

Upazila roundup

PANCHAGAR

Help build self-reliant country

Jan 8 : Law and Justice Minister Mirza Golam Hafez on Tuesday called upon the people to cooperate with the present government whole heartedly to build a self-reliant country, reports UNB.

Addressing two separate public gatherings at Tetulia and Atauri upazilas of the district, the Law Minister said that no development effort could succeed without participation of the people.

He said that BNP government being accountable to the people for its activities, would remain ever vigilant against misuse of power and misappropriation of national wealth by any quarter.

The Minister urged the local people to work for successful implementation of family planning and compulsory primary education to build a happy and prosperous Bangladesh.

BORGUNA

Cold wave claims 3 more lives

Jan 8 : The cold wave sweeping across the country claimed three more lives in the district Monday raising the death toll to five, reports UNB.

The victims are Joytun Bibi (70) in Sadar upazila, Abdul Kader (45) and Mukunda Shil (60) of the town.

They failed to sustain the harsh bite of the unusually cold weather, local people said.

JHENIDAH

Terrorists leader surrenders

Jan 8 : The leader of the terrorists group called 'Ali Bahini' surrendered at Saikupa thana of the district on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Idris Ali, leader of the group which committed a large number of crimes in the district, also deposited a tala mortar, one 303 rifle and 7 rounds of ammunition.

He was earlier awarded a life-term imprisonment for a murder in Kumarkhali upazila of Kushtia district in 1978. There were also a large number of other cases against him.

PABNA

Dacoits loot 200 grams of gold, Tk 69,000

Jan 8 : Two separate dacoity cases were committed at two houses in the town here Monday night, reports UNB.

Dacoits stormed at the house of Abu Hossain, owner of Modern Press of College Para and looted 200 grams of gold and cash Taka 52,000.

In another dacoity at Khalilur Rahman's of Dilpur area the robbers looted valuables, worth about Taka one lakh including VCD set, television and cash Taka 17,000.

Two separate cases were filed in these connection.

TONGI

Make industry financially viable

Jan 8 : Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan urged the management and labour leaders of the National Tubes Limited to chalk out a new comprehensive programme for making the industry financially viable, reports BSS.

He was addressing the management and workers of the industry here. The National Tubes is an industrial unit of Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation (BSEC).

The Minister said the present government would not tolerate any kind of mismanagement in the industrial sector. He said the nation would not bear the burden of the losing industrial concerns. He directed the National Tubes authority to put in their sincere efforts to change the present situation of the industry within the next six months.

The National Tubes Limited manufactures '1/2' to 8 'nominal dia pipes' by electric resistance welding system.

The present annual production capacity of the industry is 45 thousand metric tons and the unit is capable of meeting the entire domestic demand for 1/2" to 8" dia pipes with substantial surplus for export.

Later, the Industries Minister visited Metalex Corporation Limited which is also an industrial unit under the administrative control of BSEC.

NETRAKONA

Freedom Fighters urged to resist conspirators

State Minister for Establishment Md Nurul Huda has called upon the Freedom Fighters to resist those who speak against the spirit of Liberation War and national integrity, reports BSS.

He was addressing a gathering organised by local Mukti Juddha Command Council at Barabazar in Netrakona on Sunday.

The State Minister said late President Ziaur Rahman, the founder of BNP, was a great Freedom Fighter. So, the present government can not tolerate any negligence to and conspiracy against the Freedom Fighters, he said.

The State Minister said the government was pledge-bound to revive and uphold the spirit of Liberation War.

Elaborating the role of the Treasury and the Opposition benches in the prevailing democratic environment, the State Minister said that everyone must speak and work with full responsibility and sincerity.

He said national interest and survival of democracy were of prime importance and partisan interest should jeopardise greater national interest.

KUSHTIA

Govt college classes, polls postponed

Jan 8 : Authorities of the local Government College on Tuesday suspended college union upto January 12 following a clash between two rival groups of students, reports UNB.

They have also suspended all classes at the college till January 13.

The local units of Chhatra League and Islami Chhatra Shibir have been engaged in altercation and clashes for quite some time.

The Principal of the college has set up a liaison committee to settle the dispute between the two student organisations.

Last meeting of the liaison committee was held on Monday, but failed to produce any fruitful result.

SIRAJGANJ

One killed, wife arrested

Jan 8 : Police arrested a young housewife of Telkup village in Sadar upazila of the district Monday in connection with the killing of her husband, reports UNB.

According to police, Suhrawardy (26), husband of accused Golenoar Begum (20) was killed on December 31. On the fateful day a gang of alleged miscreants called him out of the house at dead of night while he was sleeping.

Later his beheaded body was found in a nearby ditch of his house.

Police suspects that Golenoar is somehow connected with the assassins. She admitted that she knew the killers but denied any involvement in the killing.

FARIDPUR

Call to pass Indemnity Repeal Bill

Jan 8 : Mr. Mosharrar Hossain MP has urged for passing the Indemnity Ordinance (Repeal) Bill in the current session of Parliament to pave the way for a healthy political atmosphere in the country, reports BSS.

He was addressing the annual conference of Bhanga Thana Chhatra League and 'nabin baran' of Bhanga College here last week, a Press release said here on Friday.

Faridpur district Chhatra League President Habibur Rahman inaugurated the conference with hundreds of students present there.

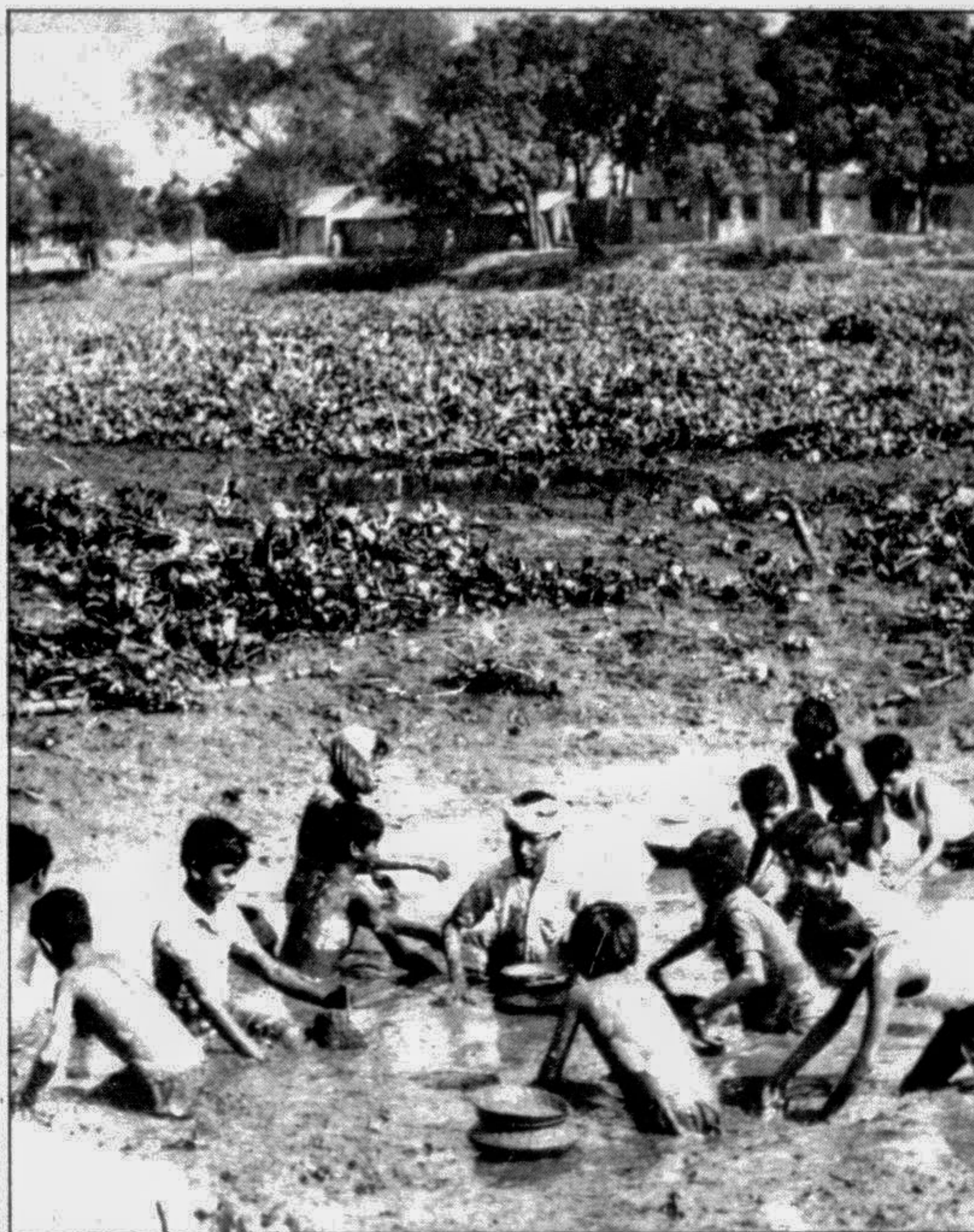
GAZIPUR

Fish disease

Jan 8 : Fish disease has broken out in an epidemic form in the sixteen upazilas of Gazipur and Tangail districts, Fishery officials said, reports UNB.

The sources said, fish like tati, shole, gozar, koi, puti, boal, magur and shing have been affected by disease known as ulcerative syndrome.

With the outbreak of the disease, demand for fish has abruptly gone down in the local markets, fish sellers said. The low income group of people who mostly live on fish are the worst sufferers.



CATCHING OF FISHES: Indiscriminate catching of fishes including the fish fry is decreasing the total production. Here boys are busy with the purpose after pumping the water out of the ditch. —Star photo

Huge fall in fish production 40,000 fishermen unemployed

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAH, Jan 8 : More than 40,000 fishermen of the district are facing unemployment because of abnormal fall in quantity fish.

Fish production this year suffered a serious set back in the district due to massive siltation of rivers, canals, haors and beels. Indiscriminate catching of fish fry by non-professionals and alarming out break of diseases.

With the advent of winter, most of the rivers, canals, beels and haors have been dried up. These water bodies earlier were silted up by the sand fall during the floods. Unabated catching of fish fry by large number of non-fishermen has also hampered the natural growth of fish.

It is alleged that a group of people living along the river side catch fish fry rampantly defying the government ban during breeding time.

Fish disease that broke out epidemically all over the country perished about 50 per cent of total fish in rivers,

beels, haors and ponds.

The increased use of insecticides in crop fields perished a huge quantity fish due to the contamination of the water.

On the other hand, fish is not cultivated proportionately in the water bodies. The fishermen could not increase fish production due to their fund constraints. They neither get bank loans nor the money lenders agree to lend money as they are already bankrupt, fishermen informed.

Meanwhile, a large number of fishermen had left their ancestral profession and had taken other occupations for their livelihood.

The Faridpur Sugar Mills authority have taken up a programme to change the socio-economic condition of the sugarcane growers by adopting intensive cultivation of improved variety of sugarcane.

A total of 300 acres of land at millgate and Magura Zone has been brought under the cultivation.

A plot measuring between 20 and 40 acres is being used for the cultivation of improved quality of sugarcane. This is now treated as single plot which helps the use maximum utilisation of land.

Md Farid Ahmed, Cane Development Officer who is organising the programme told The Daily Star that the farmers at the sugarcane blocks were supplied mechanised cultivation facilities, improved variety of plants, fertilizers and other necessary inputs for successful implementation of the programme.

Moreover, inter-cropping of potato, onion and mustard have also been introduced in the sugarcane blocks.

Under the improved method, about 900 to 1000 maunds of sugarcane is likely to be produced per acre where as the earlier sugarcane production was 400 maunds.

Field Officers and Field Staff of the department are supervising the cultivation for achieving the goal.

Notes from Magura

MAGURA, Jan 8 : A scheme has been undertaken to bring 22,811 hectares of land under potato cultivation in 16 districts of Khulna Division during the current season, reports UNB.

According to Agriculture Extension Department, the districts are: Magura, Narail, Jhenidah, Jessore, Khulna, Satkhira, Bagherhat, Kustia, Chundanga, Mcherpur, Barisal, Patuakhali, Bhola, Pirojpur, Borguna and Jhalakathi.

Of the total land, 10,900 hectares will be brought under potato and 11,911 hectares under sweet potato cultivation, said Director of Jessore Agriculture Zone.

A total of 2.62 lakh metric tons of potato will be produced this season, he added.

To make the programme a success, Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation will supply essential HYV seeds, fertilizers, pesticides among the growers at fair prices.

Tk 55 lakh for bridge construction

A sum of Taka 54.85 lakh is to be spent for construction of three bridges in Sadar upazila during the current fiscal year under the Annual Development Programme.

According to an official source, of the total, Taka 20.30 lakh has been sanctioned for construction of a bridge on Haorkhali Canal, Taka 20.23 lakh for a bridge on Alomkhali Canal and Taka 14.32 lakh for a bridge on Narankhali Canal.

The source also informed that construction work on all the bridges will start this month and is expected to be completed by June next.

On completion of the bridges, communication between Sadar upazila headquarters and the rural areas will be improved to a considerable extent.

Boro cultivation

District Agriculture Extension Department has taken up a massive programme to bring 35,081 acres of land in four upazilas of the district under boro paddy cultivation during the current season.

Abul Hossain Mollah, Deputy director of the District Agriculture Office said that, 12,010 acres will be cultivated in Sadar upazila, 1,206 acres in Sreepur upazila, 13,540 acres in Salikha upazila and 8,325 acres in Mohammadpur upazila.

With the successful implementation of the programme, about 45,000 metric tons of boro paddy worth about Taka 31 crore are expected to be produced during the season.

Aman procurement

Aman paddy procurement drive has been going on throughout the district.

The procurement target has been fixed at 2 thousand metric tons of paddy and rice during the current season.

District Food Controller said, 6 purchasing centres had been opened at Sadar, Alodda, Binodpur, Sreepur, Arpara and Mohammadpur, covering four upazilas of the district.

Launch journey hazardous

From Our Correspondent

COX'S BAZAR, Jan 8 : Launch journey on different routes of the district has become hazardous due to violation of traffic rules.

More than 100 launches ply on different routes including Moheshkhali, Kutubdia, Chakaria, Shaplapur, Badarkhali, Motorbari and Dalghata and carrying thousands of passengers every day. Most of the launches ply on these routes carry passengers, more than their capacity.

It is alleged that these launches do not possess live saving equipments and are supposed to be unaware of navigation rules. It is informed that the masters of the launches do not follow the forecast of the weather bulletin for which mishaps can take place at any time.

Most of the launches do not carry drinking water and do not have proper arrangements for urinal and latrine facilities.

The passengers travelling on Cox's Bazar-Kutubdia, Cox's Bazar-Motorbari, Cox's Bazar-Moheshpur and other routes have been facing much hardships due to the recent rise in the launch fares.

At present, the launch fare from Cox's Bazar to Kutubdia,

Motorbari and Moheshkhali is Taka 35.30, 10 as against the previous fare of Taka 25.20 and 5.

It may be mentioned here that thousands of passengers of the district travel daily by launch on these routes.

The owners of the engine boats have also increased the fare of their vessels on different routes.

Sale of adulterated foodstuff

Adulteration of foodstuffs is rampant in all the markets of seven upazilas of the district. It has become a regular practice of the businessmen causing anxiety among the people here.

Due to consumption of adulterated foodstuffs various stomach ailments and skin diseases have registered an alarming rise in the area. Adulterated goods are being sold freely in the markets. Pure milk, ghee, butter oil are hardly available.

Besides, some vendors are found selling adulterated food in front of the schools. As a result, the school-goers have been suffering from diseases.

No preventive measures have yet been taken by local Health Department in this regard, it is alleged.

Doctors negligence makes EPI failure

JHENIDAH, Jan 8 : The Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) has reportedly failed this year to achieve its target in six upazilas of the district due to negligence of doctors and other personnel, reports UNB.

The upazilas are Sadar, Shaillakupa, Kaliganj, Kotchandpur, Moheshpur and Harinakunda. Thousands of children have been suffering from the six diseases — polio, diphtheria, measles, whooping cough, phthisis and tetanus in 16 south-western districts of the country, it is learnt.

According to an official source, 61 per cent that is 28,047 children were given the 3rd dose, 64 per cent that is 29,556 were given DCO and 58 per cent that is 26,827 children were given DPT in this district.

A total of 271 staff members and 18 officers including Civil Surgeon had been working in six upazilas of the district for the successful implementation of the programme.

A high level inspecting team from Dhaka recently visited the district and expressed dissatisfaction over the failure of the programme. Non-payment of salaries was stated to be the main cause behind their indifference to the programme.

One Health Inspector has alleged that many of the field workers filled up the registers

without going to the field or actually immunising the children.

The inquiry reveals that regularly in giving doses is hardly maintained. Field workers are not available in time for the successive doses.

When contacted Moazzem Hossain, Civil Surgeon of the district admitted that there had been lapses in implementing the EPI but he said many of the workers had not been paid for long.

All-out efforts were being made to achieve the target this year, he said.

Biennial confce

The 5th Biennial conference of the Institute of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh, district unit was held here recently.

Chaired by the Unit President, Shushil Kumar Basu, the conference was attended by Moshir Rahman MP as chief guest. Among others, Khairul Umam and Abdul Latif spoke on the occasion.

A 11-member district unit committee was formed with former President Shushil Kumar Basu and Rafiqul Islam as President and Secretary respectively.

Later, a seminar on the role of 'Diploma Engineer in the Activities of National Technology' was also arranged.

Tk 22.67cr smuggled goods seized last yr

RAJSHAH, Jan 8 : The BDR personnel seized smuggled goods worth Taka 22,67,21,336 from border areas of Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Natore, Naogaon and Pabna last year, official sources said, reports UNB.

Goods worth Taka 19,20,68,315 were seized while being smuggled into the country from India and goods worth Taka 3,36,13,081 were seized while going to India from Bangladesh.

So far 4,329 cases were registered with police against 835 alleged smugglers in these connections.

The highest quantity of contraband goods worth Taka 3,16,78,816 was seized in April. The second highest valued at Taka 2,38,61,425 was seized in August.

The goods which were being smuggled into the country include sugar, salt, cows, clothes, cosmetics, imitation ornaments, blades, electric instruments, bi-cycles and spares, motor parts, water-glass, pesticides, wine and drugs like heroin, phenacydyl, hashish and ganja.

The seized goods which were smuggled out of the country include gold, silver, copper, bronze, kansa, spare parts of watch, kerosene oil, edible oil, polyester and clothes.

BDR sources said that young people and women were mostly involved in smuggling.

UP polls campaign

The campaign for the forthcoming Union Parishad Election is gaining momentum in the district.

Candidates have been holding meetings and processions every day and night with voters, supporters, workers and campaigners, moving door to door requesting the voters to cast votes in favour of them.

Roadside shops, tea-stalls and walls of the buildings are being decorated with various types of coloured posters, handbills and leaflets are also being distributed among the voters.

District Election Commission Office sources said, a total of 367 and 2,735 candidates are contesting for 71 posts of chairman and 313 members in 9 upazilas.

Candidates belong mainly to Bangladesh Nationalist Party, Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami.

Borguna lawyers on indefinite strike

BARGUNA, Jan 8 : Local Bar Association began an indefinite strike on Tuesday protesting delay in disposal of cases in the Magistrate Court, reports UNB.

The strike was called Monday to protest the delay which was reportedly caused by the absence of magistrate in the court since December 11.

The post left vacant after the transfer of the incumbent. The new Magistrate Abdul Hadi, transferred from Barisal, was yet to arrive, bar sources said.

Meanwhile, local UNO was performing the responsibility of the magistrate at the court. But the lawyers complained that disposal of cases is being delayed as the UNO could never attend the court in time.

Canal digging in progress

From Our Correspondent

The works on nation-wide canal digging programme are on satisfactory progress.

Earlier, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia inaugurated the programme near at Sanir Akhra, Dhaka where a large number of people spontaneously participated the function.

It may be mentioned here that the programme was initiated by late President Ziaur Rahman for the overall development of the villages.

The programme aims at providing employment opportunities to villagers, improving the communication network, improve irrigation facilities, removing stagnancy of water and attaining food autonomy.

Millions of villagers will be benefited by the proper implementation of the programme.

Meanwhile, the government have warned the implementation committees against any malpractice regarding canal digging.

The government have also sought cooperation from every corner to make programme success.

KHULNA

BSS reports say: Speaker of Jatiya Sangsad Sheikh Razzaque Ali formally inaugurated the District Canal Digging Programme at Rupsha upazila.

Under the programme one kilometer long Padmabila Canal would be dug.

Addressing a function arranged on this occasion the Speaker said, time had come to re-excavate the derelict canals and streams of the country so as to get rid of dependence on others and to attain food autonomy.

He stressed the need for checking the population boom along with achieving self-sufficiency in food production to reduce dependence and to stand on its own feet.

CHITTAGONG

Planning Minister Zahuruddin Khan on Tuesday stressed the need for motivating people for ensuring their participation in the Canal Digging Programme for making it a success.

Addressing the District Canal Digging Programme Coordination meeting at the Deputy Commissioner's Conference Room here, the Minister said Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman had introduced the canal digging programme considering it as the main driving

force of the rural development activities.

The meeting was attended, among others, by City Corporation Mayor Mir Nasiruddin, Sayed Ohidul Alam MP, Strajul Islam MP, Amir Khairul Mah-mud MP, Begum Rozy Kabir MP, Divisional Commissioner and concerned officials, an official hand out said.

KUSHTIA

Mr Abdul Mannan, State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism at a meeting with local Members of Parliament and officials on Sunday at Circuit House here approved the list of canals to be dug in Kushtia district.

Speaking at the meeting the Minister said the canal digging was necessary to increase production and attain self-sufficiency in food in the country. He sought cooperation of all to make the canal digging programme a success.

SUNAMGANJ

UNB reports say: Commerce Minister MK Anwar stressed the need for proper feasibility studies for each project to ensure maximum welfare of the people.

He was addressing a meeting of the district committee on Canal Digging Programme here on Tuesday.

The Minister said main objective of the canal digging programme was to provide irrigation for enhancing agricultural production with a view to attaining self-sufficiency in food.

MK Anwar said the BNP government desired to materialise Canal Digging Programme with the voluntary participation of all section of people.



Canal digging