

Upazila roundup

PABNA

Tk 13 lakh rice misappropriated

From Our Correspondent
Jan. 24: About 130 metric tons of gratuitous rice worth Taka 13 lakh was allegedly misappropriated in the name of three false project.
District Anti-Corruption Department (DACO) issued a chargesheet against four persons after investigation.
Out of the total, Abdul Karim, Chairman, Shibrampur Prantik Samaj Kallyan Samity misappropriated 35 metric tons of rice, Afzal Hossain, Chairman or Raghapur Dustha Mahila Samity misappropriated six metric tons of rice and Golam Mustafa and Isarat Ali Zinnah of Gopalpur Dustha Kallyan Samity misappropriated, 60 metric tons rice.
It is learnt, earlier DACO filed three cases against them with Pabna thana.

BOGRA

Work on palli bidyut project in progress

Jan. 24: Work on rural electrification scheme covering four upazilas of the district is going on in full swing, reports UNB.
The District Palli Bidyut Samity is implementing the scheme on cooperative basis. The upazilas are Sadar, Shibganj, Sherpur and Kahaloo.
Established in 1985 with a capital of Taka 30 crore, the samity started its power distribution programme in 1986. It covered Duchanchia Upazila in 1988 and Nandigram Upazila was brought under the programme in 1990 with the financial assistance of World Bank and Finland Government.
The samity has set up 1,309 kilometres of transmission line so far and 20,117 connections were given of which, 17,263 were domestic, 797 commercial and 398 industrial units and 397 deep tubewells.
The samity runs as a profitable organisation with the achievement of 93 per cent arrear collection and only 16 per cent system loss.

CHUADANGA

About 1700 eye patients get free treatment

From Our Correspondent
Jan. 24: Ninetyfour cataract eye patients were operated upon and 1600 eye patients were given out-door treatment in a week-long eye camp held at Darsana Girls' High School recently.
The eye camp was jointly sponsored by the Darsana Gramen Parishad Kallyan Sangstha and Bangladesh Dristhithin Foundation, Dhaka.
Tajul Islam, DC of Chuadanga formally opened the eye camp as the chief guest while Mushlehuddin, UNO, Damurhuda and Abdur Rahim, General Manager, Darsana Sugar Mills were present on the occasion as the special guests.
Both the operated eye-patients and the out-door eye patients were given medicine worth about Taka one lakh, it is learnt.

BARGUNA

5,000 female labourers jobless

Jan. 24: About 5,000 female day labourers in Sadar, Amtoli, Bamna, Betagi and Patharghata upazilas of the district have lost their jobs, reports UNB.
Mushroom growth of rice-mills in the locality has taken up the work of the women labourers who used to earn their livelihood by husking in the households of the peasants.
Number of jobless is rapidly increasing in the district due to the decreasing development activity. A good number of young girls are working as day labourers to earn their bread.

MANIKGANJ

Training course on deep, shallow tubewells

Jan. 24: A three-day training programme for owners and managers of deep and shallow tubewells of Harirampur Upazila was held at Jitika Girls' High School premises recently.
The inaugural function was presided over by Upazila Nirbahi Officer, Hariram, Mr M A Hannan. The training programme was inaugurated by Additional Director, Agriculture Extension Directorate, Dhaka Zone, Mr A M Malek.
A total of 150 persons participated in the training. Agriculture Department officers conducted the programme.
The objective of the programme is to increase agricultural production especially boro production during the current dry season.

FENI

Hamidul Haq's death condoled

Jan. 24: A meeting was held at the District Bar Association office on January 19 to condole the death of Hamidul Haq Chowdhury, founder of Bangladesh Observer, reports UNB.
Presided over-by Advocate Mahmudul Hossain, President of the association, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Advocate M A Rob and Advocate Ghosuddin Nannu.
The meeting expressed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for the salvation of the departed soul.
Meanwhile, Chowdhury was laid to rest by the side of his mother at his Ramnagar Miah Bari family graveyard in Daganbhuiyan upazila of the district Monday.
The reinforced cement concrete sculpture depicting the thrust of spirit of the Freedom Fighters during the Liberation War, has been accomplished at the initiative of Rajshahi University Central Students Union (RUCSU).
The sculpture, in red-ochre and red and comprising two human figures with rifles in hand, has been carved out by a local artist.
Four lines from the poem 'Durmor' by famous poet Sukanta Bhattacharya will also be inscribed at the foot-block of the sculpture.
About Taka 15 lakh has been spent for the work, most of which came from donation by the present and former students of the university.



RAJSHAHI: The artistes of RU rendering songs at the opening ceremony of Inter-College Cultural Week held at Kazi Nazrul Islam Auditorium of the varsity recently. — Star photo

Abnormal fall in rabi crop output likely

From A Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Jan 24: The production of the rabi crop cultivation during the current season is likely to fall abnormally in the districts of the division for multifarious problems.
The problems include untimely rainfall, inadequate farm loan, irregularities in distribution of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides, price hike of fuel and above all the absence of proper rehabilitation plan.
The farmers of Nawabganj, Naogaon, Pabna, Jaipurhat, Bogra, Rangpur, and Rajshahi sadar districts are the worst hit.
The continuous floods, drought, cyclones and other natural calamities have left the farmers economically weak. The farmers are now unable to purchase bullock for ploughing the lands. The price of the bullock is also high as the diseases left many of the cattle dead.
The irregularities of the dealers in cooperation with the staff of the Agriculture Department in distribution of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides have also left the farmers in problems. Some of the dishonest dealers of the districts are selling the improved quality of seeds in the black market at a high price. It is alleged. As a result, the farmers are compelled to buy seeds

and other agricultural necessities from the open market at an exorbitant price.
It is alleged that the farmers are not getting agriculture loan from the banks especially from the branches of Bangladesh Krishi Bank. The farmers informed that they were not even given loan forms in the plea that these are out of stock. They complained that some persons are getting loans through the middlemen. The banks are disbursing loans to some unproductive sectors like transports, hotels, restaurants, housebuilding and cinema halls. It is informed.
The farmers further complained that they are being harassed for the loans which the government had remitted. The branches of the banks say that they have not yet received any official letter from the head office.
The untimely rainfall has damaged the sowed rabi crops in the districts of the division. The lands which were prepared for cultivation were also made unfit for sowing.
The rain damaged the cultivated potato, onion and mustard plants. Taking the advantage of bad weather, the pests damaged the plants in large quantity. The farmers could not use requisite quantity of pesticides for want necessary fund.

It can be mentioned here that a total of 13 lakh hectares of land were brought under the rabi crop cultivation during the current season. Out of the total, 95,764 hectares were brought under mustard cultivation, 2,95,050 hectares under wheat, 67,050 hectares under potato and 12,000 hectares under onion cultivation during the current season.
An Agriculture Extension Department source informed this correspondent that the potato production during this season will decrease almost 50 per cent as the cultivation target will also not be achieved.
A total of 12,000 hectares of land was brought under onion cultivation. But for the problems including shortage of capital and absence of modern cultivation the production will fall to a great extent. It can be mentioned here that onion is cultivated on 40,000 hectares of land in Bangladesh.
Some farmers informed that potato production will fall by about seven lakh tons in 16 district of the division.
The production of mustard will not be achieved this season.
The farmers have urged the concerned authorities to take steps to mitigate the sufferings of the farmers of the division and help raise production.

Notes from Barisal

From Our Correspondent

BARISAL, Jan 24: The Barisal Office of Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) has earned an amount of about Taka six crore during last 18 months from selling about 8,000 metric tons of cement and 245 metric tons of CI sheets through its 260 cement and 70 CI sheets dealers including free sale programme.
The Barisal Zonal Office included the districts of Barisal, Patuakhali, Bhola, Jhalakathi, Madaripur, Perajpur and Borguna.
It is gathered that this is the highest sale of cement and CI sheet for this office since last five years of time.

Children's malnutrition

In the absence of breast feeding thousands of children are suffering from acute malnutrition and side by side losing eye-sight in the southern districts of Barisal, Patuakhali, Bhola, and Borguna.
It is learnt from different sources that meanwhile hundreds of children have already lost their eye-sight due to deficiency of 'Vitamin A'.
Besides, the infant mortality rate in these districts has increased alarmingly.

6 more Sarbahara men surrender

UNB reports add: Six more members of the outlawed Sarbahara Party surrendered to police at Gouranadi upazila of the district recently.
With this, a total of 92 Sarbaharamen surrendered responding to a general amnesty announced by the government on January 1.
They also deposited a total of 8 rifles, 17 guns including 51 rounds of ammunition to the police during the period.

45,000 sets of Text books distributed

About 45,000 sets of text books have already been distributed free of cost among the students of primary schools in the district, reports UNB.
According to official source, 15,600 sets distributed for class one students, 11,270 sets for class two, 9,000 sets for class three, 4,700 sets for class four and 4,410 sets for class five under the Universal Primary Education Programme.
A 22-member Co-ordination Committee has been formed for smooth implementation of Compulsory Primary Education Programme in the district.

Mustard cultivation

A scheme has been undertaken to bring 31,300 hectares of land under Mustard cultivation in 65 upazilas of 11 southern districts during the current rabi season.
According to Agriculture Extension Department, 16,900 hectares have been brought under high yielding variety while the rest 14,350 hectares under local variety.
The districts are: Barisal, Patuakhali, Jhalakathi, Bhola, Pirojpur, Borguna, Faridpur, Madaripur, Shariatpur, Gopalganj and Rajbari. Production target has been fixed at 25,500 metric tons.

51 acres of land under maize cultivation

A BSS report adds: A total of 51 acres of land have been brought under maize cultivation in 27 upazilas of four southern districts under Barisal Agriculture Division in the current winter season.
According to an official source, production target of maize has been fixed at 1,000 metric tons this year in these districts.
The Agriculture Extension Department has arranged 27 demonstration plots to teach the farmers the modern methods of maize cultivation, the source said.

Villagers attack BDR men, one shot dead

CHITAINAWABGANJ, Jan 24: One alleged money racketeer was killed in firing by BDR patrol forces at Hayatpur Border Check Post in Shibganj upazila Thursday, reports UNB.
Another person with 20,000 Indian currency was caught from the same spot during the incident.
Acting on a tip, the BDR personnel led by Havildar Md Anasuzzaman challenged some persons at the check post and caught Abul Kalam and his associates redhanded with the currencies.
On hearing the news local villagers attacked on the BDR patrol party with deadly weapons and tried to snatch a gun from Naik Akhter Hossain who in self defence shot at Ruhul Amin killing him instantly.
All others fled away from the spot immediately.
Ruhul's body was sent to the local morgue for autopsy.
The BDR personnel in a separate raid recovered another 90,000 Indian Rupees

and two Indian bicycles from the same locality.
They arrested Bayzeed Bostami of village Lakshampur in Shibganj upazila.
Bostami was handed over to the local police.
Irregular movement, death of engines and passenger-coaches and lack of proper

maintenance have been hampering train services in the western zones.
The zone comprises Chapainawabganj-Parbatipur route, Chapainawabganj-Sirajganj, Rohanpur-Ishurdi, Rajshahi-Dinajpur, Parbatipur-Panchagarh, Parbatipur-Lalmohra, Kaunia-Kurigram, Kaunia-Fulchariat and Bonarpur-Santahar route.
Overcrowding is a regular feature in almost every train where compartments are not cleaned. Passengers travel on rooftops also.
The trains very often run without any first class compartment, forcing the first class ticket holders to travel in overcrowded second class compartments.
Moreover, second class compartments do not have the requisite amenities as the railway authorities has just upgraded the third class without necessary changes.
Local leaders have demanded urgent attention by the railway headquarters.

Mysterious fever leaves 6 dead

RANGPUR, Jan 24: A mysterious fever claimed six lives and attacked 50 others in last two days, Rangpur Medical College Hospital sources said on Monday, reports UNB.
The deceased were identified as Rezina (12), Dhoron (17), Jotin (70), Rajen (45) and two sisters Kojona (13) and Kobori (7) of village Kukur in Sadar upazila.
According to family sources, the patients died within twentyfour hours.



GAZIPUR: Mr Gias Kamal Chowdhury, a renowned journalist speaking as chief guest on the inaugural ceremony of Oxford Kindergarten here recently. — Star photo

79 deep tubewells out of order Irrigation to 7,000 acres hampered

From Our Correspondent
CHUADANGA, Jan 24: A total of 79 deep tubewells in four upazilas of the district has gone out of order and as a result irrigation to a vast tract of land is hampered.
Of the total 79 deep tubewells, 23 tubewells have gone out of order in Sadar upazila, 11 in Alamdanga, 30 in Damurhuda and 15 in Jibannagar upazila.
Due to the mechanical troubles of the deep tubewells, the irrigation facilities to about 7,000 acres of land has seriously been affected and consequently the production of IRRI-boro paddy, sugarcane and wheat is likely to be decreased.
Steps should immediately be taken to repair those with a view to solving the sufferings of the connected cultivators through extending irrigation facilities to keep the production normal.
Nineteen persons including women and children lost their lives from road accidents last year in four upazilas of the district.
Of the total, four persons were killed in the month of February, one in March, two in May, one in June, two in July, one in August, one in September, one in October and one in November.
According to official source, all the deaths were caused by road accidents in Sadar, Alamdanga, Damurhuda, Jibannagar upazilas due to rush driving.
A total of 14 cases was registered with the police in these connections.
Wheat cultivation
A total of 39,650 acres of land has been brought under wheat cultivation in the district during the current rabi crop cultivation season.
Of the total, 37,400 acres have been brought under irrigation through extending project and the rest 2,250 acres under normal cultivation.
About 40,000 metric tons of wheat are expected to be produced in the district during the current season.

Train journey troublesome

From Our Correspondent
KUSHTIA, Jan 24: Train passengers of this region particularly of Poradah Route are facing problems due to irregular services, lack of amenities at railway station, and shortage of compartments.
Trains on this route are few in number. The number of compartments in each train is inadequate to cope with the rush of passengers.
Sometimes, the absence of first class and second class compartments creates inconveniences to the upper class passengers.
The number of passengers travelling without tickets has increased as there are no proper checking on this route bringing misery to other passengers. Moreover beggars, subscription collectors and hawkers including women increase the sufferings of the passengers.
On the otherhand, compartments are not kept clean and sometimes water is not available in the latrines.
Most of the waiting rooms of the stations have no sitting arrangements for upper class passengers. The condition of waiting room in almost all the stations of this section are in a pitiable condition and remain dirty and found under lock and key at the time of need, it is alleged.
The platforms are not kept clean for most of the times. It is also alleged that booking counters start functioning just before the arrival of the train. As a result, many passengers fail to purchase tickets.
2 held for cheating
UNB adds: Police arrested two people of a fake company Tuesday who were engaged in cheating the innocent people of the district.
According to police, accused Azizur Rahman Akkas and one of his accomplice claiming themselves as the local agent of a recruiting company named 'Project Aids Associates' were dealing with the patients of hypertension and diabetes in rural areas against payment of fees.
Azizur Rahman claimed himself as a qualified doctor and recruited some girls in the name of imparting training for the company and realised Taka 3000 per head for the purpose.
Head office of the company, according to the papers seized from Kushtia office, is situated at 48, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka.
The matter came to the notice of the administration when one Halima Khatun who secured the job of the district accountant of the company against a deposit of Taka 3000, filed a case against the company with the Kushtia police.
Police seized all the papers of the company and further investigation is going on.

319 cases recorded last year

From Our Correspondent
PABNA, Jan 24: A total of 319 cases were registered with the Sadar thana during last year.
Out of 319 cases, eight are murder cases, 11 dacoity, 41 theft, 52 riot, 8 explosive, 2 smuggling, 15 arms, one rape, 3 kidnap, 4 drug, one cheat, one toll collection and 176 are others cases, police source said.
The source added that a total of 199 cases of unnatural death was also recorded with the Sadar upazila thana.
It is learnt that the Sadar thana police arrested 70 persons on different charges during last December from different areas of the town.
The charges include murder, hooliganism, rape, theft, toll collection, kidnaping and other anti-social activities.
Mr Intazur Rahman and Dr Shahidullah were elected President and Vice President of Ishwardi Chamber of Commerce and industry recently.
A total of 26 contestants participated in the election. The elected members of the executive committee are: Mr Khalilur Rahman Sanu, Yunus Ali Mintu, Amjad Hossain Basu, Md Kabil Uddin, Intazur Rahman, Dr Shahidullah, Abdul Masud, Anasuzzaman and Jahangir Alam Mukul.
Mr Harunur Rashid, Registrar, Pabna Polytechnic Institute died of heart attack recently. He was 65.
Tk 2350 cr for primary school construction
UNB adds: The Education Ministry has sanctioned Taka 23,50 crore for construction of 113 government primary schools in 16 northern dis-

Training course on implementation of uplift projects

PATUAKHALI, Jan 24: A day-long training course on implementation of development projects was held in Galschipsa Upazila of the district recently, reports UNB.
Organised by upazila administration, among others, chairmen and supervisors of different development projects took part in the programme.
Officials said, it was the first programme of such training course in the locality.
Meanwhile, a four-day training on scientific way of controlling pest menace concluded here recently.
The course was jointly organised by the district Agriculture Extension Department and the district administration, officials said.