

Upazila roundup

NARAIL

Dawn-to-dusk hartal observed

Oct 21: A dawn-to-dusk hartal was observed in Narail town on Saturday at the call of the district Awami League protesting the killing of Chhatra League activist Chayan Ranjan Mallick, reports UNB. Chayan was killed by armed assailants at Aouria ferry ghat near Islamic Mission in the town on October 16. Awami League blamed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) for the killing.

Police picked up five people during hartal hours on Saturday. They were four Chhatra League leaders — Litu, Mukul, Swapan and Mahub — and a trader, Khokon.

Shops, business establishments and government and private organisations remained closed. All sorts of vehicles were off the roads during the period.

The district Bar Association also held a meeting on Saturday and expressed concern over the deteriorating law and order situation of the district.

The lawyers condemned the killing and demanded immediate punishment to those responsible.

GHATAIL

Kader Siddiqui accorded reception

Oct 21: All Party Muktiyoddha Sambardhana Parishad accorded a reception to Mr Abdul Kader Siddiqui yesterday at Ghatail Public School play ground, reports UNB.

Mr Md Habibur Rahman presided over the function. Mr Kader Siddiqui in his speech said that the Liberation War was fought for the economic emancipation of the people, but it was not achieved in last 20 years. He urged the freedom fighters to stand by their commitment and work together to improve the lot of people.

He reiterated his demand for punishment of the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman under the law of the land.

Among others Advocate Habibul Haque Benu spoke on the occasion.

TANGAIL

Diarrhoea claims 46 lives

Oct 21: Forty-six persons died and about two thousands and five hundred were attacked by diarrhoea in the district during the last few weeks, reports BSS.

An official source, however, claimed that over one hundred died and over ten thousand people were attacked by the disease.

Civil surgeon office source said that eleven persons died in Sadar upazila, eight in Kalihati, six in Ghatail, 19 in Madhupur and five in Bhupur upazilas. One hundred sixteen medical teams are working in affected upazilas of the district, the source added.

PANCHAGARH

Tk 1.7 cr for construction of 46 culverts

Oct 21: Government has sanctioned an amount of over Tk 1.7 crore for construction of 46 culverts under the Rural Development Project-13 in five upazilas of the district during the current financial year, reports UNB.

Of the total amount, Tk 21.14 lakh has been sanctioned for construction of 6 culverts in Atwari upazila, Tk 25.73 for 6 culverts in Debiganj upazila, Tk 23.44 lakh for 9 culverts in Tetulia upazila, Tk 57.86 lakh for 14 culverts in Boda upazila and Tk 42.40 lakh for 10 culverts in Sadar upazila.

With the implementation of the scheme, road communication in the district will be improved to a great extent.

The construction of eight new government primary school buildings in five upazilas of the district were completed during the current financial year.

The Facilities Department of the Ministry of Education has completed construction at a cost of Tk 35 lakh under universal primary education programme.

The upazilas are Boda, Atwari, Tetulia, Debiganj and Sadar. With completion of the scheme, over 5000 students will get primary education facilities.

JESSORE

Directive to repair judge court building

Oct 21: Minister for Social Welfare and Women Affairs Tariqul Islam called upon the workers to help consolidate the process of democratic institution established in the country after long nine years struggle against the autocratic rule, reports UNB.

He was addressing a transport workers rally at a local cinema hall here on Friday.

The Minister said that the present government was people oriented and committed for the welfare of the masses including the farmers and the workers.

Sixty leaders and workers of the district Jatiya Sramik Party formally joined Jatiya Sramik Dal at the rally under the leadership of MN Wadud and Rafiqul Islam.

Earlier, Tariqul Islam visited the judge court, said a PID handout.

He directed the concerned authority to take up the repair work of the court building immediately.

SATKHIRA

Tumour weighing 12 kg removed from abdomen

From Our Correspondent Oct 21: A tumour weighing about 12 kilograms was removed from the abdomen of a teenage girl when she was operated upon at Satkhira Sadar Hospital recently.

According to the hospital sources, Rani Sardar (15), daughter of Monoranjan Sardar of village Kushiya under Kaliganj upazila of the district was suffering from abdomen ailment since long. She was admitted to Satkhira Hospital with acute abdomen pain. After necessary investigation it was found that a big tumour had been enlarged inside her abdomen.

Dr. Israel Biswas, Consultant Surgeon of Satkhira Hospital operated upon the patient and removed the tumour.

CHANDPUR

Prices of essentials mark rise

From Our Correspondent Oct 21: Prices of all essential commodities have registered a sharp rise in the district over the last few weeks affecting the fixed income group of people.

Prices of all varieties of rice have gone up abnormally in recent days. On an average the price of rice has increased by Tk 100-120 per maund. Medium quality of rice is now being sold at Tk 15 per kilogram as against Tk 12. Each kilogram of flour is being sold at Tk 10 as against Tk 8 last week. The prices of different varieties of pulses have also shown an upward trend in different upazila markets.

RAJSHAHI

Influenza breaks out

From Our Correspondent Oct 21: Influenza and viral fever have broken out throughout the district affecting 40 to 50 per cent people, local doctors said.

The worst affected areas are Rajshahi City, Durgapur, Putia, Paba and Bagha upazila.

The affected persons suffer for four to seven days from fever with severe pain of body and head, sore throat, cough and sore eyes. Almost every family in these areas have been attacked with this virus. According to the physicians rainy season, change of weather are the reasons for the spread of this virus.

FARIDPUR

3 killed in road mishap

Oct 21: Three persons were killed and four others injured when a rickshaw van was crushed under the wheel of a passenger bus Saturday at Pukhuria on Faridpur-Sadarpur road seventeen miles from here, reports BSS.

According to a Faridpur Sadar Hospital source, the rickshaw van was knocked down and rammed by the bus from behind. The victims were travelling by the van. Three persons died on the spot and four others received injury. The bus fell into roadside ditch. No bus passengers received any injury. A case was registered with Bhanga police station in this connection.



NARSINGDI: Foodstuffs are sold in the open in rural as well as urban markets causing health hazards. Photo shows selling of different kinds of sweets in progress at a market in Narsingdi. — Star photo.

Relief operations geared up

1700 die of diarrhoea in Nilphamari

NILPHAMARI, Oct 21: Nilphamari district administration completed 335 projects with 800 metric tons of wheat under test relief programme in the first phase and another 313 projects are being implemented with 800 metric tons of wheat for total benefit of the flood affected people of the district.

Deputy Commissioner, Nilphamari Mr. M. Sukur Mohammad Pramanik told BSS that government has so far sanctioned four thousand five hundred and ten metric tons of G.R rice and wheat for distribution among the needy and distressed people. Besides the government sanctioned Taka 11 lakh 35 thousand as G.R cash and Taka 12 lakh 50 thousand as house building grant for the district.

Referring to diarrhoeal and water borne disease he added that so far 1700 person died out of about 50 thousand attacked with it. The disease have been arrested but he said that some sporadic cases were being reported from some parts of the district. Effective measures have already been taken to combat the disease, he added. The situation is under control and the medical teams are working in all the

upazilas. Meanwhile, test relief work is going on in full swing in all the six upazilas of the district to mitigate the sufferings of the people.

The Deputy Commissioner said that the administration is distributing 32 thousand V.G.D ration card among the needy and distressed people. He said the administration has received in cash and kind Taka four crore sixty-eight lakh for the district and the test relief work was going on with the help and co-operation of army.

Rangpur

Our Rangpur Correspondent writes: Relief operations, rehabilitation works and medical aids are yet far from requirements all over the greater Rangpur zone resulting in widespread deaths due to malnutrition and diarrhoeal diseases.

A famine like condition is prevailing in all the five districts of the zone following flood devastations to standing crop, dwelling houses and abnormal price hike of essentials particularly foodstuffs. Besides these, there is no work in the field turning lakhs of day labourers jobless all over the

zone. According to the information, rice is being sold at Taka 13 to Taka 15 per kilogram while atta is selling at Taka 10 to Taka 11.50 per kilogram in the markets of the zone. Similarly prices of pulses, vegetables, edible-oil, fuels and other essentials have shot up and went beyond the purchasing capacity of the consumers.

In the face of soaring prices of essentials and no work in the fields, lakhs of families are starving and many of them are selling cattle fowls, utensils, ornaments and other household belongings at a very cheap price for mere survival. To add to miseries, prices of jute has dropped to Taka 100 to Taka 125 per maunds.

All the towns and business centres in the zone have now flooded by job-seekers from the villages presenting a dismal look.

Another BSS report says: Relief and rehabilitation activities in the district are going on in full swing.

A total of 716 employment-generating projects are being implemented throughout the districts with an allocation of 1183 tons of wheat under Test Relief Programme.

Under the programme

2700 tons of wheat have been sanctioned for the district. Besides, 43,485 special VGD (Vulnerable Group Development) cards and 15,146 normal VGD cards are being distributed among the destitute families. Each family under the programme has been provided with 31 kg of wheat round the year.

So far, 1066 tons of rice, 620 tons of wheat, Taka 8.2 lakh and other relief goods have been distributed among the flood affected people. Taka 15.50 lakh have also been provided as house building grant.

These relief goods have been distributed with the joint efforts of local administration and members of defence through relief committees constituted in each ward of the district.

A total of 8,147 people were affected by diarrhoea so far in the district. Of them, 58 died. Thirty nine medical teams comprising 74 doctors and 8002 health assistants have been working round the clock in 74 temporary and eight permanent medical centres. The recovered patients are being provided with 5 kgs of rice each.

35 injured in clash over land dispute

JHENIDAH, Oct 21: At least 35 people were injured, nine seriously, in a clash over land dispute between two rival groups at village Kastosagra in Sadar upazila here Friday, reports UNB.

Witnesses said about 300 villagers of Bantababu Hudashur and south Kastosagra attacked each other with ramdao, sarki, ballam and other lethal weapons in which eight houses were damaged and properties worth about Tk one lakh looted.

The seriously injured were rushed to the sadar hospital while the rest were released after first aid.

Cases have been lodged with the police by both the groups and tension is prevailing in the area.

AL council meeting

A biennial council meeting of Bangladesh Awami League, Harinakunda upazila unit was held at the upazila headquarters.

The meeting reviewed the latest political situation in the country and urged all to uphold the democratic ideals for the well-being of the toiling masses. It also expressed grave concern over the famine like situation in northern districts and urged the government to gear up relief activities to save the hungry people.

Setabganj rly station in sorry state

From Our Correspondent

DINAJPUR, Oct 21: Setabganj railway station is beset with multifarious problems. Being the nearest station of the district headquarters thousands of passengers travel daily to and from the station.

The condition of waiting rooms is very pitiable. The waiting rooms are not cleaned regularly. Very often the rooms remain under lock and key.

The goods sheds of the station have turned into dens of anti-social elements including gay girls and their clients.

Most of the time the station platform is occupied by these anti-socials. Most of them are allegedly suffering from various venereal diseases. They even cook meals on the platforms and use space between railway tracks as open latrines which pollute the environment causing serious health hazard.

Besides, railway properties are being misused from the station yard. The number of ticketless passengers has increased in absence of proper checking.

Moreover, carrying of goods on the roof top and in passenger coaches without booking causing huge loss to the authorities. Very often unscrupulous

employees demand high rate during counter sale of mail and local tickets as the tickets do not carry specific rate of fare.

Essential prices up

The prices of essential commodities have registered a further rise in the district markets. Almost all the items are being sold at increased prices. It has hit hard specially the fixed income groups. The traders when interviewed attributed the cause of rise to short supply of commodities due to disruption of communication. A random survey showed that the price of rice has gone up by Taka 50 to 60 per maund on an average for the last one month. The rice traders opined that the price of rice will not come down till the Aman harvest.

Besides, prices of other essentials like onion, turmeric, pulse, sugar etc, have also gone high. The price of baby food and the powder milk also recorded a sharp rise.

The price of spices particularly garlic and onion have gone abnormally high. Garlic is being sold at Taka 48 per kilogram and onion at Taka 20 to 24 per kilogram.

Illegal VCR shows

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Oct 21: Unauthorised VCR shows have become rampant in different parts of the district.

It is learnt that mini cinema halls have been set up in different upazilas including Belkuchi, Chowhali, Ullapara, Raiganj and Shahzadpur. Influential and organised quarters are involved in such illegal practices. It is alleged that obscene films are being exhibited on VCR every night which is spoiling the moral values of young generation. The organisers of the VCR shows display obscene posters and leaflets in the open places to draw attention of the customers. In Belkuchi upazila a hair cutting saloon and a godown at Mukurdagati bazar, are being used as mini cinema halls. In Chowhali upazila a hall room for this purpose can accommodate about 600 visitors at a time.

This unauthorised business in Sirajganj is going on unabated and no steps have been taken as yet to stop the illegal business.

Water logging has caused immense sufferings to

the people of Chalanbeel in Tarash upazila in Sirajganj district. With the fall of water level in the Jamuna and its tributaries flood water has receded from the localities but due to water logging more than 70,000 acres of land in Tarash upazila are still under water. People of these areas are living on the machans.

Agriculture is the main source of livelihood in Tarash. Due to long lasting water logging the farmers have been rendered jobless and are facing hardships. The government and some NGOs have started relief operations here but these are also inadequate.

During the last floods more than 10,000 kutcha houses of Tarash collapsed by the wave of Chalanbeel. The affected people are living on high lands, flood control embankment. Some are passing their days under open sky.

The affected people have urged the government to take massive rehabilitation programmes immediately.

Flood renders 3 lakh jobless

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, Oct 21: The flood affected people of the district are passing a miserable life for want of food and pure drinking water. Over three lakh agricultural labourers are unemployed for the last few weeks. The peasants have no scope to provide them with job as their crop fields are still under water causing heavy damage to standing crops. These people are passing their days half-fed or unfed.

About 95 per cent people of Jamalpur district mostly farmers every year suffer from drought, floods, continuous heavy rainfall and other natural calamities.

However, markets are full of foodgrains but the people have lost their purchasing capacity. Price hike of essential commodities has further deteriorated the situation. Not only the agricultural labourers but the rural and urban traders are also hard hit.

Most of the rural hats and bazars went under water. As a result the traders cannot carry on their business. Hats and bazar roads are inundated disrupting the communication system which threw all sections of people into distress.

Besides, hundreds of small hotels and restaurants in rural areas are about to face closure for want of customers. Hence about 20000 persons employed in these hotels and restaurants have become unemployed. Moreover, over 25000 rickshaw pullers and other vehicle drivers have become jobless as they do not find passengers.

On the other hand the urban economy has also been adversely affected as the rural traders do not come to the urban merchants. Virtually they have lost their traditional wholesale buyers in the villages which has affected their business.

Even customers are scarce in town hotels. Poor rural women and day labourers who work in different houses on daily basis are also hard hit since none was coming forward to engage them.

Influx of floating people in the town has posed a serious threat to the urban life. Most of them have taken to begging while many young and middle aged women have chosen prostitution for their livelihood.

An integrated development approach is essential to protect the people from natural calamities.

Agri-rehabilitation plan in Sylhet likely to fail

From A Correspondent

SYLHET, Oct 21: The post-flood Agricultural Rehabilitation programme is being failed in the district due to the bureaucratic snags. The special rehabilitation programme was taken up after the colossal damage to crops by the devastating floods that hit Sylhet in May last. Taka 1,12,45,000 was sanctioned for distribution among the flood hit farmers of 11 upazilas of the district.

It is alleged that once the authority decided to purchase Aman seeds for distribution with the allocated amount but due to non-availability of quality seeds in the local markets the decision was changed. Later they purchased fertilizers, pesticides and spray machines last month.

But due to unknown reasons the farmers are yet to get the fertilizer whereas the sowing season has been passing off.

The farmers are badly in need of fertilizers for their paddy

fields which are turning red, it is reported.

The fertilizers and pesticides should be immediately provided to the farmers, it is widely felt, otherwise the target of Aman production would be hampered seriously this year.

Office-bearers

A new executive committee of Patients' Welfare Association of Sylhet M A G Osmani Medical College Hospital was formed at a meeting of the organisation held recently.

The meeting was presided over by Col Rokanul Islam Chowdhury, Director of the hospital.

The new committee members for the next two years are Dr Tamshed Bakht— patron, Col Rokanul Islam Chowdhury— president, Dr Chuniul Dutta and Dr Begum Hasna Rakile — vice presidents, Mr Abdul Malek Chowdhury — publicity secre-



Majibur Rahman, State Minister for Finance addressing the Branch Managers' Conference of Rupali Bank Ltd. held at Bogra Vocational Training Institute on October 19. Also seen in the picture are: A.K.S. M. Taifur Hussain, Managing Director, Mr. Jalilur Rahman Chowdhury, General Manager, Mr. Yousuf Ali Hawlader, Deputy General Manager and Zonal Head of Bogra Rupali Bank Ltd. attended the conference.

Meagre medicare in Kishoreganj hospital

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, Oct 21: The 50-bed Kishoreganj Sadar Hospital is unable to cater to the minimum requirements of the patients who visit the hospital everyday.

The problems include shortage of physicians, accommodation, medicines, absence of blood bank and ambulance for emergency patients.

The existing beds of the hospital can meet only 60 per cent requirement of the patients seeking admission. Most of the cots and bedsheets have become worn out and these are rarely replaced by new ones, it is alleged. The ambulance of the hospital went out of order. The patients cannot be sent to the Mymensingh and Dhaka Medical College hospitals in case of emergency. Sometimes the people can manage the ambulance of the Rotary Club for their use through payment.

The only X-ray machine in the hospital remains unused and is being operated by an assistant in absence of a radiologist. The sanitary service in the hospital is pitiable. Most of the latrines and urinals are quite unfit for use. They are

not cleaned regularly. There is no separate ward for infectious diseases.

The government office timing is not maintained in this hospital. No doctors are available after 1.30 pm. There is no residential accommodation for the doctors and nurse and other staff of the hospital.

In absence of blood bank the patients have to run to the Mymensingh Medical College Hospital and sometimes patients in critical condition die for want of blood.

Scarcity of life saving drugs has posed a great problem. Poor patients are worst sufferers in this regard and they are unable to purchase medicine at exorbitant prices from the open markets. Many patients coming from far flung areas everyday with the hope of proper treatment go back disappointed for want of accommodation. The diet supplied to the patients is also not up to the standard, it is alleged.

There is no waiting room for the outdoor patients although about 400/500 patients visit the hospital everyday.

Rice saline quick treatment for diarrhoea

RANGPUR, Oct 21: Rice-saline administered orally has been proved quick and effective treatment for diarrhoeal disease, this was disclosed by health officials working in Rangpur district, reports BSS.

Health Department for sometime past has been supplying powder from properly boiled rice and diluted with salt to diarrhoea patients admitted to different health centres of district. Health officials working in these centres said rice oral saline was very effective for diarrhoea patients. The rice oral saline meets their need for food as well, they added. The Civil Surgeon in the meantime has instructed all health centres of district to provide rice oral saline to diarrhoea patients.