

Upazila roundup

GAIBANDHA

Husband awarded 3 months RI for second marriage

From Our Correspondent

Jan 17: Husband was sentenced to suffer three months rigorous imprisonment on charge of taking second wife without the consent of first wife. He was fined Taka 3,000 in the court of Upazila Magistrate, Sunderganj.

It is learnt that the accused Mohiruddin of village Barigram married Jarina Khatun of village Dhumatari long 15 years ago. But she could not offer a child during her conjugal life.

Being frustrated Mohiruddin married for second time without notice to plaintiff.

CHANDPUR

Two-day camp on Diabetic Forecast

From Our Correspondent

Jan 17: Bangladesh Diabetic Forecast Centre, Dhaka organised two days long camp on Diabetic Forecast at Chandpur and Faridganj upazila recently.

The camp was jointly organised by Sputnik Science Club and Chandpur Press Club.

Md. Yaqub Ali, DC Chandpur inaugurated the camp at Chandpur Press Club.

Dr. Alder Rasid, Civil Surgeon, Dr. M.A. Gafur, Principal Khurshedul Islam, Prof. Md. Hossain Khan, Aminul Haque Bhuyan, spoke on the occasion.

It is learnt that during the camp two hundred diabetic patients were examined.

JAMALPUR

Exhibition of blue films unabated

From Our Correspondent

Jan 17: The exhibition of blue films through VCR and VCP is going on unabated in different areas of the district town and other parts of the district for a long time without any obstruction from the law enforcing agency.

A section of unscrupulous video shop owners of the district town have been projecting obscene films through their mobile units of VCR and VCP.

It is alleged that attractive posters are also displayed at different vantage points to attract the people to witness the show which costs only Taka 10 per head.

Some of the conscious people of the district while talking to this correspondent opined that such exhibition of naked films through VCR and VCP polluted the social atmosphere in the town greatly contributing to moral decadence of the young generation.

They also alleged that the anti-social activities have also increased in the rural areas of the district due to uncensored Hindi and English film display.

Local people have urged upon the concerned authorities to take immediate measures against these immoral activities.

PATUAKHALI

157 tons of rice, paddy procured

Jan 17: A total of 155 metric tons of rice and two metric tons of paddy have been procured till now through 15 purchasing centres in six upazilas in this season, reports UNB.

But the procurement target has been fixed at 5,000 metric tons of rice.

Officials sources disclosed this at a meeting on procurement programme held here recently with Md Abdul Baki, Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) of the district in the chair.

It is reported that the meeting expressed dissatisfaction over the procurement trend and called upon the officials to gear up the activities to make the programme a success.

SIRAJGANJ

Rickshawpullers observe 8-hour strike

Jan 17: Rickshawpullers observed an eight-hour strike in the town on Wednesday demanding implementation of their four-point demand, reports UNB.

Several processions were brought out during the strike called by the District Rickshaw Sramik Union.

Five people were injured when two groups of pullers encountered at Ostaganda Kachari.

Their demands include solution to problems relating to rickshaw-stand and issuance of licences.

CHAPAINAWABGANJ

Tk 6.42 crore smuggled goods seized last yr

Jan 17: Bangladesh Rifles of different border outposts arrested 89 alleged smugglers and seized a huge quantity of smuggling goods worth about Taka 6,41,90,844 in the district during the last year, reports UNB.

Officials said, goods worth about Taka 4,87,37,554 were seized while being smuggled into the country and other contraband goods valued about Taka 1,54,53,290 were seized while being smuggled out of the country.

A total of 1,915 cases were lodged against 162 smugglers in these connections. Seventy-three accused remained absconding.

The contrabands included 95,587 kgs of sugar, 94, 803 kgs of salt, 3,249 kgs of chilli, 5,563 pieces of Indian saree, 722 pieces of lungi, 1646 pieces of bicycle, 2,842 cattle-head, 54,446 metres of cloths, 1,70,814 metres of polyester, 70,889 kgs of pulses, 8,235 kgs of copper, 20,372 kgs of soyabin oil, 24,972 kgs of onion, 3,365 kgs of coconut oil, 3,78,479 packets of bidi, 3,914 kgs of hilsha fish, 50 tola gold and 140 gram heroin.

NETRAKONA

Intensive boro farming plan

Jan 17: An intensive scheme has been undertaken to bring 2,74,407 acres of land under boro cultivation in all the 10 upazilas of the district during the current season, reports UNB.

According to Agriculture Extension Department, the upazilas are Sadar, Atpara, Madan, Kendua, Purbadhalla, Durgapur, Kalmakanda, Barhatta, Mohanganj and Khaliarua.

Of the total land, 2,05,156 acres will be brought under High Yielding Variety while the rest 69,251 acres under local variety.

The department in cooperation with Agriculture Development Corporation will distribute seeds, fertilizers, insecticides and other necessary inputs for optimum production of boro crops.

Besides, the department has brought 7,904 acres of land under wheat farming, 3,458 acres under potato, 34,763 acres under mustard, 200 acres under sugarcane and 2,097 acres under vegetable farming.

All the commercial banks including Bangladesh Krishi Bank will disburse necessary loans among the farmers to make the programme a success.

SHERPUR

Rally protests violation of college girl

Jan 17: The students of Sherpur Government Girls' College and Zila Mahila Parishad jointly brought out a procession Tuesday protesting violation of a student of the college by three miscreants, reports UNB.

They also paraded the main thoroughfares of the town demanding immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of the culprits.

Later the agitating processions handed over a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner.

College sources said the girl was kidnapped by three miscreants on December 29 last while she was returning home at village Taktinari in sadar upazila from Nandir Bazar Area.

A case was lodged in this connection but none was arrested so far.

KURIGRAM

Dacoits loot cash, goods worth Tk 8 lakh

From Our Correspondent

Jan 17: Cash and property worth about Taka 8 lakh were looted by armed dacoits recently from the houses of one Akbar Ali and Azahar Ali at Nazira near Kurigram Textile Mills, only half mile away from Kurigram Thana.

It is gathered that a gang of dacoits armed with deadly weapons entered the house in the evening and beat the inmates of the house mercilessly and took away cash Taka 30,000, gold ornament of 13 tolas, Radio, Cassette, VCP, Utensils, 200 pieces of Sarees and others. The booty was estimated at about Taka 8 lakhs.

On hearing the hue and cry of the inmates, people of the area rushed to the spot and gheraoed the dacoits. But they opened fire on the villagers and fled away.



RAJSHAHI: The meritorious students who secured satisfactory marks in SSC Examination are receiving prizes from the City Corporation Mayor Mizanur Rahman recently.

Woes of phone subscribers

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Jan 17: Telephone subscribers under Rajshahi Exchange have been suffering much due to poor services for a long.

Overbilling and mismanagement are plaguing local tele-communications at the Divisional Headquarters. The telephone subscribers are facing a lot of inconveniences as the sets do not work properly.

Frequent cross connections and other disturbances like wrong connections and noisy sounds are the regular phenomenon which cause immense sufferings to the subscribers.

It is alleged that one telephone set was very often connected with another set engaged in STD calls and this leads to rise in phone bills of the subscriber who is not generally involved in such calls.

Whether it is a mechanical trouble or something made inconvenient with the dishonest staff of Phone Department is yet to be detected.

Local businessmen informed that the trade and commerce of the district with the capital and other commercial places have been facing setback due to lack of proper telelink facilities.

The traders are largely dependent on telephone to contact with other business centres of the country and outside the country. But due to continuous troubles in phone services they are facing very much difficulties in their daily business, the members of the local FBCCI informed.

Besides, Rajshahi based correspondents of different dailies of the country are facing a lot of problems as they can not send news to Dhaka and other places of the country, because of frequent disruption of telephone line.

Trunk service is not also satisfactory. The subscribers cannot communicate with their relatives residing in different places. They have to wait for hours together to get connection. These trunk calls which are mostly urgent are being cancelled after waiting for the whole day, it is alleged.

The operators from the telephone-exchange use to give a common reply that Dhaka or other places were not responding or the line is down.

The subscribers also complained that they were fed up with the overbilling or false bills of their sets. They also informed that the switchboard and the meter are defective.

City dwellers urged the concerned authorities to take immediate steps to mitigate the sufferings of the subscribers.

The annual election of Rajshahi University Teachers' Association (RUTA) was due to hold on January 16.

A total of 30 candidates is contesting from two separate panels for 15 posts in the election.

The Green Panel which is supported by rightists and led by Prof Shamsur Rahman and Prof F I Faraki and the other is Yellow Panel, a left-oriented panel led by Prof Fazlur Rahman Khan and Prof Saidur Rahman Khan.

A total of 464 teachers of the varsity will exercise their franchise in the election.

Casting of votes is due to begin at 8 am and will continue upto 1 pm without any break. The venue of the election has been selected at Juberi Bhaban.

Dhanshi, proper crop for coastal saline belt

BARGUNA, Jan 17: A new kind of cereal, locally called "Dhanshi" is growing abundantly in the coastal areas of the district. It is being used as an alternative to rice, reports UNB.

Local people said, Dhanshi was discovered as the hungry people were looking for food during 1974. Though it was the main food of the famine stricken people at that time, it has now grown popular among all classes of people.

Dhanshi, at present grows in plenty over an area of 5000 acres in the forests of Amtali and Patarghata. Being a natural crop, the area of growth continued to expand.

The morphological structure of Dhanshi is almost same as paddy. The plants grow up to a height of 3 to 4 feet and it has no branches like paddy plants. Generally 25 kgs of rice are being produced from 40 kgs of unhusked Dhanshi. It is brown in colour and its size is like IRRI rice.

Local people said 'Dhanshi' as a cereal could improve in quality and through research. If modern technology is adopted its production could be increased substantially and it may turn into a major crop in the coastal area.

There are vast saline tracts in the coastal area of the country. Crops are seldom grown there due to salinity. As Dhanshi grows in saline land it could be the proper crop for the saline belt of the country.

Local people urged the authorities to take necessary steps for conducting research on this crop.

Half-way through the winter, migratory birds continued to flock to the beels, canals and churs of the district.

10 injured in JCD-BCL activists clash

SATKHIRA, Jan 17: At least 10 students were injured, two seriously, in a clash between the activists of Jatayabadi Chhatra Dal and Bangladesh Chhatra League of Kalaroa Government College Tuesday evening, reports UNB.

Seriously injured Laitu and Abul Kalam of BCL were admitted to local hospital while others were released after first aid.

Police and students said, when BCL activists brought out a procession demanding immediate bail of some of their leaders who were under trial on charge of criminal cases, JCD activists blocked the procession and the clash ensued.



KURIGRAM: Zila Juba Red Crescent members are carrying warm clothes for distributing among the poor villagers recently.

Benapole bound bus turns turtle, 2 killed, 17 hurt

BARISAL, Jan 17: Two people were killed and 17 others injured when a Benapole-bound bus turned turtle near Shimulati Bridge in Madaripur this morning, according to first hand report, reports UNB.

Of the injured some were admitted to Rajor Health Complex and those seriously wounded were on way to Barisal Medical College Hospital.

The dead were yet to be identified.

The accident occurred when a front tyre of the bus, Modhuchanda Paribahan, got punctured. The bus overturned as the driver lost control over the wheels, an injured passenger said.

Superintendent of Police of Madaripur rushed to the spot, according to first hand report.

All set for Biswa Estema

TONGI (Gazipur), Jan 17: All preparation is now complete for the three-day World Muslim congregation - "Biswa Estema" here beginning today (Saturday) due solemnity and religious fervour, reports UNB.

Organised by "Tablig-Jamaat", hundreds of volunteers worked round the clock to provide drinking water and sanitation facilities. Temporary sheds have been erected in vast areas to accommodate large number of devotees.

Sack-cloth pandal stretching over 2 and a half kilometre area on the right bank of the river Torag, has been erected for holding this grand religious rally, the 2nd largest congregation after hajj.

Devotees from different countries of the world are expected to take part in the grand congregation. Meanwhile, Jamaat (Delegates) from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, Bahrain and India have already arrived.

BR zone earns Tk 77.35 cr

CHITTAGONG, Jan 17: Bangladesh Railway (East Zone) earned about Taka 77.35 crore during the first half of the current financial year, which is Taka nine crore more than that of previous year, reports BSS.

According to a Railway Press release, Taka 41.25 crore was earned from passengers and Taka 36.10 crore carrying goods and other sources.

Besides, railway earned Taka 31 lakh during last December by carrying 752 containers.

The container service between Dhaka and Chittagong was first introduced in April, 1987, the Press release added.

Plan to instal 1809 pumps, tubewells

PATUAKHALI, Jan 15: Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation has taken up a programme to instal 1,600 power pumps, 25 deep and 184 shallow tubewells in southern region in the current rabi season, reports UNB.

Official sources said, the programme will be implemented in eight districts under Barisal Circle.

It is also reported that installation of these tubewells and power pumps under the programme will continue upto March this year.

With the implementation of the programme pure water supply and irrigation facilities in the districts will be improved to a great extent.

Crop lands remain fallow for salinity

CHITTAGONG, Jan 17: More than 1,000 acres cultivable land in the Anowara upazilas has remained fallow for the last two crop seasons due to intrusion of saline water from the sea, reports UNB.

The land located adjacent to the sea-beach used to be cultivated regularly before last year's devastating tornado which washed away the poorly constructed dam.

Local people told a group of visiting journalists that the cross dam in the upazila which protected the land from saline incursion had been damaged within three weeks of its reconstruction.

They also alleged that the cross dam was not strong and durable as some WDB officials misappropriated a huge amount sanctioned for its construction.

About 25,000 people in the area who could not raise crops for two seasons have been passing their days in economic hardship and untold misery.

BSS report says: CID police recently recovered a total of 29 forged stamps of different values worth about taka one

lakh from the possession of three persons at Dosta Building adjacent to new market here.

According to a CID Press release Jahirul Haq, Mohammad Yusuf Bhuiyan and Abdul Matin were arrested while they were selling the stamps. Later they were taken into custody.

Bodies of six victims of Sarta Forest beat killing by tribal insurgents were handed over to their relatives at different destinations.

Forest Department here arranged handing over of the bodies after autopsy. Four of the victims were village people while the two were forest employees. One of the two forest employees hailed from Fatickchari thana and the other was from Chandpur.

Forest Department sources said that kidnapped officer, M Manzurul Karim had remained untraced till today. Efforts were on to rescue the kidnapped officer.

Diarrhoea claims 16, attacks 400

MAGURA, Jan 17: Diarrhoea has claimed 16 lives and attacked more than 400 others during last month in two upazilas of the district, reports UNB.

The affected upazilas are Sadar and Salikha Sadar, the worst affected upazila alone claimed 10 lives during the period, district Civil Surgeon said.

The dead identified as Ripon (3) of village Kashinathpur, Rabeya Khatun (45) and Bodiar Rahman (25) of village Besholti, Kakoli (3) of village Dhanpara, Fuljan Bibi (55) and Sayed Ali (45) of village Mohishadanga, Ujjal (3) of village Rupoti, Jashimuddin (1) of village Choychar, Nobela Khatun (20), of village Kapashati and Sonia (1) of village Parla in Sadar upazila.

Imran Ali (2) of village Bhatpara, Atequr Rahman (3), Alim (4), Akhtar Hossain (6) and Hafizur Rahman (2) of village Horishpur and Zakir (5) of village Pachkaunia died in Salikha Upazila.

Acute shortage of drinking water and adulterated food were attributed to the outbreak of the disease.

A total of 37 medical teams

have been working in the affected upazilas to combat the disease, source added.

A day-long workshop on new method of sugarcane cultivation, use of fertilizer and pesticides was held at Faridpur Upazila Headquarters recently under the auspices of Faridpur Sugar Mills.

Deputy Commissioner of the district Nirmal Chandra Sarkar inaugurated the workshop. General Manager of the Mills KM Abul Kashem presided over the inaugural function which was addressed, among others, Sramik Union leader of the mills Abul Hossain.

A total of 200 sugarcane cultivators from different areas of the district attended the workshop.

They underlined the need for modern method of sugarcane cultivation and urged the farmers to work hard and increase production in the interest of the nation.

Postal Department has sanctioned Taka 10.18 lakh for construction of a post office and a resident for Post Master in Salikha Upazila of the district during the current fiscal.

Price rise hampers aman procurement

From Our Correspondent

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Jan 17: The target of aman procurement drive in the district may not be achieved as the market price is higher than the government price fixed for procurement.

As many as nine procurement centres were set up in Chapainawabganj sadar, Amnura, Nachoul, Deopura, Shibganj, Bholahat, Malikpur and Gobratola upazilas started purchasing paddy from November 1 with a target of 2000 metric tons. This drive will continue upto mid March.

Till the end of December last, about one hundred tons of paddy and rice were procured at different centres. It can be mentioned that at the beginning of the drive the market price of paddy and rice were Taka 210 and 230 per maund.

As the government purchasing prices were higher, the farmers went to the centres to sell their products. But the price of paddy in the open market has begun to rise from the first week of January and now stood at Taka 255 and 260 per maund.

On the otherhand, the government has fixed the price at

Taka 245 per maund. Naturally, the farmers are willing to sell the paddy at open market at higher prices.

So, the target of aman procurement in the district may not be achieved this year. It is apprehended.

Former UZ Chairman faces corruption charge

The district anti-Corruption Department has filed two separate cases against Mr Abdul Malek Chowdhury, a former Upazila Chairman of Nachoul Upazila.

According to first case, Malek Chowdhury by means of false resolution and without the recommendations of the tender committee issued a work order against one project to one Aminul Islam, a contractor and also showed an additional expenditure of Taka 85,451 in the same work.

The charge in the second case is that Mr Malek along with the Sub-Assistant Engineer, Abdul Mannan, UP members and Project Chairman, Enamul Huq misappropriated the total amount of wheat and money allotted for building helpad at Nachoul Upazila.

Farmers deprived of bank loans

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, Jan 17: The staff of the local branches of Bangladesh Krishi Bank and Sonali Bank are allegedly involved in malpractices in disbursing loan among the farmers.

It is informed that loan application forms were always found out of stock in the branches. But the forms can be managed through the agents of the some of the staff of the banks.

Following the damage caused by the recent floods, some commercial banks were directed by the government to disburse loans to the farmers on priority basis. But the farmers are not getting loans from those banks. The staff of the banks even stopped supply of loan forms in the plea that

there is no form in the stock. It is further alleged that the banks are disbursing loans to the people who are coming through the agents. Some people are reportedly receiving bank loans in fictitious names inconnivance with some dishonest staff of these banks.

The branch authorities are also disbursing loans to some unproductive sectors like transport, hotel, restaurant, cinema hall, it is informed.

It can be mentioned here that the applicants whose cases have been kept pending were in frustration. Some loan seekers informed the AGM of the region about the malpractice but no action has yet been taken for the reason not known.