

Upazila roundup

HABIGANJ

Govt firm to remove curse of illiteracy

Jan 26 : State Minister for Finance Mojibur Rahman on Saturday said the government was determined to impart education to all through Mass Literacy Programme, reports BSS.

He said, with that end in view the government had earmarked the highest allocation for education.

The State Minister was addressing as the chief guest a fresher's reception organised by Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), Hobiganj Brindaban College at the College premises here.

Presided over by the local JCD Convenor Dewan Abdul Mukaddis Chowdhury, the function was addressed by BNP central leader Advocate Atiqul Islam, BNP Hobiganj District Convenor Ghulam Murtaza and JCD central leader Mosharraf Ahmed Thakur.

Later, the State Minister had a meeting with local bank personnel. Talking to the bank officials, he called upon them to disburse agriculture loan timely to redress the problems of the poor peasants and help boost field production. He also exchanged pleasantries with local journalists at Hobiganj Press Club.

BRAHMANBARIA

Health complexes beset with problems

Jan 26 : Most of the health complexes in the district are beset with manifold problems due to lack of medical apparatus, absence of ambulance, scarcity of drinking water and shortage of medical staff, reports UNB.

Hundreds of patients come to the health complexes everyday but go back disappointed for absence of proper medicine and treatment facilities.

Most of the complexes have no X-ray machine, blood bank, dental or ophthalmic treatment facilities.

Shortage of staff is another problem in the health complexes. Emergency patients can not be moved to other places due to lack of ambulance.

Besides, paucity of drinking water and lack of proper drainage system in the complexes are increasing the sufferings of the patients.

It is alleged that important medicines supplied by the government are being sold to the local pharmacies by some dishonest workers.

Local leaders have urged the authorities to remove the problems and enable the health complexes to function normally.

BARISAL

18 irrigation schemes to be implemented

Jan 26 : Barisal Irrigation Project Committee will implement 18 schemes with 788 metric tons of wheat under Food for Work Programme (FWP) in two upazilas of Barisal and Jhalakathi districts in the current winter season, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the schemes re-excavation of 18 canals in the upazilas of Bakerganj and Rajapur.

Nine canals of 26.05 kilometres will be re-excavated in Bakerganj Upazila of Barisal District at an allocation of 505 metric tons of wheat while nine canals of 20.86 kilometres will be re-excavated in Rajapur Upazila of Jhalakathi District.

Work on the projects has already been started and is expected to be completed by April next.

When completed, a total of 6,740 hectares would be brought under irrigation facilities.

KISHOREGANJ

Polls in 6 unions held peacefully

Jan 26 : Elections in six union parshads of Hossainpur upazila of the district were held peacefully, reports UNB.

According to unofficial sources, Sobrabbuddin elected Chairman of Zinari Union, Ayub Ali of Sidhla Union, M A Awal of Gobindapur Union, Abdul Kader Swapan of Aratbaria Union, Shah Mahub of Shihedial Union and Zahurul Islam of Pundri Union.

No untoward incident was reported from any centre of the upazila. Tight security measures were taken by the administration to make the election free and fair.

TANGAIL

21 development plan taken up

Jan 26 : Tangail Pourashava has taken up 21 development projects at a cost of Taka 28 lakh in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the projects include development of 15 roads, five drains and construction of a culvert. The work will be completed by June, next.

JAMALPUR

Training course on cottage industry

Jan 26 : A two-day training programme on cottage industry was held recently at the local office of the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) here, reports BSS.

Fifteen trainees including five women participated in the training programme. They were imparted training by the BSCIC instructors on making of various handicrafts.

Mr. Fazlul Haq, Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) distributed certificates among the participants.

MADARIPUR

Welding factories create obstacles

Jan 26 : At least 50 welding factories have been set up beside the roads in the town creating problems, reports UNB.

Apart from creating obstacles in the free movement of vehicles and pedestrians, the functioning of these factories have led to environmental problems.

Residents of the areas complained of health hazards due to unauthorised operation of welding factories.

Physicians said the town-dwellers are suffering from various diseases including eye complications due to adverse effects of rays sparked out from the factories.

Local people have urged the authorities to take immediate action against the unauthorised welding factory owners.

PIROJPUR

Participation of people in uplift works stressed

Jan 26 : State Minister for Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Mosharraf Hossain Shahjahan has underscored the need for a massive participation of the people in government's development programmes including the canal digging and re-excavation projects for a qualitative change in the socio-economic condition, reports BSS.

He said people should spontaneously come forward to help the government improve the Agriculture sector and the lot of the rural mass through implementing the programmes undertaken for achieving desired level of progress and prosperity.

The State Minister was addressing a cross-section of people while inaugurating re-excavation of the Butchakathi Canal under Shaikh Matia Union of Nazipur upazila in the district on Friday.

He said the government was now implementing various programmes throughout the country with the aim of bringing about a positive change in the lot of the rural people.

Apart from voluntary participation of the local people in re-excavation of the Butchakathi Canal, 38.87 metric tons of wheat was allocated for the purpose, an official handout said on Saturday.

SYLHET

Youths urged to acquire human qualities

Jan 26 : Foreign Minister A. S. M. Mostafizur Rahman on Saturday said, the youths of the country would render tremendous services to the nation provided they were allowed to develop and nourished in a congenial atmosphere, reports BSS.

He advised the youths to acquire human qualities so that they could give proper direction to the nation in due course.

The Foreign Minister was addressing as chief guest the inaugural ceremony of 'International Youth Camp' organised by Lion's Clubs International District-315B. Presided over by Lion District Governor Jalal Ahmed, the meeting was also addressed, among others, by Ataul Karim and Leo President Masud Uddin Bhuiyan.

Three hundred youths are taking part in the 3-day-long International Youth Camp.



RAJSHAHI : Mina-Waliul Smriti Songsad, a social welfare organisation recently launched a literacy programme for the children. — Star photo

Compulsory Pry Education programme

Teachers, people cooperation must for successful implementation

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Jan 26 : A meeting to devise ways and means for the successful implementation of the Compulsory Primary Education Programme was held at the office of the district Primary Teachers Association-office under the auspices of the district and upazila level primary education officers of Faridpur, Rajbari, Shariatpur, Gopalganj and Madaripur districts recently.

Presided over by Belalur Rahman, Secretary, Greater Faridpur Primary Teachers Association, the meeting was attended by Md Abdul Aziz, Deputy Director, Primary Education, Dhaka Division as chief guest while Md Marina Naim, Programme Officer, UNICEF and Project Officer, UNICEF as special guests.

The chief guest advised the Education Officers to implement the programme successfully with their efficient management and urged the people of all walks of life to extend their whole hearted cooperation to make the programme a success for the greater interest of the country.

The other speakers mentioned that there is no other alternative to education and compulsory primary education is a must for the overall progress of the nation. They said that the main responsibility lies with the primary teachers to make the programme a success. The teachers should therefore, be careful, sincere and cordial in discharging their duties, they continued.

The teachers have been urged to attract the children so that they come to schools and motivate the guardians to send their kids to schools. The speakers reminded the teachers that the non-going children is more than 25 per cent and that is why they should put their best efforts to bring them to schools.

Our Chandpur Correspondent reports : Education Minister, Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar called upon the students to maintain academic atmosphere in the educational institutions.

While the Minister was addressing as the chief guest at

the local government college students union installation ceremony asked the students to devote to their studies to make themselves the worthy citizen of the country. HE also urged the people to eradicate illiteracy from the country within shortest possible time.

The Education Minister said that the government had already taken up a plan to bring one thana under each district under mass Literacy Programme. He further said that the government was ready to implement the Compulsory Primary Education Programme within a short time.

A UNB report from Patuakhali says : A children survey has been launched in all the villages of sadar upazila of the district under Compulsory Primary Education Programme.

According to informed sources, teachers of the local primary schools and students have been deployed to find out the number of children

and the publicity task in the rural areas to motivate parents for sending children to schools.

Teachers and students are visiting each and every houses to create awareness about the importance of compulsory primary education among the rural guardians.

Posters, banners and public meetings are being arranged for the publicity of compulsory primary education in the locality.

A local primary school teacher told UNB that they are convincing the illiterate and poor parents to send their children aged 6-7 to the local primary schools.

It is reported that the guardians are not in a position to send their children to schools owing to poverty and as such child labour force is increasing day by day in the district.

Our Satkhira Correspondent reports : About 35,000 children in the district are unable

attend schools due to acute hardships and ignorance of the guardians.

As a result, large number of children are deprived of the education maximum of whom come from poverty stricken-families lives in remote areas. Many of the children are to move for jobs to earn livelihood.

According to a statistical reports, there are 1022 government and non-government primary schools in the district where about 2,15,886 students take their lessons. Out of the total 737 are government primary schools and 235 are non-government primary schools and 50 are still unregistered. A total of 1,78,637 students read in government primary schools and 37,229 students read in non-government schools.

At present 3,041 teachers are engaged in different primary schools in the district and 91 posts are still lying vacant.

50,000 acres under tobacco farming Patronisation can help earn more foreign currency

From Our Correspondent

RAJBARI, Jan 26 : About 50,000 acres of land have been brought under tobacco cultivation throughout the country during the current season.

According to reliable sources, about 27,000 acres have been cultivated under the supervision of a leading tobacco company through its registered growers while the rest under the Agriculture Extension Department and private initiatives.

A total of 24,000 tons of tobacco is expected to be produced in the country during the current season.

Cultivation of quality tobacco is very profitable and now it is one of the main cash crop in the districts of Rajbari,

Faridpur, Kushtia, Chuadanga, Meherpur, Rangpur, Nilphamari, Dinajpur, Manikganj and Rangunia of Chittagong.

A leading tobacco company of our country first introduced the cultivation of virginia tobacco for manufacturing cigarettes on experimental basis on a few acres of land in Kushtia in 1967.

The result was very much encouraging and since then the very quality of tobacco is being cultivated in Kushtia, Rajbari, Chuadanga, Meherpur and Jhenidah districts.

Till 1972, about 90 per cent of the country's demand for tobacco were met through import where a large amount of foreign currency were ex-

pendent. In 1976, Bangladesh attained self-sufficiency in tobacco and thus the entire cigarette companies including the bidi factories used home produced tobacco.

Bangladesh is now earning a considerable amount of foreign currency through the export of quality tobacco during the last few years.

Some tobacco exporters opened that our country can earn more foreign currency through the extension and expansion of tobacco cultivation in Kushtia, Meherpur, Rajbari, Chuadanga and Jhenidah districts. The experimental basis cultivation of quality tobacco to other areas may also give a positive result, some growers expressed.

The tobacco growers outside the concerned tobacco company zone are not getting fair prices of their products. The private growers of tobacco face various problems before and after the cultivation.

The floods, cyclone, drought, river erosion, pest attack and other natural calamities have made the farmers economically weak. They are to borrow money from the local money lenders at a very high rate of interest and sometimes they are denied as they can not repay on time.

Some farmers alleged that they do not get full cooperation from the staff of Agriculture Department in times of need. The field staff of the department visit the villages very rare, it is complained. The BADC dealers of fertilizers and pesticides in collaboration with the departmental staff adopt unfair means in distribution of the agricultural inputs, it is further alleged.

Tk 70,000 cotton gutted at textile mills

DINAJPUR, Jan 26 : A stockpile of cotton worth about Taka 70,000 was gutted in a fire at the Dinajpur Textile Mills, 8 kilometres from here Saturday, reports UNB.

Officials of the nationalised mills, however, put the figure at Taka 50,000.

They said fire originated from the flame of a welding machine at the Blue Room of the Mills where the cotton has been kept.

The flame of the welding machine in operation, rapidly spread throughout the room at about 2-45 pm and gutted the stockpile.

Youngman strangled to death

RANGPUR, Jan 26 : A youngman was strangled to death by some unknown assailants at village Mohodipur in Badarganj Upazila of the district Thursday, reports UNB.

Police said the victim Wazed Ali (19), while returning home from Badarganj Market the miscreants forcibly took him to a nearby sugarcane field and strangled him to death.

The cause of his death could not be ascertained. His body was sent to morgue for autopsy.

25 injured in post poll clash

SATKHIRA, Jan 26 : At least 25 people were injured, four of them seriously, in a post election clash between the rival groups of two defeated chairman candidates at Anulia Union Parishad in Assasuni Upazila Saturday, reports UNB.

The polls were held on Wednesday and Babar Ali was declared unofficially elected. But after this both the defeated candidates Elahi Baksh of Jatiya Party and Din Muhammad of Jamaat-E-Islami, Blamed each other for the defeat and the clash ensued between the rival groups.

The seriously injured Ruhul, Ataul, Rashid and Surat were rushed to the local hospital.

Two separate cases have been filed with the local police.

The influx of landless farmers in the district town and its adjoining areas for work, food and relief is going on unabated.

Due to non-availability of jobs, many people of the villages are passing their days in food crisis.

According to informed sources, about 80 per cent people of the district are agriculturist, 10 per cent in other occupations and the rest are unemployed. Of the total, 60 per cent agriculturists are landless and 20 per cent are marginal farmers. It is gathered that river erosion, floods, drought and other natural

calamities had made them landless.

The few who have some lands are unable to produce adequate crops for the price hike of the agricultural inputs. On the otherhand, this class of farmers have to borrow money from the local money lenders at a high rate of interest to maintain their families.

It is gathered many of the farmers are not getting fair prices of their products as they are to sell their crops earlier to repay the debts of the money lenders.

The allocations under Food for Works Programme are unable to meet the demand of the increasing number of landless people.

Some of this distressed people are found involved in anti-social activities for earning their livelihood.

UNB adds : Two jawans of the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) and seven arms were missing after their speed boat capsized on Thursday in the bordering river Katakhal, five miles off Kaliganj Upazila.

BDR said the patrol boat sank with seven BSF personnel due to sudden mechanical fault Thursday morning.

Five BSF men could swim ashore but missed their two colleagues and all of their arms in the river.

Tk 18 lakh phone wires stolen

Jan 26 : Nearly one lakh metres digital telephone wires worth about Taka 18 lakh were stolen from Western Railway Zone during the last year, reports UNB.

A knowledgeable source alleged that wires are being stolen mysteriously in presence of railway security guards and law enforcing agencies.

The railway authorities are facing problems in maintaining correct timings and contact with other railway stations due to stealing of wires.

Pilferage of telephone wires in western railway is going on with impunity as no punitive action has yet been taken against the known miscreants and unscrupulous officials involved in the heinous act.

The most affected areas are western railway Paksey Division, Rajshahi University, Shardah, Arani, Gopalganj, Parbotpur Junction, Bhabanipur, Kaliahati, Chatmohar, Vangura, Serajganj, Ullapara and Ishurdi stations.

Meanwhile, nearly 8000 metres long telephone wires worth about Taka 3 lakh were stolen from different lines during the last two months causing serious problems to the

subscribers of the northern districts while many telephone sets are facing disruption problems.

Several cases have been lodged by the Telephone and Telegraph Department in this connection.

An aged man was killed when a pick up van dashed him near localbus stand recently, police said.

The victim was identified as Felu Miah (50) of Pukurpar village of Bera Upazila.

Police seized the vehicle (JAS-65-425) but the driver managed to escape.

The body was sent to the morgue for autopsy.

A case was lodged in this connection.

The annual Badminton tournament of Pabna District Collectorate began here recently.

A total of 54 players including Deputy Commissioner and Police Super of the district participated in the tournament.

Md Abu Solaiman Chowdhury, Deputy Commissioner of the district inaugurated the tournament.

The final match was due held on January 26.

Connecting roads in deplorable condition

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Jan 26 : Road communication of the district has become worse as almost the connecting roads of the district have become unfit for vehicular movement.

The roads linking Rajshahi with Bagha, Tanore, Charghat and Durgapur upazilas needed urgent repair and reconstruction.

The roads run from Rajshahi to Tanore is in pitiable condition. Innumerable cracks and potholes have developed on this road. Most of the bridges on this road are also in dilapidated condition. Hundreds of buses ply on this road everyday.

The owners of buses and mini-buses informed that their vehicles are damaged very much for the heavy jerking due to pitiable condition of the road. They further informed that they bear a heavy amount of money for the purchase of different parts of the vehicles.

Besides, the Rajshahi-Bagha Road should be extended and repaired for quick movement of the vehicles so that the passengers can reach earlier.

Rajshahi-Charghat Road is very important because over two lakh people of Baneshwar and Charghat travel on this road. The cracks and potholes developed on this road are obstructing the vehicular movement and also the movement of pedestrians.

The works on these roads have partially been completed and the rest could not be completed for want of funds. Due to the incomplete condition, the repaired parts of the roads are also being damaged.

The concerned authorities have been urged to take immediate steps to complete the works on these roads to mitigate the sufferings of thousands of people travel on these roads.

Housing problem has be-

come acute in Puthia upazila of the district over the past few years.

The population of the upazila has increased considerably after the upgradation of the town. But the local people are reluctant to construct new houses for the increasing population of the town due to price like of construction materials.

As a result, government officials, teachers and businessmen are suffering much. Fixed income groups are unable to live together with their families due to increased house rents.

The different government offices, corporations, banks, and NGO's have opened their offices but none of them has its own office or residential quarters. As a result, many private houses are being used as offices as well as residential quarters.

Taking advantage of the situation, house owners are changing exorbitant rent for their houses. Absence of government housing estate here has aggravated the situation further.

Dacoits loot valuables, cash Tk 17,000

SIRAJGANJ, Jan. 26: Armed dacoits looted valuables and cash worth Taka 50,000 at Ramgati, Village in sadar upazila, wounding three people in the early hours Saturday, police said, reports UNB.

The dacoits numbering about 10 to 12, attacked the residence of Mobarak Ali of the village at about 5 am in which the house owner, his son Anabuddin (30), and daughter-in-law Maya Begum (22), were seriously injured.



COMILLA : The local journalists brought out a procession protesting the assault on journalist Ziauddin Mahmud Mitu by Islami Chhatra Shibir activists recently. — Star photo