

Upazila roundup

JAMALPUR Honours courses from current session

Jan 10: State Minister for Education Principal Yunus Khan said here on Thursday that honours courses would be introduced in Ashk Mahmood College from the current session, reports UNB.

Addressing the installation ceremony of the college students' union, he said at the initial stage honours courses would be started in Bangla and Management.

Deputy Minister for Health Md Sirajul Haq also spoke on the occasion.

It may be mentioned that the students and teachers of the college and local people have been demanding introduction of honours course in the college since it was nationalised in 1979.

RUPGANG Research centre on Zamdani saree will be set up

Jan 10: A research centre of Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation will be set up at Tarabo of Rupganj upazila under Narayangang district to improve the qualitative standard of Dhakai Zamdani saree, a pride heritage of Dhakai Moslin, reports BSS.

At the same time the Tarabo area will be given the status of Zamdani Estate of BSCIC, according to an official handout on Thursday.

This was stated by Minister for Industries Shamsul Islam Khan while visiting different Zamdani Factories here. Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, State Minister for Textiles A Mannan, Salauddin Ahmed MP and BSCIC Chairman Moniruzzaman Chowdhury were present on the occasion.

During free and frank discussions with the owners of these factories, the Industries Minister said that the research centre would work for making Zamdani more attractive in design and colour and help better marketing of Zamdani sarees. A team of experts would be sent soon to explore the project and give recommendation within two weeks, he added.

The Home Minister said the expert workers of Zamdani industry could be turned into very useful workforce.

The State Minister for Textiles said the Textile Ministry was implementing a comprehensive scheme to raise the production of high standard silk yarn to 5000 tons from 25 to 30 tons at present to improve the quality of Zamdani sarees and other products.

KHULNA

Attack on Islamic Varsity teacher protested

Jan 10: Teachers of Islamic University brought out a silent procession Thursday protesting assault on a teacher by a student, reports UNB.

An examinee of Masters, Department of Management, of the University allegedly attacked a lecturer of the department while on duty. He abused Md Saiful Islam but was restrained from further assault by other students.

The incident occurred in the first floor of the Mathematics Building of the campus.

Chhatra League, Chhatra Dal and Chhatra Shibir condemned the attack and demanded proper inquiry into the incident and adequate punishment on the offenders.

LALMONIRHAT

Implementation of canal digging stressed

Jan 10: Treasury Bench Whip Prof. Shahjahan Mia on Thursday stressed the need for proper implementation of National Canal Digging Programme aimed at economic self-reliance, reports UNB.

Addressing the district administration officials here the Jatiya Sangsad Whip sought cooperation of all to achieve the goal of national progress.

Though people have mandate to BNP to run the country, but the Opposition is equally responsible to build up the economy as the country did not belong to BNP alone, he said.

Later, he visited the progress of canal digging of 22 km long Sreekhata-Bukshula which had been inaugurated earlier by Prime Minister Begam Khaleda Zia.

Prof. Shahjahan Mia also distributed relief to victims of a recent fire in the town.

BAGERHAT Call for paying respect to intellectuals

Jan 10: Food Minister M Shamsul Islam called for evaluation of scholars and intellectuals of the country and their contribution in different branches of knowledge, reports UNB.

He was addressing as chief guest at the concluding session of the 3-day programme organised by the Bagerhat Foundation, a social welfare organisation, established in 1981.

The programme held at the Town School premises on Thursday was arranged to acknowledge the contribution of celebrated personalities and meritorious students of the district.

The Minister said that the nation which does not pay due respect and recognition to their scholars cannot prosper.

The function was also addressed by Syeda Nasreen Ali MP, Khulna City Mayor Advocate Toiwabur Rahman, Principal Bagerhat Government College, Mojibur Rahman.

The function was presided by Deputy Commissioner Abdul Mannan.

NARAIL

Scout rally

Jan 10: A four-day district scout rally began Thursday at Chalitatala Sammilani High School premises, reports UNB.

Deputy Commissioner of the district presided over the inaugural ceremony while Sharif Khasruzzaman MP attended the function as chief guest.

About 200 scouts of 25 high schools of the district are taking part in the rally.

The closing ceremony will be held Sunday next.

JESSORE

Terrorists asked to surrender arms

Jan 10: Minister for Social Welfare and Women's Affairs Mr Tariqul Islam on Thursday called upon the members of the outlawed underground political parties to surrender their arms to the nearby police stations and come back to normal life, reports BSS.

He was addressing a public meeting at a village Joradaha of Jessore Sadar upazila.

Local political leaders and officials of Jessore district administration were present in the meeting.

The Minister said, the government would provide all possible assistance for rehabilitation of those who would surrender their illegal arms within the announced deadline of January 15.

Mr. Islam later distributed blankets, lungs, old clothes and baby garments among the poor villagers affected by booters and terrorists.

The members of an outlawed underground political party attacked with arms at the Joradaha village in the middle of last month. They looted cow, goats, paddy, rice and other property of the villagers.

SIRAJGANJ

Pickpockets active

Jan 10: Safe travelling to and from the district town is becoming increasingly troublesome and threatening due to pickpockets, reports UNB.

The pickpockets are roving round the streets openly and snatching away cash from the innocent passengers passing through the town, alleged the sufferers.

The offenders are also seen very much in action at the Bank counters, local people said.

The law enforcing agencies have not yet taken any effective measures to stop the rising trend of this social nuisance.

KISHOREGANJ

BNP unit confce

Jan 10: The conference of Kishoreganj thana unit of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) was held at the Local Shilpakala Academy recently, reports UNB.

Zahidul Haque, Deputy State Minister for Shipping attended the meeting as chief guest while Masud Helal presided.

Amiruddin Ahmed MP, Convener of the district BNP formally inaugurated the conference.

A 51-member committee was formed with Mir Hossain as President and Abdus Shoban as General Secretary.

Moulana Aatur Rahman MP was also present.

The conference was addressed among others by Prof Habibur Rahman Bhutyan Joint Convener of the district BNP, Kabiruddin Ahmed and H Habibur Rahman Dayal.

Leprosy attacks 15,000 people in Maulvibazar

MAULVIBAZAR, Jan 10: About 15 thousand people of the district, mostly in the tea garden areas have been attacked by leprosy, reports UNB.

Lack of proper treatment and medical facilities aggravated their sufferings mostly male, local doctors said.

According to a social welfare organisation here, people belonging to the age group 15 to 30 and male are the worst sufferers.

Poverty, ignorance, prejudice account for the spreading of the disease in the area. Local people alleged that the disease has broken out in an epidemic form, but no steps has yet been taken to arrest the menace.

"HEED", a social welfare organisation has set up a leprosy cure Centres at Kamalganj upazila of Habiganj district and Kulara upazila of Maulvibazar district.

At present, about 4,000 leprosy are under treatment at Kamalganj Centre and 1,000 at Taliapara Centre.

Potters of the district have been facing a serious set back in their business due to price hike of necessary inputs and lack of marketing facilities.

Informed sources said, prices of dice, chemicals, clay and dye have recorded a sharp

rise and gone beyond the purchasing capacity of the poor artisans.

A large number of potters of Rajanagar, Kulara, Kamalganj and Sadar upazilas of the district have given up their ancestral profession due to fund constraints, sources added.

Potters said the cost of raw materials is increasing day by day. High price of fuel and straw has aggravated the situation.

They complained that they did not get adequate bank loans to run their age-old business.

They urged the concerned authorities to extend loan facilities of marketing to help them survive and keep their industry going.

Eye, skin diseases

A reports from Kishoreganj says: Gastro-intestinal ailments and skin diseases have been spreading alarmingly in all the 13 upazilas of the district causing grave concern among the people.

Doctors said, a large number of patients from different parts of the district are pouring into the Upazila Health Complexes and Sadar hospital everyday seeking treatment.

Scarcity of pure water and consumption of adulterated food and edible oils are learnt

to be the main reasons behind the outbreak of the diseases.

Adulterated food stuff including edible oils, milk and ghee are being sold unabatedly in open markets, consumers complained.

Local people urged the authorities to take stringent measures against the sale of adulterated foodstuff in the open market for the sake of public health.

Another report from Borguna adds: Hundreds of children in five upazilas of the district have been suffering from different eye, skin and gastro-intestinal diseases, hospital sources said.

Patients are being admitted into the hospital and health complexes everyday due to the recent outbreak of the diseases in an alarming proportion, doctors said.

Vitamin deficiency, scarcity of drinking water and taking of adulterated food were attributed to the outbreak of the diseases.

Lack of necessary medicine in the hospital and health complexes has aggravated the situation, it is learnt.

Local leaders have urged the authorities to supply necessary medicines to the hospital and health complexes and take immediate measures to combat the growing menace.

Notes from Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Jan 10: The number of landless and unemployed people are on the increase in all the 9 upazilas of the district, reports UNB.

According to a survey conducted by local leaders and journalists, the total population is now stands at over 19 lakh. Of the total, 70 per cent depend on agriculture, 10 per cent on different types of occupations and the rest 20 per cent are unemployed.

Among the farmers, 65 per cent are landless and 20 per cent are marginal. Rest 15 per cent have some lands.

The survey report said, river erosion, shortfall of foodgrains, flood and other natural calamities were the main causes for growing landlessness.

The farmers, having a few acres of land can not cope with the rising prices of agricultural inputs. They have been compelled to borrow money from the local money lenders at a high rate for livelihood.

Suicide on rise

Suicide incidents are increasing alarmingly in all the nine upazilas of the district causing grave concern among the conscious people.

Police said, at least 153 people committed suicide in the last year.

Of the total, about 70 per cent were divorced women. Poverty, family feud, unhappy conjugal life, failure in love were the main reasons behind the suicide, the sources added.

Besides, 55 murder cases were registered in the nine upazilas of the district during the same period.

Guest birds

With the onset of Winter, guest birds in plenty are being seen in different upazilas of the district.

Bird watchers say, innumerable species of migratory birds are pouring into the Chalanbeel of Tarash upazila and Jamuna Char area of Kazipur and Chowdhali upazilas.

Most of the birds are from the Siberian region where extreme cold weather forced them to migrate to warmer climates.

Principal manhandled

The Principal of Haji Wahed Mariam Degree College at Chandakona in Raiganj upazila who was forced out of his office recently.

Some activists of a student organisation forced Shamsul Huq out of his office apparently being agitated by filing of a case by him (Principal) against 8 Chhatra League workers in connection with an earlier incident at the college.

College sources blamed Pro-Awami League Chhatra League (A-A) supporters for the incident.

Meanwhile, the college authorities have completed preparation of a new voters list, as demanded by the Chhatra League, for the ensuing college union election scheduled to be held on January 12, college sources said.

Use of firewood

Trees are being felled indiscriminately for use in the brickfields in the district despite government ban.

According to informed sources, more than 50 brickfields with single and double burners have been burning about 200 maunds of firewood each daily quickening the deforestation.

Some brickfield owners told UNB that they are using tree branches from the local saw mills which are readily available on credit basis.

When contacted, a Coal Inspector alleged that the brickfield owners violating government rule are using firewood indiscriminately.

Plants and bamboo clusters are being uprooted for use as firewood without replantation which will adversely affect ecology of the district. Some Environmentalists said.

Food poisoning

At least 40 people including Mirza Muraduzzaman, MP of Sadar upazila, suffered food poisoning after attending a chelum in Dhanbandi area of the town recently.

Of them, five still undergoing treatment at the Sadar Hospital.

A large number of people attended the chelum party of local Veterinary Doctor. Of them 40 people were rushed to hospital after they fell sick soon after taking the food.

Burglary at Paura office

NAOGAON, Jan 10: Burglars took away Taka 13,125 from the steel almira of Naogaon Pourashava Office Sunday night, although two night guards were on duty at that times, reports UNB.

According to the pourashava sources, the thieves entered the office by breaking the iron bar of two windows of the office and decamped with money.

It may be noted that there is no iron safe in Naogaon Pourashava Office for a long time.

Scarcity of drinking water in Kushtia

From A Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Jan 10: Acute scarcity of pure drinking water is causing serious problems in rural areas of the district.

The existing number of tube-wells in six upazilas of the district is quite inadequate to meet the demand of the people.

According to a report, a large number of tube-wells are lying out of order for the last two years causing untold sufferings to the villagers.

The tubewells are out of order due to the damage in filter pipe, leakage in the pipe and want of spare parts.

Several representations for reworking the choked up tubewells were given to the authorities but no step has yet been taken. Besides, upper portion of many tubewells were stolen.

Reliable sources said, adequate funds were needed urgently for reworking and repair of the tube-wells.

Moreover, due to scarcity of pure drinking water people have to depend on kunka wells and tanks for drinking water. As a result, various water borne diseases are spreading in rural areas of the district.

Number of divorces is gradually increasing in the district. It is learnt, at least 1500

divorce cases were recorded during last two years in six upazilas of the district.

Under aged housewife are the worst victims as their husbands divorce them mostly for dowry.

Despite ban on marriage below 18 years, the marriage registrars are allegedly registering all marriages at the cost of more money.

50 grams heroin recovered

PABNA, Jan 10: District unit of the Narcotics Control Department recovered 50 grams of heroin worth about Tk. 5 lakh from village Kashipur of Hemayetpur union Wednesday night and arrested one man in this connection, reports UNB.

Official sources said, acting on a tip, a force led by A K M Saiful Islam and Sree Jatin Mukharjee, Director and Assistant Director of the unit, raided the house of Md Amzad Hossain and recovered the said quantity of heroin.

They also arrested Amzad from there.

A departmental case was filed with local police in this regard.

Borguna Govt College

Accommodation, teachers inadequate

BORGUNA, Jan 10: Shortage of teachers, inadequate laboratory apparatus and absence of transport facilities have been hampering smooth functioning of the Borguna Government College since long, reports UNB.

Classrooms of the college cannot accommodate 500 students and as a result the students find it difficult to sit comfortably. During summer, the students have to bear severe heat for want of fan.

Practical classes of the college are also being hampered

Silk town in Rajshahi soon

RAJSHAH, Jan 10: A separate silk-town will be set-up soon on 30 acres of land in the town here to popularise the silk industries of the country, official sources said, reports UNB.

Regional Director of BSCIC, Rajshahi Division, Kawser Ali Sheikh informed that the foundation stone is expected to be laid in mid February.

Chief Engineer-in-charge and Deputy General Manager of Planning Department of BSCIC accompanied with the local officials and the City Mayor visited three probable sites for the proposed silk-town Saturday.

Another highly technical team will visit Rajshahi in this month to finalise the site selection, the official sources added.

98 terrorists with mortar, gun surrender

JHENIDAH, Jan 10: Sixty-two armed activists of different underground political parties have surrendered and laid down 28 fire arms and ammunition to the police in four upazilas of the district till January 8, reports UNB.

They have surrendered under the general amnesty announced recently by the government.

Local administration said, 20 activists have surrendered in Sadar, 29 in Kotchandpur, 10 in Kaliganj and 3 in Shalukupa.

Of them, 25 activists belonged to Shabbarah Party (Quamul), 24 to Biplobi Communist Party (Haq), 11 to Purba Bangla Communist Party and 2 to Jasad Gonobahini.

The arms includes one mortar, 12 pipe guns, 2 cut rifles, 3 country made rifles, 2 country made shutter rifles, 5 country 3 shutter guns and 121 round of ammunition.

A man was killed and another one injured in a road accident Wednesday afternoon at Modhupur, 5 kilometers off the town on Jhenidah-Magura road.

Police and witnesses said, while the victim Jafar (40) was passing the road riding on bicycle, a Jhenidah bound bus (Jessore 719) knocked him down from behind. He died on the spot while another man Mokbul received serious injuries.

Mokbul was rushed to Sadar hospital immediately.

The body of Jafar was sent to morgue for autopsy.

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

After the incident, agitated people blocked the road for about one hour. A total of 886 people al-



MYMENSINGH: Syed Magrub Morshed, DG, BRDB distributed saplings among the landless persons at a rally held here recently. Local Central Cooperative Associations Ltd arranged the rally and it was attended by the male and female members of the samities under the Sadar upazila. — Star photo

UP polls campaign gaining momentum

From Our Correspondent

The campaign for the Union Parishad elections in different areas of the country is gaining momentum as the polls date is approaching nearer.

According to government declaration, the election will begin on January 22 and continue till February 6. The arrangements are underway to make the elections free, fair and smooth.

The government assurance of free and fair election has generated much enthusiasm among the candidates, workers and the supporters.

The number of contestants for both the posts of member and chairman is greater than the previous year. The incumbent chairmen, the defeated candidates of the last election and some new faces are in the run.

The candidates started visiting their respective areas to mobilise support. They are holding meetings after meetings with the voters, supporters, workers, relatives and campaigners and moving door to door to seek votes.

Election camps have been set up in different places of the constituencies. Distribution of handbills, posters and leaflets are going on and some candidates are using microphones in their campaign. Posters, banners and election symbols are on display extensively everywhere of the areas. Some candidates are also bringing out processions to show their massive support. In one word, the villages are now in the grip of election fever.

The voters are usually gathering at the local hotels, tea-stalls and restaurants. The voters gather not only to take free tea but also to watch the intensity of the campaign and put their views in the discussions.

The involvement of political parties in the current election has made it more competitive. The political party workers are doing the needful for their candidates.

Reports reaching here say that candidates of some areas are providing free transport for the voters. Few candidates are also entertaining their vot-

ers with different kinds of sweets.

The candidates have engaged the unemployed rural youths for campaigning. Some of the candidates in the meantime got assurance of jobs. Bicycles and motorcycles were also supplied to the youths for quick movement.

The relatives and wellwishers of the candidates who are now in abroad are keeping touch and sending money if needed. It is reported that the expenditure of the polls during this year is more than the previous years.

The women candidates are also seen in the race in some of the constituencies. They are contesting against their sons and husbands.

Some dishonest persons are seen in the contest. They are preparing themselves for implementation of their evil designs, it is alleged.

The terrorists are influencing to a great extent. They are working for the like-minded candidates. They are also using forces in some cases. For this, a good number of peace-loving candidates have abandoned the scene.

A general survey reveals that most voters favour honest, energetic, dedicated and competent candidates for the posts. The voters feel that the Union Parishad executives have a very important role to play in the development of the rural areas.

Reports of clashes and killings have been published in national dailies over different election issues. Despite these, the administration is still hopeful of holding polls peacefully. Meanwhile, the administrations in their respective areas have taken or going to take measures against any untoward incidents.

Above all, every conscious citizen of the country expecting the return of best candidates through free, fair and peaceful election.

KURIGRAM

District election office source disclosed, a total of 241 candidates are contesting in 67 unions of 9 upazilas for the

post of chairman and 1,857 candidates are contesting for the post of members. Two women candidates for the post of chairman and 78 women candidates for the post of members are also contesting in the district.

Out of 75 unions election will not be held in Holokhana, Panchagachi, Pandul, Buraburi, Dhamosreni and Daldalia unions. The elections in the rest of the will begin on January 22 and it would continue till February 6.

CHUADANGA

Out of total 31 Union Parishads of four upazilas of the district, election will be held in 26 union parishads.

The election to 5 union parishads have been suspended due to some reasonable grounds.

In 26 unions of the district, a total of 118 candidates are contesting for 26 posts of chairman and 681 candidates are contesting for 234 posts of member.

GOPALGANJ

According to Gopalganj District Election Office, election will be held in 59 Union Parishads out of 69 under five upazilas of the district. Election of the 10 unions have already been declared postponed for boundary problem and cases.