

Upazila roundup

HABIGANJ

Pregnant girl throttled to death by lover

Jan 3: An unmarried pregnant girl of Nandipara in Baniachong upazila of the district was allegedly throttled to death by her lover Saturday, reports UNB.

Police said, Hosnara (20), was in love with her neighbour Harunoor Rashid (25) for a long time. Harun developed physical relationship with her on assurance of marriage.

At one stage, Hosnara became pregnant and asked him to make arrangement to solemnise their marriage. On his refusal the issue was referred to the local village elders who in a meeting asked Harun to marry Hosnara.

At this Harun got furious. He went to the house of Hosnara and throttled her to death. Since the incident he remained absconding.

The body was sent to Sadar hospital for autopsy.

A case has been filed with the local police.

KHAGRACHARI

10,000 people get winter clothes

Jan 3: The local garrison of the Bangladesh Army has distributed winter clothes among ten thousand distressed people of two upazilas of the district during the last few days ending on December 31, reports UNB.

Brigadier Shareef Aziz said, woolen clothes were distributed among tribals and non-tribals in 9 cluster villages and the adjoining areas of Manikchari and Luxmichari upazilas.

Meanwhile, price of winter clothes has registered a sharp rise in the local markets which is beyond the purchasing capacity of the low income group of people.

SIRAJGANJ

Two slaughtered by unknown assailants

Jan 3: Two people were slaughtered by unknown assailants in the district in two separate incidents on Tuesday night, reports UNB.

Police said, Sarwardi of village Fulbari of Sadar upazila and Shahidul of Nimgachi village of Raiganj upazila were sleeping at night in their respective houses. A gang of miscreants call them out of their houses and killed them. They threw the bodies in nearby ditches of their houses.

On information, police recovered the bodies and sent to Sadar hospital for post-mortem.

Two separate cases were filed with Sadar and Raiganj police. None was so far arrested.

SATKHIRA

Mini marathon race contest

Jan 3: A 20-kilometre mini marathon race competition was held here Wednesday to celebrate the happy new year, reports UNB.

Organised by the District Sports Association, the race was divided into civilian and defence groups.

In civilian groups, Kazi Qudus became first and Habibullah and Pintu became second and third respectively.

Kazi Qudus took one hour 23 minutes to touch the target. In Defence Group, Maradul Islam of Bangladesh Ansar won the first prize. He took one hour 10 minutes. Joydul Abedin and Jahangir of BDR became second and third respectively.

The race from Sakhipur High School to District Stadium was participated by 250 competitors including a 66-year-old athlete Anisur Rahman of Palashpore.

Director General of NGOs Shahidul Alam distributed prizes among the winners while old athlete Aminur Rahman was also awarded special prize.

CHANDPUR

Six dacoits held, arms recovered

Jan 3: Chandpur Railway Police on Wednesday arrested six alleged dacoits from Modoroot Railway Station, reports BSS.

Police said they committed dacoity at Khan Bahadur Bari village Shahtoli, under Chandpur upazila.

They were passing through train in the guise of passengers. On suspicion Railway Police challenged them and caught them. They allegedly confessed their crime to the police.

Police recovered one pipe gun and lethal weapons from their possession along with looted goods.

JHENIDAH

College students' union election

Jan 3: Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal won all the seats in the local Mahatabuddin College Student Union election held on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Zahidul Islam and Soliman Biswas elected as Vice President and General Secretary respectively.

JCD brought out a victory procession on the campus after the announcement of the results.

Meanwhile, Jatiya Chhatra Dal Student wing of National Democratic Front boycotted the election after submitting their protest.

At a Press conference here on Wednesday, the leaders of the Jatiya Chhatra Dal termed the election as unconstitutional and demanded fresh election.

COMILLA

Cadet College annual sports concludes

Jan 3: The annual sports competition and prize distribution ceremony of the Comilla Cadet College concluded at the college ground here recently, an ISPR Press release said, reports BSS.

The Comilla House Team emerged champions in the three-day competition while the Titus House Team became runners-up.

The local Area Commander of Bangladesh Army, Major General Syed Badruzzaman, was the chief guest on the concluding day while Begum Marina Badruzzaman gave away the prizes as special guest.

PABNA

Indian Hindi, blue films exhibited

Jan 3: Indian Hindi and foreign blue films are being exhibited openly here at many public places causing moral degradation of the young generation, reports UNB.

The demand for the Indian Hindi films is on rise and both the Hindi and obscene films are also being shown in many villages through VCRs, local people alleged.

The school going boys and girls often drop their classes to enjoy the films in a body, some guardians alleged.

Taking advantage of law and order situation some unscrupulous video shopowners in the town have turned their shops into mini cinema halls, where obscene films are shown on commercial basis.

Besides, the youths of the town and other places are addicted to spurious drugs and liquor at the influence of foreign video films who often resort to anti-social activities.

Local leaders have urged the authorities to take stringent measures against the exhibition of obscene films to save the youths from further ruin.

BRAHMANBARIA

Young housewife commits suicide

Jan 3: A young housewife of village Lalpur of Sadar upazila allegedly committed suicide by taking poison on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Police sources said Kulum Begum (22), wife of Bacchu Mia allegedly took poison in the afternoon. She was rushed to Sadar hospital where the doctors declared her dead.

RANGAMATI

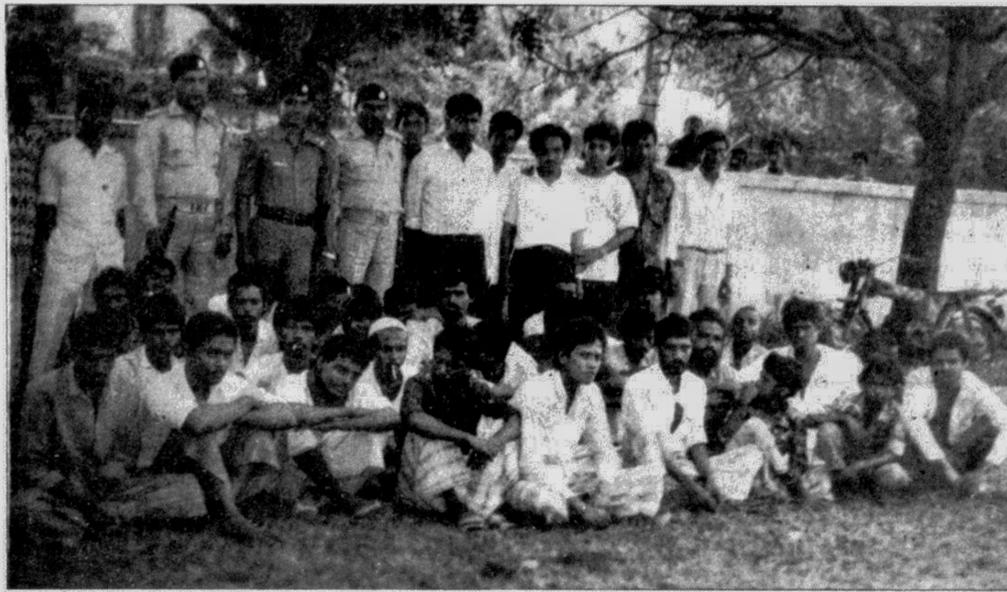
487 tara pumps to be installed

Jan 3: At least 487 tara pumps are to be installed in the hill district to supply pure drinking water this year, reports UNB.

An Executive Engineer of the Public Health Engineering Directorate disclosed this in the monthly meeting of the District Coordination and Development Committee held on December 24 with Guatam Deban, Chairman, Local Government Parishad in the chair.

The meeting discussed the financing modality of the installation and decided to move the government for exemption of payment of installation charges by the local people.

The meeting observed that the poor people would not be able to make part payment of the installation cost, which should be exempted as done last year.



GAZIPUR: Thirtytwo heroin addicts were arrested recently from Borhan Mazar Area, Tongi. The raid was conducted jointly by the Tongi Thana police and the members of Leo Club, Dhaka Turag.

Jotders using lathials to grab khas lands

NOAKHALI, Jan 3: The legendary lathials have staged a comeback wreaking havoc on the poor and landless in the char areas of Greater Noakhali District in the same way as in the distant past, reports UNB.

UNB Correspondent Rezaul Karim Lotus visiting Hatiya, Nabagram, Bhatirtek, Thanarhat and several other char areas heard horrowing tales of atrocities, deprivation and varied criminal commissions perpetrated by the self-styled and absentee jotders with the help of their hired legions.

The resurgence of lathi wielding professionals, vanguard of the despotic landlords and vanquished for long has been prompted by the autocratic regime's decision to distribute khas land to the landless and declaration of surfacing char-lands as government property (khas land) in 1988.

And the lathials, also forlorn and distribute, give a damn to the blood and misery of their kindred as long as they have a job and enough to eat provided by their invisible "barasababhs".

In the offshore areas of the district, innumerable chars have been surfacing and vanishing in and out of season. As soon as a char emerged, Kamaluddins and Azharuddins from nowhere take over its control with a big contingent of lathials parading on the fertile soil.

The uninhabited char land which have been existing since before 1988 had been asked to be distributed to the landless peasants but some erosion — affected inheritors (Boya) or just pretenders stood on the way.

They came up with records of 1940 and laid claims on the chars securing stay order from the court.

Political pressure prevailed upon the district administration to continue interim allocation of the "khas land" through Duplicate Carbon Receipts (DCR), which conferred temporary lease and the right to cultivate the land.

But the claimants made their own arrangements and forced the farmers to share crops or on refusal face lathial power to get relieved of the entire crop at harvest time and become fugitives.

Dhal Char, 5 miles South-West of Hatiya is one such char where about 1800 acres of khas land and 2500 acres cultivable land have been occupied by two jotders (landlords), Kamaluddin and Hazi Azharuddin.

With the authority of DCR, the landless cultivators planted paddy on the char and as harvest time closed in, professional lathials swooped on them and took away the entire crop for two consecutive years, 1990 and 1991.

In November last, landlords took away crop from 800 acres of land, farmers told UNB.

At the nearby Moulevir Char, at least 1600 acres of khas lands remain under illegal possession of a handful of jotders.

The story is repeated at Nabagram, Bhatirtek and Thanarhat not very far from the district head quarters.

Farmers at Naluya, Dhanershis, Kalomi, Gangchil, Char Towab Ali, Char Akram, Char Alauddin, Char Elahi, Char Bahga and Char Laxmi had the same story to tell.

The jotders, whose claim has never been established, have been taking away crops from those "khas lands" for the last three years.

Several times the lathials had set ablaze the homes and subjected the landless DCR holders to inhuman torture, subjected lathials had set ablaze the homes and to inhuman torture.

Number of abortions increasing

KUSHITIA, Jan 3: Number of illegal abortions has alarmingly increased in the district in the recent months, reports UNB.

Kushitia hospital sources said, 18 patients, victims of illegal abortion were admitted and treated in the hospital last month alone.

The victims Lutfun (38), Hamida (20), Farida (30), Sabina (13), Ferdousi (16), Chaina (18), Rehana (40), Marjina (20), Bulbul (18), Rokeya (36), Maleka (30), Aklima (35), Jaima Khatun (25), Supria Shah (25), Naima (45), Dolly (18), and Nazmina (24) were admitted in the hospital with serious complications and survived after prolonged treatment.

Village quacks are mainly responsible for the complications, it is alleged.

Implementation of laws needed to decrease road accidents

From Our Correspondent

The initiatives so far taken by the government and private sources have failed to halt the increasing rate of deaths from accidents.

It is learnt that over two thousand people die in road accidents every year in our country. A WHO source disclosed that about five lakh people die from road accidents in the world per year.

A senior police officer recently said that the knowledge about traffic rules could help reduce road accidents. It proves that the drivers were given licences without proper knowledge of traffic rules. Some of the people may not have the knowledge about the rules but all the road accident victims are not fools.

Some daily passengers of buses informed that most of the drivers of few routes are actually boys who have managed valid licences. It is alleged that some of the drivers do not care the law enforcing agencies and have good relations with them for reasons not known.

A police source informed that in some cases they were unable take actions as the concerned unions protect the drivers. They law enforcing agencies are harassed in some cases, it is informed.

When the higher authorities verify the requisite papers of the vehicles, it is found that the number vehicles on the roads are very small. It proves that a good number of vehicles are seen on the roads have no valid papers.

In cases of accidents in cities and towns, the rickshaws can be blamed but the question of the public is that what are the law enforcing people are doing. There are allegations that the rickshawpullers without licences use to manage the traffic police.

A police officer said that the deplorable condition of roads and vehicles and untrained drivers are mainly responsible for the accidents. But these can be solved through appropriate actions, some people expressed.

Some speakers at a seminar on road accidents called on the experts to evolve methods to check growing road accidents. But who will implement the new methods.

Some of the bus owners and drivers expressed that the road accidents will reduce when we will be able realise the value of lives. They said that we must consider every one as our near ones. They further demanded the exhibition of post-accident matters before the public which can help greatly to reduce accidents. Heavy punishments to the killers are also needed to set examples before the public.

The below mentioned road accidents will no doubt speak of the necessity of taking meaningful steps to decrease the mishaps.

Bus helper killed

UNB reports says: A bus helper was killed and 10 passengers were injured when a speeding bus plunged into a roadside ditch near Middle

Dalia on Feni-Sonagazi road recently.

The victim Harun (25) died on the spot.

Two seriously injured passengers were admitted to Sadar hospital.

Police seized the bus but the driver managed to escape.

Minor boy crushed to death

A minor boy was crushed to death under the wheels of a speeding bus coming from Comilla on Chandpur-Comilla road recently, police said.

The victim was identified as Mahbab Alam (6) of Torpurcharndi village of Sadar upazila.

Police and witnesses said, the accident occurred near Technical Govt. High School Gate when the bus (No Noakhali 1082) dashed him after speedily coming down from a high bridge.

There is no speed breaker on both ends of the bridge, it is alleged.

Deputy Commissioner and Superintendent of police visited the spot after the incident.

2 old men succumb to injuries

An old man succumbed to his injuries at Sadar hospital following a road accident on Jhenidah-Magura road recently, police said.

Witnesses said, the victim Kiamuddin Mollah (62) while crossing the road at Goalpara, 10 kilometres off the Sadar town, was knocked down by a speeding truck (No Dhaka N 5932).

He was rushed to the hospital in a critical condition where he expired after a short while.

Police seized the truck, but the driver, however managed to flee.

An aged person succumbed to his injuries at Sadar hospital after he was fatally wounded when he fell down from a running minibus on Satkhira-Kaliganj road.

Police and witnesses said, Johar Ali (55) of village Parulia of Debhata upazila fell down from the overcrowded coaster (No Khulna BA 1461) at Parulia.

Police seized the coaster, but the driver managed to escape.

One killed, 5 hurt

A man was killed and five others sustained injuries following a head on collision between two coasters on the Sylhet-Sunamganj road at Badriganj in Chataik upazila.

Witnesses and hospital sources said the accident occurred recently when the ill-fated coaster (Sylhet, No 6702) bound for Sunamganj from Sylhet fell into the roadside ditch after the collision killing the man on the spot.

The identity of the deceased could not be gathered. The injured were admitted to the Osmani Medical College Hospital.

A man was killed by a speeding truck on Jhenidah

Landless, unemployed people increasing

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Jan 3: The number of landless and unemployed people are increasing day by day in all the seven upazilas of the district.

According to a local survey conducted by local journalists, the total population of the district is over 18 lakh. Of them, 70 per cent depend on agriculture, 10 per cent on different occupations and the rest 20 per cent are unemployed.

Among the farmers, 60 per cent are landless, 25 per cent are marginal farmers and the rest 15 per cent have lands of their own by which they can survive during usual days.

As the per capita land is small, the shortfall of foodgrains has become a regular feature in the district for some time past.

Besides, hundreds of acres of land are being eroded by the rivers — Kobadak, Betrabati, Kakshially, Kholpetua and Ichhamati every year. Consequently, the number of landless are increasing alarmingly.

The farmers having a few acres of land can not cope with the rising prices of agricultural inputs and daily necessities. They are to borrow money from the local money lenders at a high rate of interest.

They are deprived of the irrigation facilities being unable pay its cost. Above all, they are unable to get fair prices of the agricultural products as they are to sell it earlier for the payment of loans and the interest.

The educated unemployed persons are also giving rise to social unrest since there is little scope for employment in mills and factories.

AL supporter shot dead

JHENIDAH, Jan 3: A local Awami League activist was shot and another received serious bullet injuries in village Dhaura at Salkupa Upazila by unknown miscreants Wednesday, reports UNB.

The victim Rafiqul Islam alias Manik Joarder (30) died on the spot while the injured Mizanur Rahman was admitted to the upazila health complex, police said today.

The miscreants, numbering about eight, called Manik and his brother-in-law Mizanur Rahman, to a nearby field of the village and shot them.

Road communication still not normal

PABNA, Jan 3: Road communication remained almost disrupted in the district as most buses and coaches went off the roads since November 28 due to non-issuance of appointment letters to the drivers, reports UNB.

It is learnt that the big transport owners have not yet issued appointment letters as per terms given by the Road Transport Authority. On the other hand, small transport owners who issued appointment letters are collecting high fares from the passengers.

Passengers complained that Taka 120 is being charged for Pabna-Dhaka coachfare against Taka 75 upto November 27. Moreover, small number of mini buses now plying in different routes were carrying almost double passengers violating the traffic rules. Authorities mysteriously remained silent ignoring the public inconveniences.

Meanwhile, Advocate Ranchar Maitra, President and Mofazzal Hossain Secretary of Pabna District National Awami Party expressed grave concern over the situation and demanded immediate intervention of the authorities in this respect.

Lack of medicine, medical apparatus, X-ray machine and ambulance have seriously handicapped the Santhia Upazila Health Complex.

It is alleged that medicines supplied by the government are being sold to the local pharmacies by some dishonest employees of the health complex.

Patients complained that the doctors rarely attend the patients at the complex to spend time in their private chambers.

They also complained of unhygienic environment, low quality of diet and poor accommodation at the complex.

Local people have urged the authorities to look into the matter and take necessary steps to remove the problems.

Passengers suffer for want of gangway bridge

PATUAKHALI, Jan 3: The slippers of the gangway bridge of the launch terminal here has been damaged causing much inconveniences to the passengers, reports UNB.

It is reported that due to damage of the bridge at the gateway of the terminal, serious obstacles are faced for loading and unloading of goods to and from launches.

Mentionable that hundreds of passengers travel from the terminal towards various places of the country including the capital city. Goods are despatched throughout the country by river routes through this terminal. But the bad condition of the terminal has created problems both for the passengers and the traders in lifting their goods.

It is also alleged that the launches are not maintaining time schedule resulting the sufferings of the passengers.

Tractor kills minor boy

A minor boy was run over by a tractor recently near Taragor on Sherpur-Gaetrikhamar road.

The tractor dashed the victim Ershad Ali (8) from behind killing him on the spot while he was crossing the road.

The driver managed to escape with the vehicle.

The body was sent to Sadar hospital for autopsy.

A case was filed in this connection.

Woman killed, seven injured

A woman was killed and 7 others were injured in a bus mishap at Satchori hilly area on Dhaka-Sylhet highway.

Police said, the accident took place when a Madhabpur bound bus (Khulna BA 4305) collided head on with another bus coming from the opposite direction.

Sufia Khatun (25) died on the spot and her body was sent for autopsy. The injured were admitted to Chunarughat Hospital.

A case has been lodged with Chunarughat police.

Deputy Commissioner and Additional Superintendent of police visited the spot.