

Upazila roundup

BARISAL

BKB disburses Tk 15.57 cr loan in 7 months

Jan 31: Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) of Barisal Region has so far distributed a sum of Taka 15.57 crore as agriculture loan among the farmers of eleven southern districts under Barisal Agriculture Zone (BAZ) since July last, reports BSS.

The districts are: Barisal, Bhola, Pirojpur, Jhalakati, Patuakhali, Barguna, Faridpur, Gopalganj, Madaripur, Shariatpur and Rajbari.

According to an official source, the loan was distributed for the cultivation of aman, boro, IRR, aus, fish-culture, and purchasing cattle, and agricultural equipments.

The government sanctioned Taka 56.97 crore for disbursement as agriculture loan for these districts this year.

Meanwhile, the bank has realised Taka 11.41 crore out of total outstanding of Taka 421.34 crore till January 25 from the farmers of this districts, the source said.

TANGAIL

Workshop on cattle resource development

Jan 31: A day-long workshop on cattle resources development sponsored by Livestock department was held at upazila Livestock Development Centre recently, reports BSS.

A total of 450 men and women from thirteen unions took part in the workshop.

Mr Khan Shahabuddin, Deputy Commissioner Tangail inaugurated the upazila poultry rearing unit on the occasion.

Dr Afzal Hossain Miah distributed vaccination kit among the participants of the workshop.

PATUAKHALI

Work on six projects in progress

Jan 31: The Local Government Engineering Bureau (LGEB) has been implementing six projects at a cost of Taka 96 lakh in Mirjaganj Upazila of Patuakhali District in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the projects are four irrigation canals and two closure embankments.

Meanwhile, 30 per cent work of these projects has been completed and the rest is expected to be completed before next June, the source said.

A total of 2,000 hectares of land will be saved from salinity.

MYMENSINGH

Seminar on NZ farming system

Jan 31: A seminar on Agricultural systems in New Zealand was held at the seminar room of Bangladesh Agricultural University Library on January 25, reports BSS.

Organised by BAU Central Seminar Committee, the seminar was presided over by Prof M Ashraf Ali Khan, Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture.

Prof George Hill of the Lincoln University of New Zealand was the key-note speaker.

Prof S M Faruk and Prof A M Ashraf Kamal among others participated in the discussion.

BORGUNA

Blind School faces problems

Jan 31: Magura Blind School is facing various problems including accommodation, shortage of teachers, furniture and fund, reports UNB.

Established in 1983 with assistance from the Social Welfare Department, the school is running with only one teacher working at present. Since its inception, it had earned good will for its academic results and socio-cultural activities.

At present about 30 blind students are studying in the school set up as an integrated project to educate blind children.

Local people have urged the authorities to take necessary steps for the development of the school.

They also urged the authorities to ensure supply to educational equipment including furniture, books and others immediately for the survival of the institution.

MAULVIBAZAR

2,916 tubewells out of order

Jan 31: Acute scarcity of pure water has posed a serious problem to the people in the rural areas of Greater Sylhet Region, reports UNB.

According to reports, the existing number of tubewells in 35 upazilas of the region is quite inadequate to meet the growing need.

It is learnt from official source that present for 70 lakh people of the district. There are 46,357 tubewells, of which 2,916 are lying out of order. Of those in disorder, 841 are in 11 upazilas of Sylhet district, 500 in 10 upazilas of Sunamganj, 747 in eight upazilas of Habiganj and 828 in 6 upazilas of Maulvibazar districts.

The tubewells remain out of order for more than three years. No effective measure has been taken so far either to replace or resink them, it is alleged.

Several complaints have been lodged but no steps are yet taken to rectify the situation.

The people continue to depend on wells, tanks, rivers for drinking water due to non-availability of pure supply. Repeated floods and cyclones worsen the situation spreading water borne diseases.

KUSHITIA

Science exhibition week concludes

Jan 31: The National Science and Technology Exhibition Week concluded here Tuesday at Kushtia Government College Cafeteria amidst great enthusiasm, reports UNB.

Over 130 students, scientists participated with 116 projections and exhibits was marked by a debate competition which generated inspirations in scientific works of the participants, sources said here today.

The exhibition held district wise every year, is the 15th of its kind and was visited by a large number of students and people from various strata of the society.

The concluding function was addressed by Deputy Commissioner Syed Hafiz Ahmed while inaugural function was addressed by Vice Chancellor of Islamic University Dr Abdul Hamid.

Prof Md Atahar Ali Dewan, Principal of Kushtia Government College presided over the function.

Prizes were distributed among the participants.

SYLHET

Armed attack on AL office, none hurt

Jan 31: A group of armed hooligans stormed into the local office of Awami League on Thursday and created panic firing gunshots and exploding crackers, AL leaders said, reports UNB.

They said the unidentified attackers came riding on motor bikes, fired three rounds of shots from cut-rifles and exploded crackers at around 7 in the evening.

None was however hurt in the attack but panic-stricken people ran helter and shelter for security.

Juba League leader Bijit Chowdhury blamed Jatayatnabadi Chhatra Dal for the attack.

MAGURA

11 Sarbahara Party men surrender

Jan 31: A total of 11 activists of so called Sarbahara Party surrendered with arms and ammunition to the Police Super of the district during last 10 days, reports UNB.

The surrendered persons are: Abu Baker (30), son of Kalu Molla of Kotbag, Amir Hossain (28), son of Abul Bareque of Tilkhori, Abdul Halim (35), son of Kalu sheik of Tilkhori, Samir Kumar Biswas (32), son of Sonaton Kumar Biswas of Shingair and Nasir molla (34), son of Zobeid Ali Molla of Satakhali Village in Salikha Upazila, Amanat Ali (28), son of Neamot Ali of Uttarnowapara, Abul Kalam (30), son of Montaj Mollah of Sachani, Bokshi Tarun Kumar (27), son of Debendra Nath of Chandpur, Kabir Hossain (29), son of Momin Uddin and Apan Ali (26), son of Tamog Uddin of Pakkanchampur and Abdul Alim Fakir (30), son of Azim Uddin of Uttarnowapara village in Sadar Upazila.

They also made over to the police 3 country made guns, one rifle, one pistol, 4 local made pipeguns and 25 rounds of ammunition.



GOALUNDO: A farmer is watering the plants of water-melon. The daughters are also helping father. —Star Photo

20,000 Monipuri weavers seek protection

MAULAVIBAZAR, Jan 31: The Handloom Industry of Monipuri Community in Kamaiganj Upazila of the district have been facing acute crisis following high price of yarn, weaving materials, non-availability of capital and lack of marketing facilities, reports UNB.

According to informed sources, about 20 thousand people are dependent on weaving to earn their livelihood but for want of capital and exorbitant price of yarn they are unable to cope with the present situation.

The availability of foreign clothes at cheap rate has reduced the demand of the products of Monipuri Handloom Workshop.

The products like bedsheet, napkins, sarcons, lungis and wrappers are in great demand outside the district and these products are cheap.

A group of weavers told UNB that unless some positive steps were taken by the authorities to supply adequate yarn and other materials to the Monipuri weavers directly, the present condition of the weavers would not improve and they would have no alternative but to close down their business.

Forest resources on the wane

Forest resources are on the wane due to illegal felling of all the old trees mercilessly by unscrupulous people of the district.

Dense forests are going barren apparently without any preventive or punitive action by the government.

Firewood, bamboos, songgrass, cane, many old trees, young plants coupled with natural growth of multifarious plants so long made the forests rich in natural resources. But all the reserve forests are now being plundered.

It is learnt that many people are occupying forcibly forest land by building permanent residences and these trespassers are directly or indirectly responsible for felling trees, selling firewood and bamboos.

Local people strongly urged the authorities to take urgent preventive measures to protect forest wealth.

Illegal occupation of lands alongside highways and roads has created problems for both government and members of the public.

It is alleged that a section of roads and highways officials are involved in this illegal occupation thus earning money illegally.

Some local influentials have allegedly managed to occupy vast tracts of roads and highways lands for agricultural and pisciculture purposes.

Occupants informed that they use to pay money to the roads and highways officials as rent but the officials do not issue any documents.

An officer of the R and H Department admitted the fact over phone and further told UNB that they had submitted a list of unauthorised occupants to the district administration with a request to evict them but the district administration is indifferent regarding the matter, it is further alleged.

A number of buildings have also been constructed in the district town and other commercial places which have narrowed the roads. Illegal occupants are creating sheds, semi-pucca and pucca stalls beside the roads thus creating obstacles to the pedestrians and causing traffic jams or accidents.

Tk 27 lakh goods lying unused for long time

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Jan 31: About 3,500 pipes worth Taka five lakh have been lying unused at the local regional and sadar upazila offices of Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) for over two years.

It is learnt that these pipes were made in order to supply water to the lands of the Barendra Area but these pipes were not used for the reasons not known.

About 15 lakh bricks worth Taka 22.50 lakh of the Public Works Department (PWD) have been lying unused and unprotected within the area of Bholahat Health Complex for over 17 years last.

Meanwhile, a good number of bricks were stolen from the stock for which cases were filed and some hawkiders were suspended.

The concerned authorities are yet to utilise the large quantity of bricks which were kept at the place since 1974 for the said development of Bholahat.

The staff of the Bholahat Health Complex and patients have been suffering much as snakes and poisonous insects come out the bricks stakes.

Some local people informed this correspondent that these big quantity of bricks have become almost unworthy of use for this the government has to incur a huge loss.

The local people have urged the concerned authorities to take steps to find out the persons who are behind the un-planned work and demanded exemplary punishment to the persons responsible for the huge loss.

A UNB report adds: Serious irregularities and mismanagement have compounded the sufferings of the orphans of the local Shishu Sadan.

Informed sources alleged, unscrupulous elements had long been active for grabbing money, food and other essentials allotted for the orphans.

Built in 1972 at Baroghoria, a small town across the river Mahananda, it was shifted to the district town in 1989.

A six room building was rented for Taka 8,000 per month at the court area for the accommodation of orphan girls. But it was too small to accommodate increasing number of girls.

From Our Correspondent

Steps for poverty alleviation stressed

State Minister for Finance Mojibur Rahman said in a resource constraint country like Bangladesh both the government and non-government organisations (NGO) need to blend their efforts for alleviation of poverty.

He was addressing as chief guest at the 'Annual Conference 92' of Unitary Socila Centre of Canada and Bangladesh (UCCB) an associate voluntary organisation, at Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development here recently.

National Professor Dr Nurul Islam presided over the functions.

Mojibur Rahman said NGOs should take up programmes in line with government policies to turn the poverty stricken millions to self-reliant and self-respecting citizens.

He underscored the need for vigorous motivational activities by the NGOs.

The State Minister emphasised on the need for planned utilisation of the country's vast potential manpower.

He said, manpower has to be tapped by concerted efforts to reach the fruits of democracy and freedom to the doorsteps of the people.

Eminent scholars and NGO personalities spoke on the occasion.

One-day-long exhibition on cross breeding of cattle and poultry birds concluded here at Laxmipur High School ground under Sadar upazila recently.



SYLHET: Traffic jam, a regular affair of the town. —Star Photo

Notes from Comilla

COMILLA, Jan 31: At least 5.36 lakh sets of primary text books have been distributed free to the primary school students in the district, according to an official source, reports UNB.

But 79 thousand sets have fallen short of the requirement as there are about 6.15 lakh students in 1712 government and non-government primary schools. Only 11 sets remain at the hand of the district administration.

Requisition for additional supply of books have been submitted to the district primary education office which was being processed, according to the source.

It can be added here that free books would not be supplied to the students of kindergarten schools this year and the institutions have been advised to purchase the text books from the Text Book Board.

Training course on cultural activities

A three-month long training course was formally inaugurated by Ramiz Khan, Convener, Ushashi Parisad in Shishu Kanan premises recently.

The workshop on pronunciation, recitation and preparedness to act on stages was sponsored by Comilla Ushashi Parisad.

The inaugural function was addressed, among others, by Moazzem Hussain Babul, Ashik Ranjan Dey, Zahurul Islam.

Spurious insecticides sellers held

Two people were hauled up by the people while trying to sell spurious insecticides in Paduar Bazar recently.

According to the villagers, the cheats mixed powdered ultramarine, DDT and chalk powder, packed them for sale but could not deceive being dealer.

The cheats were identified as Md Shaheen and Dulal Mia.

Later they were handed over to the Kotwali Police.

Engineers' Institute confce held

The annual conference of Comilla unit of Bangladesh Engineers' Institute was held here recently.

The conference was formally inaugurated by Abdul Basit Sarker, Chief Engineer, PDB and President of Comilla unit, Engineers from greater Comilla and Noakhali districts participated in the conference.

It was addressed, among others, by Manruddin Ahmed, Additional Chief Engineer of Krishi Unnayan Corporation, Md. Shahjahan, Chief Engineer of Rajuk and Begum Shamim Ahmed, Secretary, Engineers Ladies Club of Comilla.

Club executives

The election of the executive committee of Comilla Club was held in the club premises recently.

Those elected are: Vice-President Dr. Mohd Hedayet Ullah, Professors Fazlur Rahman and Abdul Aziz Khan Advocate, Secretary — Zahangir Alam Khan (who was elected for the second time uncontested), Assistant Secretary — Professor Syed Zahangir Alam, Treasurer — Syed Mansoor Haider, Sports Secretary — Bijon Roy.

Members elected are: Professor Ali Hussain Chowdhury, Professor Dipak Kumar Bhadra, Amlan Kumar Sinha, Kamaluddin Ahmed, Badal Kumar Bazra, Abdur Razaque, Dr. Shahid Ullah and Iqbal Hussain.

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Smuggling flow up after devaluation of Indian currency

KUSHTIA, Jan 31: Contrabands goods worth about Taka 8.3 crore were seized by Bangladesh Rifles from different area of this border district during the last 18 months, official sources here said, reports UNB.

The contraband goods not only reach Bangladesh from across the border but also continue unabated pilfering into India despite the government's anti-smuggling drive.

The flow of smuggling rather increased particularly after devaluation of the Indian currency, it added.

According to an estimate, Indian goods worth about Taka 5,95,04,300 were seized while on way to Bangladesh and Bangladesh contraband goods worth Taka 2,07,82,200 were seized while being smuggled into India.

The seized materials included VCP, sugar, salt, sarcons, cows and buffaloes.

Different police stations have ailed up and sued 229 people for alleged smuggling.

A report from Jessore says: The district task force and Bangladesh Rifles raided Morirampur and Alavzani and seized contraband goods worth about Taka 1.56 lakh.

According to sources, the Indian goods includes sarcons, polyester cloth, harmonium reed and other materials.

According to sources nine alleged smugglers were arrested and seized goods were handed over to the local customs.

The contraband goods include sugar, salt, sarcons, clothes, thread net cosmetics and other materials. A number of cows and buffaloes were also seized.

Prices of essential commodities rise

From Our Correspondent

RAJBARI, Jan 31: The prices of some essential commodities have recorded a sharp rise at the district town market over the last few days causing hardship to the common people.

The prices of the different varieties of rice has recorded a rise by one to 1.50 Taka per kg. The price of a kg of rice is now varies from Taka 12 to Taka 14.50 according to quality. One kg of ata is now being sold at Taka 9.75.

Soyabn oil, coconut oil, jira, masur dal now selling at Taka 40, Taka 95, Taka 150 and Taka 40 per kg respectively while these items are being sold at Taka 40, Taka 80, Taka 130 and Taka 40 a fortnight back.

Fish has become rare item to the common people of the district town over the last few days. The price of 200 medium size kot fish ranges from Taka 80 to Taka 100 a fortnight back. Four medium size magurs are now available between Taka 60 and Taka 70 against the previous price of Taka 30 to Taka 40.

Mutton and beef are now sold at Taka 100 and taka 60 per kg while the prices of mutton and beef were Taka 80 and Taka 50 per kg a month back. The prices of poultry birds has also recorded a steep rise from some time past. The price of medium size poultry bird weighing about 500 gram ranges from Taka 40 to Taka 50.

Upward trend of vegetable prices has also been prevailing at the district town market. A medium size cabbage is now sells at Taka 10 while a cauliflower at Taka 8, a kg of corolla, tomato are being sold at Taka 30 while potato at Taka 9 per kg and papua at Taka 6.

Besides, a medium size red pumpkin sells at Taka 15. The price hike of vegetables has been attributed to incessant rain and bad weather.

Moreover, baby food like Dano, Redcow and Neopray is selling at higher prices.

Koimi Jute Mills Toll collectors burn jute, supply stopped

SIRAJGANJ, Jan 31: Illegal toll collection lead to stoppage of jute supply from Thursday to the Koimi Jute Mills of the district, reports UNB.

The decision came following the alleged burning of jute by some workers of the mills Wednesday.

Witnesses said workers' union president of the mills Abu Hossain Bachu alongwith some other members allegedly set fire on a jute loading truck of Burul Ali at the mills gate as he refused to give toll money.

Local jute suppliers alleged that the union leaders forcibly have been collecting illegal tolls from the businessmen for a long time.

They demanded immediate punishment of the people responsible for the jute burning and urged the authorities to stop illegal toll collection.

The mills authority however, admitted the incident and said they were trying to resolve the matter.

The upazila BNP leadership suspended all activities of the Jatayatnabadi Chhatra Dal and Juba Dal of Belkuchi upazila of the district following a series of clashes.

According to local BNP sources, JCD activists split into two groups while selecting their leaders on Tuesday. Differences led to clashes which left 15 people injured. Asaduzzaman was sent to PG Hospital, Dhaka Wednesday with serious injury.

UP polls violence 11 including APO, 2 candidates held

Chandpur, Jan 31: Four people, including an Assistant Presiding Officer (APO) and two UP member candidates, were arrested in connection with poll violence that left at least 12 injured at a centre here on Thursday, reports UNB.

Two cops — Police Officer Ranjit Bhoumik and a constable — were among those injured in a clash between policemen and local people at Lodhuya Primary School centre in Fatepur Union of Matlab Upazila on Thursday morning.

Authorities postponed voting following the clash and snatching of ballots, officials said.

A mob of about 100-150 people with sticks allegedly attacked the centre and snatched six ballot books, police said. They clashed with the police and also assaulted the Presiding Officers on duty when resisted.

Member candidates Giasuddin Bhuiyan and Mostafa Kamal Niazil, Assistant Presiding Officer Nurul Islam Miah and a voter, Solaiman, were arrested from the scene.

A report from Sathkira says: Seven people were arrested by police from different polling centres of Shymnagar Upazila of the district Wednesday for alleged violence during the Union Parishad Elections.

Police also seized 12 motor bikes while being used for terrorism in the area.

The arrested are Abdul Bari, Shadul, Raju Ahmed, Jahangir, Prasanta, Samad and Mozammel.

However, election to 12 unions parshads of the upazila were held peacefully.

Rival groups clash, 6 held with arms

KUSHTIA, Jan 31: Police arrested 6 young men for inciting an armed clash between two rival groups, which caused panic in the district town, reports UNB.

The arrested persons were Ajoy Kumar (20), Shahajada (20), Don (20), Mustafa Zaman Titas (23), Anisur Rahman (23) and Mahtab Ali Masud.

They all belong to an unidentified group which is said to be responsible for the fast deteriorating law and order situation in the town.

The group wielding arms, suddenly attacked their rivals locally known as Amlapara Dal.

Police recovered one pipe gun, ram dao and daggers from their possessions.

A case has been filed in this connection.