

Upazila roundup

MAULVIBAZAR

Hunting, catching of migratory birds unabated

From Our Correspondent
Dec 30: Amateur hunters and bird catchers have been killing the local and migratory birds with impunity in the district despite government ban.

A large number of hunters are engaged in killing and catching the guest birds that are crowding the Beels and Haors of the district everyday, witnesses said.

Everyday a huge quantity of different migratory and local birds are being sold in different markets and bazars, especially in the town markets of the district. Law enforcing agencies are often play a silent role to take any stern action against the illegal hunters and bird catchers, it is alleged.

The migratory birds usually throng in these regions from the Siberian and other parts of the world to avoid biting cold.

Due to indiscriminate hunting and catching, the number of migratory birds has been decreasing rapidly.

Local people urged the authorities to take stringent measures against the amateur hunters to save the local and migratory birds.

FENI

Tk 26 lakh for construction of 4 bridges

Dec 30: A total of Taka 26 lakh has been sanctioned for reconstruction of 4 bridges in Sadar and Sonapur upazilas of the district under the post-cyclone rehabilitation programme, reports UNB.

Asian Development Bank will finance the project. Local Government and Engineering Bureau sources said.

Of the total sanction, Taka 7.86 lakh will be spent for reconstruction of the bridge on Kaldaha Majborta Canal, Taka 7.86 lakh for reconstruction of a box culvert on Komua Canal, Taka 7.86 lakh for reconstruction of the bridge on Alaria Canal in Feni Sadar upazila.

Taka 2.20 lakh has also been sanctioned for reconstruction of the bridge on Sonapur Canal in Sonapur upazila.

Work on the project will start soon and is expected to be completed by next month.

COMILLA

Workshop on investigative reporting

Dec 30: A two-day workshop on 'Investigative reporting' has ended at Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) here, reports UNB.

Jointly organised by Bangladesh Society for Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) and Comilla Union of Journalists, Director General of BARD K M Tipu Sultan attended the workshop's concluding session as chief guest and President of BSEHR Principal Jahid presided.

In his address, Mr Sultan urged the journalists and human rights activists to trace out violations of human rights in the rural areas honestly and sincerely.

Chairman of the Council of Editors, Bangladesh, Sanaullah Nuri was present as chief guest while Deputy Commissioner of the district Md Hedayetul Islam Chowdhury attended as special guest.

The working sessions were addressed, among others by ADC General Kazi Farid Ahmed, Joint Director of BARD Khairul Kabir, Advocate Moshfiqur Rahman Ferdous, Secretary, Comilla Union of Journalists.

The recommendation of the workshop focused on the necessity of opening an information centre for the preservation of records and documents on human rights.

RANGPUR

Rabi crop seeds distribution

Dec 30: Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) has taken up a programme to distribute various Rabi crop seeds among the farmers in five districts of Rangpur Zone, reports UNB.

Officials said a total of 30,93,393 kilograms of seeds will be distributed in Rangpur, Gaibandha, Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat and Kurigram districts during the current season.

The seeds include 555 kgs of vegetables, 5,838 kgs of mustard, 85,000 kgs of boro, 14,000 kgs of maize, 27,97,000 kgs of wheat and 1,91,000 kgs of potato.

BADC has already started distributing seeds in the districts through upazila office and sales centres.

JHENDDAH

Students' union polls today

Dec 30: Elections to the Students' Union of Mahatabuddin Degree College, Kaliganj will be held on Tuesday (December 31), reports UNB.

Three panels from Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), Islami Chhatra Shibir and Jatiya Chhatra Dal will contest in the elections.

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) nominated Jahidul Islam and Soleman Biswas as VP and GS, Islami Chhatra Shibir nominated Iqbal Hossain and Azizur Rahman as VP and GS and Jatiya Chhatra Dal selected Hafizul Rahman and Idris Ali as VP and GS are contesting in the election.

A total of 453 students are expected to cast their votes in the elections.

TANGAIL

Bank branch opens

Dec 30: The 56th branch of Islamic Bank, Bangladesh was inaugurated here recently.

The inaugural function was addressed among others by Deputy Executive President of Islamic Bank Mr M Azizul Huq, Deputy Commissioner, Tangail, Mr Khan Shahabuddin, and Chairman Tangail Paurashava Mr Shawkat Ali Talukdar.

Mr Azizul Huq speaking on the occasion explained the operational system of the bank which, he said, will provide banking services under Islamic Shariah.

BRAHMANBARIA

Arms, smuggled goods seized

Dec 30: Railway police recovered a 303 cutla rifle and two rounds of ammunition from the Titas Railway Bridge area, reports UNB.

On getting information from the local villagers that a gang of dacoits are taking preparation for committing a dacoity in the nearby area, the police rushed to the spot and seized the arms while the dacoits managed to escape.

Bangladesh Rifles seized smuggled goods worth about Taka 5 lakh from a passenger train, police said here recently.

Acting on a secret information, a contingent of BDR searched Bhairobund local train from Ball at Brahmanbaria Station and recovered the contrabands recently.

The goods include 225 bags Indian sugar and 20 BG Phosce files.

Later the goods were handed over to Akhaura Customs Department. Cases have been filed in these connection.

CHUADANGA

Dacoity at Customs godown

From Our Correspondent
Dec 30: A dacoity was committed at the local Customs Godown recently.

It is learnt that the dacoits numbering about 15 took away goods and cash Taka 6,82,042 by breaking opened the grill and locks of the godown.

Police has seized 48 pieces VCP, 1000 pieces Indian Suti-Sarees worth Taka 75,527 and also 10 grams of gold ornaments recently.

Police has arrested Store Keeper Nazrul Islam. A case has been registered in this connection.

KISHOREGANJ

3 uncontested UP chairmen

From Our Correspondent
Dec 30: Three persons have been elected Chairmen uncontested for the Union parshads in the District.

Mr Nurul Millat has been elected Chairman of sadar union in Kuliarchar upazila and Mr Moslemhuddin Sudhan of Elanghuri Union in Ina Upazila and Mr Farid Mia of Kalikprasad Union in Dhatriab Upazila.

According to the District Election Office sources in total 438 candidates have submitted nomination paper for the posts of Chairman and 2628 candidates for Member in 13 upazilas of the district.

Condolence meet

A condolence meeting of District Bar Association on the sad demise of Advocate Mahmuda Chowdhury, a local Awami League leader was held here Thursday.

Chaired by Advocate Abdul Hamid MP, President of the Association, the meeting was addressed among others by Advocate Amirul Islam, Advocate Zinnatul Islam, Advocate Nasiruddin Faruqi and Advocate Bhupendra Bhowmik Dhan.



Rootless people: Biting cold has left them helpless. They are in a bid to keep them warm. — Star photo

Notes from Kishoreganj

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ Dec 30: The conference of Ina Thana Unit of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) was held at Moheshchandra Shikyaniketan with Mr Qudaratullah in the chair recently.

Mr. Abdul Hye, Deputy Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and co-operatives attended the function as chief guest while Prof. Habibur Rhaman Bhuiyan Joint-Convenor of District BNP formally inaugurated the conferences.

Major (ret'd) Md Akhtiaruzzaman Ranja MP was the special guest.

The conference was addressed among other & by Kabiruddin Ahmed, Amiruzzaman, Salauddin and Advocate Fazlur Rahman Shikdar.

In the conference a 15-member committee has been formed with Mr Qudaratullah as President and Mr Siddiquzzaman Thakur (Swapan) as General Secretary.

Slaughter house Needed

UNB reports says: Illegal slaughtering of animals at several places of the town and its suburb has become rampant polluting the environment.

Old and diseased cattle, buffaloes and rams are being slaughtered indiscriminately in and around the town and meat are sold in the local markets without any clearance of the health and sanitation inspectors.

A huge quantity of meat is put up for sale in unhygienic and dirty conditions and sold at exorbitant prices. Beef is sold at Taka 60 kg and mutton at Taka 75 which are Taka 15 higher than the fixed prices.

Scarcity of pure drinking water in Sylhet region

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Dec 30: Acute scarcity of pure drinking water has posed a serious problem to the people in general in the rural areas of greater Sylhet region.

According to reports, the existing number of tubewells in the 35 upazilas of the region, sunk by Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) is quite inadequate to meet the demand of the people.

It is learnt from an official source that there are 46,357 tubewells in the district installed by PHED. The total population of the district is about 70 lakh.

Out of the total tubewells, 2,916 are lying out of order in different areas of the region. It

includes 500 in 10 upazilas of Sunamganj, 747 in eight upazilas of Habiganj, 6 in 6 upazila of Maulvibazar and 841 in 11 upazilas of Sylhet district. The tubewells are remaining out of order for more than three years, it is alleged.

But no effective measures has yet been taken either to replace or resink those by the authorities concerned, it is informed. In the meantime several complaints have been lodged for repair of the tubewells but till now no steps has been taken up by the authorities, it is gathered.

The people in general have to depend on wells, tanks, rivers etc. for drinking water

due to non-availability of pure drinking water. It has resulted in the spread of various water borne diseases in the different areas of the district. The situation has worsened by the repeated floods and cyclones.

The people of the greater Sylhet district have urged the concerned authorities to take immediate steps to supply pure drinking water to the people of the vast area.

Dacoity in pharmacy

A UNB report adds: Dacoits strangled to death a man and beat up a guard while looting a medicine shop in the town recently, police sources said.

They said a 6-year old bag-

ger who was sleeping on the pavement in front of the shop was strangled by the dacoits during the robbery at about 2.30 am in the night.

The guard of the building was also tied up by the miscreants while they committed the robbery at Central Pharmacy Ltd — the largest drugstore in the town's Chouhatta area.

The dacoits reportedly decamped with medicines worth about taka five lakh, police said.

The body of the victim was sent to Sylhet Medical College Hospital morgue for post-mortem and a case has been registered in this regard with the Kotwali Police.

UP elections in districts

Villages wear festive look

From Our Correspondent

COMILLA, Dec 30: The campaign for the coming union parishad elections is gradually gaining momentum all over the district.

The candidates of the election with their supporters have already started visiting their respective areas and pursue the voters to cast their votes in their favour in the coming election.

The workers, supporters and the relatives of the candidates are also moving from door to door and arranging public meeting in different places of the village for gaining support. After sun set, the local tea-stalls become crowded by the workers, supporters and relatives of the candidates.

It can be mentioned here that all the bills of the tea-stalls are paid by the candidates.

The incumbent chairmen, the last defeated candidates and also some fresh candidates are taking part in the coming election. Some of the candidates are young, energetic and seems to be honest. In some seats, there are some dishonest and corrupt candidates also, it is alleged.

According to the election office sources, election will be held in 147 parshads out of the 177 in the district. A total of 658 candidates has filed nomination papers for the posts of Chairman and 6199 candidates for the posts of Member.

District Election Commissioner (I) Mr Bazul Rahman informed that four candidates have been elected chairmen and 17 candidates have been elected members uncontested.

Maulvi Bazar

Our Maulvi Bazar Correspondent adds: Activities on union parshads election are gradually reaching to the peak in the district.

The characteristic of the

local body election campaign in the district is different from any other parts of the country.

The candidates are entertaining the voters with sweets, tea, birri and cigarettes. Some candidates are providing free transportation to the voters free of cost for the whole period. In some cases the candidates are arranging employment for the relatives of the voters. In one work, the candidates are expending a considerable amount for the coming election.

According to election office, election will be held in 55 union parshads out of 67 under 6 upazilas of the district. Election to 11 UPs were declared postponed for various reasons.

Usually the political parties did not involve themselves in

local body elections in the past. But this time BNP and Awami League are directly taking part in the coming UP polls, it is informed.

A large number of people of the district are living in UK, USA and Middle East countries. The election candidates of some seats are getting money from their relatives. It can be easily guessed that how much money the candidates are expending.

Election camps have been set up in different areas of the villages. Hand-bills, multi-colour posters are seen in the voting areas.

Unemployed youths of the villages have been appointed for campaign. They are working round the clock to mould public opinion. Some of them received motor cycle for canvassing votes. In one ward the candidates are more active this



Election campaign

Erosion threatens existence of town

BORGUNA, Dec 30: Leaders of various political and socio-cultural organisations of Betagi Upazila urged the government to protect the upazila town from the erosion of the river Bishkhali, reports UNB.

In a joint statement issued here recently they said that the existence of the upazila town, an important area of the region was threatened due to unabated erosion of the river.

They said that despite their repeated appeal to save the town from erosion, nothing tangible was done in this regard.

The statement was issued by district units of Awami League, BNP, JSD (Inu), Communist Party, Bangladesh Jatiya Sangbadik Sangstha, local Press, Club and Human Rights Association.

Scarcity of medicines in most of the hospitals, health complexes and union health centres of the district has created a serious setback in proper treatment of patients.

Hundreds of patients coming from far flung areas to the health centres are returning everyday without any medicare.

It is alleged that medical officers of the most upazila health complexes and union sub-centres are not attending the outdoor due to non-availability of medicines. The outdoor services of all the hospitals have become almost paralysed.

People complained that common medicines even dextol or savior are not available in the rural health complexes.

According to official sources, only Taka 2.5 lakh

was sanctioned for each hospital and Taka 30,000 for each union sub-centres for medicines and other expenses as against the requirement of Taka 5 lakh and 1 lakh respectively.

Local people urged the authorities to provide adequate medicines to mitigate the sufferings of the people.

Boat capsizes in Jamuna, 9 killed, 5 missing

SIRAJGANJ, Dec 30: Police and local people have so far recovered nine bodies following Thursday's boat capsizing in river Jamuna, police said on Saturday, reports UNB.

The accident took place in midstream Thursday night when the boat turned turtle in a cyclonic storm.

All the 14 people on board, including 7 children and three youths, are feared dead. The ill-fated people were returning to their village Juktipara in Kazipur upazila from Gudarbagchar after harvesting paddy.

The bodies were identified as those of Tokman Ali (40), his son Abdul Khaled (15), Mantu Sarkar (16), Sakina Khatoon (10), Abdul Bari (22), Pearsa Khatoon (12), Parveen (13), Foezuddin (60) and Khulu (30).

Those who are still missing are: Al Amin (13), Rina Khatoon (7), Solaiman Sheikh (25), Azibar Rahman (40) and Beauty Khatoon (7).

The storm also damaged about 1000 thatched houses and standing crops and uprooted many trees.

Betel leaf growers need funds

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, Dec 30: The betel leaf production in Hatmchar upazila under Chandpur district has decreased to a great extent due to increase in bamboo, fertilizers, oilcake and pesticides prices.

Betel leaf is cultivated on large-scale in Hatmchar upazila. There are over 200 betel leaf growers in the upazila who have been facing much difficulties due to continuous floods, erosion of the rivers, price hike of the agricultural inputs and shortage of capital. As a result the growers are losing interest.

It may be mentioned here that the growers could earn about Taka two lakh from per acre production a year. But the rise in production cost has decreased the amount of return.

The growers have been deprived of bank loans which are now badly needed to continue the cultivation of betel leaf.

The betel leaf growers urged the concerned authorities to extend financial assistance to mitigate their sufferings.

Dacoits convicted

The district and Sessions Judge, Chandpur in a judgement convicted 13 persons involved in launch dacoity case recently.

The prosecution of the case

is that one the night of July 18, 1986 about 20 to 25 dacoits wearing masks attacked the ansars and passengers on board M. V. Satko bound for Chandpur. The dacoits snatched away eight rifles from the ansars on duty with 800 rounds of ammunition and looted cash and valuables of passengers worth Taka four lakh and decamped at Durairchar under Sharapur district. In this connection a case was filed with the Chandpur police.

The case was entrusted with the CID police for investigation. During the investigation some accused were arrested and on their confession eight rifles and some ammunition were recovered.

After proper investigation, the CID police submitted chargesheet against 13 persons. The learned District Judge after examining the eyewitnesses and evidences sentenced accused Mubarak Paik and Straj Mia to suffer Ri for eleven years each and accused Azahar Ali, Abdul Jalil, Zahurul Islam, Badal Mia, Abul Bakar, Khokan, Naser, Monir Hassan Monu, Latif Mollah, Suruj Mia and Ali Hossain to suffer Ri for seven years with a fine of Taka 5,000 in default Ri for one year more. Accused Munin was acquitted of the charges.

Mr. Siddiqur Rahman, AJP conducted the prosecution.

Smuggling rampant in Maulvibazar

MAULVIBAZAR, Dec 30: Smuggling has become rampant along the border areas of the region following the government decision to delay the crackdown until the new year, reports UNB.

Almost all the hats and bazar of this region specially border areas have been flooded with the smuggled goods.

The incoming contraband goods from India include sugar, salt, sarees, clothes, onion, blades, crockeries, cosmetics, bullocks, pulses and orange.

Goods like brass, betel nut, silver, fish, coconut, soyabean oil and old garments are being smuggled out of the country everyday.

The goods are being smuggled by rail, trucks, minibuses and boats. Children and destitute women are engaged in the illegal trade.

Women carry smuggled sarees on headloads from door to door for sale in both rural and urban areas of Sunamganj, Maulvibazar, Sylhet and Habiganj districts.

In Maulvibazar district, goods are openly being sold at Barlekha, Shabapur, Kulara, Kamaganj, Srimaganj, Bhanugacha and Shamsheernagar.

In Sylhet, smuggled goods are easily available at Jaktiganj.

Kaliganj, Beantbarar, Chankhal, Chandgram, Sutarkandi, Tamabil, Golapganj, Balaganj, Tajpur, Jalong and Kanatganj.

Madhabpur, Chunarughat, Shaistaganj and Ballah of Habiganj district have turned into important markets for the contraband.

In Sunamganj district, Chhatka, Govindaganj, Tahirpur, Deral are some of the trading centres.

Another report from Kushtia adds: Social crimes including rape and hijacking have increased in the district in the last two months causing grave concern among the people.

The latest incident of murder occurred on December 20, at village Machpara in Kushtia union in Sadar upazila where Mosharrif Hussain (40) was shot dead by some unknown miscreants at dead of night.

The cause of the murder could not be ascertained.

On December 10, Jayanta (20), a local photographer, was killed in the Housing Estate area.

Anjura Begum (28), pregnant for seven months was raped then killed by mastans at Dhuluka village in Kumarkhali upazila on November 30.