at high rate of interest for which they face much difficulty at the time of repaying loans. Sometimes as they cannot pay loans they handover their total fish produce to "Mahajans" at

minimum prices from which these Mohajans make high profits.

They are also deprived of getting lease of "Jalmahal" through co-operative societies mostly fake formed by influential quarters of fake fishermen.

The traditional fishermen are struggling hard for their livelihood. Some of them have even left their traditional ancestral profession.

## Silk cultivators face problems

The silk cultivators of different villages in Ishwardi upazila of the district are frustrated due to irregular payment by the concerned authorities.

Previously silk-worms were purchased by the concerned authorities directly on cheque payment, but now the silk producers are harassed in different ways by the brokers.

The producers demanded the authorities to supply "Nistar" quality of oviparous in the current season instead, they supplied "S.P." type of silk-ovally which will hamper silk production will decrease and the cultivators will face hardships.

In this connection a case was registered with Bagerhat P.S. on October, 19, 1989.

The Anti-Corruption Bureau investigated the matter and submitted the chargesheet to the court recently. It is learnt from a knowledgeable source that the accused storekeeper Khan Zakir Hossain who hails from the village Fatepur under Bagerhat Sadar Upazila has been absconding for long. The Anti-Corruption Bureau requested the appropriate authority to arrest Zakir Hossain and seize his properties.

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Dacoits broke upon the door and looted cash and kind worth Taka 30,000 from inmates of the house on dagger point and escaped safely with the booty.

## Potters leaving profession

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, Feb 20 : Potters of Nabinagar, Brahmanbaria Sadar, Sarail, and Kasba upazilas have been facing numerous problems including lack of necessary materials and increase in their prices. The potters in these upazilas are now on the verge of extinction.

Moreover, the potters are

great demand for the earthenwares and production of the same on commercial basis was a lucrative avocation. But with the introduction of modern utensils the demand for their products has declined to a great extent.

Drivers and passengers said that highway bandits blocked the road by tractor and trolley from nearby sugarcane centre and robbed them of cash and goods worth Taka 40,000. The passengers of the minibus were returning to Kushtia after

attending the Rotaract conference at Cox's Bazar.

A case has been instituted with Mirpur police station in this connection. Besides, a dacoity was committed in the house of Nazrul Alam of west Majampur in Kushtia recently.

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Candidates contesting from Bagerhat district. From top left — Advocate Fajur Rahman Molla (Muslim League), Habibur Rahman (JP) and Advocate S A M Sabur (NAP-Muazzafar).

—Star photo