

Upazila roundup

SUNAMGANJ

2 killed, 50 hurt in road mishap

Feb 7: At least two people were killed and 50 injured when two minibuses collided on Thursday near Gobindapur on the Sunamganj-Sylhet highway, reports UNB.

The dead were identified as Sayed Miah (30) and Zainul Abedin (32), a businessman.

They died on the spot when a Sylhet-bound minibus hit another coming from the opposite direction at around 1.15 pm.

Among the injured, 45 were admitted into Sunamganj Sadar Hospital, from where 17 shifted to Sylhet Osmani Medical College Hospital in critical condition.

MADARIPUR

Bus journey hazardous

Feb 7: Reckless driving and overloading are making bus journey more and more hazardous on different routes of the southern districts including Greater Faridpur, reports UNB.

According to reports, drivers frequently resort to oversteering to make up for time wasted in stopping too long at too many points.

They are also in the habit of overloading their buses not only with passengers but also with a wide variety of goods which should usually be carried by trucks.

The reports also suggest that many of the buses plying on these routes do not have necessary permits or even fitness certificates.

It is not infrequent that the engines of many ramshackle vehicles stop dead or their wheels fall off midway putting the lives of passengers in jeopardy.

BRAHMANBARIA

Family welfare centre opens

Feb 7: Barikandi Family Welfare Centre built at a cost of Taka 16 lakh at village Dharabanga under Nabnagar Upazila was inaugurated on January 31 by the former cabinet secretary, Siddiqur Rahman, reports BSS.

A rally of field workers of the Family Planning Department was held on the occasion.

The function was presided over by Deputy Commissioner, Brahmanbaria, Md. Khabiruddin Ahmed, Deputy Commissioner, Narsingdi District, Abdus Samad, Civil Surgeon, Brahmanbaria, Dr. Abdul Bari and Family Planning Deputy Director M.M. Nawasher Ali among others spoken on the occasion.

The speakers stressed that family planning and population control activities should be geared up in the rural areas for overall socio-economic development of the country.

PATUAKHALI

Higher market price hits aman procurement

Feb 7: Procurement drive for aman paddy in the district has slowed down as the open market price is higher than the price offered by government, reports UNB.

The drive was on since November 15 through 15 purchasing centres in different upazilas to procure 5,000 metric tons, but only 200 metric tons of paddy and rice could be procured until December last.

Food Department sources said, concerned officials have been asked to gear up the drive to touch the target soon.

RANGPUR

VGD programme for 15,000 distressed women

Feb 7: The Relief and Rehabilitation Department is running Venerable Group Development (VGD) Programme for 15,000 distressed women in Rangpur district, reports BSS.

According to the programme, monthly per capita 31 kilograms of wheat are being distributed free of cost from 84 centres in the district.

The Post-flood Agriculture Rehabilitation Programme, has been completed in the district recently at a cost of Taka 72.40 lakh. According to an official source, under the programme, over 6,700 acres have been brought under boro and wheat cultivation.

Seeds and fertilizers have been distributed among the farmers free of cost.

CHANDPUR

Population, Family Welfare Day observed

Feb 7: The National Population and Family Welfare Day was observed in Chandpur on Sunday in a befitting manner, reports BSS.

On the occasion, an elaborate programme was chalked out at district and upazila level towns. The programme included seminars, meetings, rallies, processions, and receptions to ideal couples and prize distribution among the best family planning workers.

A seminar was held at Chandpur Upazila Auditorium. The seminar was presided over by Mahbubur Rahman, Deputy Director, Chandpur Family Planning Office.

The seminar was addressed among others by Md. Yakub Ali, Deputy Commissioner, Sheikh Matur Rahman, Advocate Shaif Uddin Ahmed, Prof. Md. Hossain Khan, Dr. Nurul Islam Khan, Dr. A Rashid, M.A. Rob, Jiban Kanat Chakrabarti, Mrs Farjlatun Nessa.

PIROJPUR

Fish disease

Feb 7: Fish disease has broken out in an epidemic form in almost all the upazilas of the district, reports UNB.

The disease locally known as 'ulcerative syndrome' has affected different varieties of fish like shoal, magur, sing, kol, taki, gozar, boal, baim and puti.

With the outbreak of the disease, the demand for fish has abruptly fallen in the local markets, causing hardship to the fishermen.

Nutrition experts feared that low income group of people who mostly live on fish, are likely to suffer from protein deficiency following the outbreak of the disease.

Local people urged the authorities to spray lime water in the affected waterbodies to combat the menace.

NARAIL

Govt urged to accept teachers demands

Feb 7: Teachers and employees of all non-government institutions in a meeting Tuesday at Victoria Collegiate School here called upon the government to accept their 150-point demands, reports UNB.

Presided over by Sheikh Abu Bakar, the speakers explaining the vital role played by the teachers in nation building activities demanded uniform pay scales. They regretted that the present democratic government continues to remain silent on the prevailing discrimination between government and non-government teachers and employees in matters of pay and service conditions.

They urged the government to discuss the matter with the teachers to help solve the problems. Later a procession was brought out with hundreds of teachers parading the town streets.

FENI

Tk 31 lakh for road development

Feb 7: Local Pourashava has sanctioned about Tk 31 lakh for eight uplift schemes under Post-flood Rehabilitation Programme, official sources said, reports UNB.

Under the scheme, Tk 11.33 lakh will be spent for reconstruction of Abu Bakar Road, Chowdhury Bari Road and Shamsul Haq Road, Tk 14.60 lakh for development of drainage system of Mojumder Bari Road, Munshi Bari Road, Saudagar Bari Road and Selina Road and Tk 4.75 lakh for reconstruction of Abed Munshi Road.

The work on the schemes will start soon with financial assistance from the Asian Development Bank.

SATKHIRA

Two commit suicide

Feb 7: A housewife and a teen-age girl of the district allegedly committed suicide by taking poison Saturday, police said, reports UNB.

Salaha Khatun (23), wife of Abu Zafar of village Ganduha of Kaliganj Upazila allegedly committed suicide following a quarrel with her husband.

The other victim Ranzina Khatun (16), daughter of poor father of village Batekhali of Sadar Upazila got upset as her mother asked her to search a job for livelihood. She allegedly poisoned herself to death due to utter frustration.

Two U.D. cases were lodged with the police.



JAMALPUR: Erosion of the river Brahmaputra has taken a serious turn. The major portion of the village Balurchar under Islampur Upazila of the district has already been devoured. — Star Photo

Problems hamper current season's paddy farming

From Our Correspondent

BOGRA, Feb 7: The cultivation of IRRI-boro paddy may face a serious setback through out the district during the current season.

A vast area of cultivable land remained fallow due to high prices of different agricultural inputs.

Shortage of bullock for tilling the lands, the price rise of fuel, irregularities in distribution of High Yielding Variety of seeds and financial constraints of poor and marginal farmers are the main reasons for which the cultivation is greatly hampered.

The recent increase of prices of chemical fertilizers has also affected the farmers in general.

The supply of High Yielding Variety of seeds by Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) is quite inadequate. Besides, these are not available at the upazila level office at fixed prices. These are sold in the open markets at an exorbitant price.

The very poor stock of seeds of the farmers were exhausted during the last floods in Gatabali, Shariakandi, Dhunot and Sonatola upazilas of the district.

About 70 to 80 per cent farmers of the district have no bullock to till their lands. Some farmers are tilling their lands on share basis. They are even compelled to use milch

cows for ploughing the lands.

Flood, diseases and indiscriminate slaughtering of cattle are the main reasons behind the shortage of bullock. Some greedy cobblers poisoned some cattle to death for collecting skin. Moreover, what of cash for purchasing daily necessities and repayment of debt forced most of the farmers to sell the cattle.

On the other hand, the government decision to stop supply of irrigation pumps on rental basis has also hit the farmers of the district greatly. These are now sold by BADC but only a few farmers are able to procure the same for irrigation purposes. The poor and marginal farmers are to buy water from these class of farmers at high rate. The increase of fuel price has also affected the cultivators.

The farmers of the district are not getting requisite agricultural loans from the nationalised commercial banks including the Bangladesh Krishi Bank.

According to, District Agricultural Extension Department, a scheme has been taken up to bring a 4 lakh one thousand 8 hundred and 64 acres of land under the IRRI-boro cultivation in the district during the current season.

The production target of

the cultivation has been fixed at 4 lakh 74 thousand 8 hundred and 52 metric tons.

Irregularities in TB hospital

The lone TB hospital in the district is beset with manifold problems.

Shortage of medicines, improper diet and absence of proper care have rendered the TB patients helpless.

Patients complained that doctors of the hospital rarely attend the patients. The doctors come to the hospital only to sign their attendance register and after that day they return to their private chamber.

The patients also complained that the hospital is kept dirty and they are not supplied proper diet.

Condition of beds is not satisfactory. The mattresses, pillows and bed covers are not at all fit for use.

It is alleged that medicine supplied by the government are being sold to the local pharmacies by some dishonest employees of the hospital.

Patients also complained, a section of youths from adjacent locality carrying on anti-social activities inside the TB hospital compound.

Eyewitnesses said that after office hours gambling and other anti-social activities go unabated in the premises.

Poura amenities absent in Gaibandha

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Feb 7: The local pourashava, one of the oldest in the country is now beset with manifold problems.

The Pourashava was established when the population was hardly a few thousand and amenities at that time were proportionate to the demand. But with the expansion of pourashava area and the increase of population the amenities did not extend. The present inadequate amenities are causing untold sufferings to the town dwellers.

It's narrow roads and lanes, absence of proper drainage system, poor street lighting, irregular cleaning, poor health and sanitation system have made the life of tax payers miserable. There is no proper drainage in the district town. All the existing drains are found full of weeds and

garbage and for want of proper care these have turned into mosquito breeding centres.

The concerned authority is quite indifferent to the problems although a good amount of money is being spent every year. There is no park or recreational facilities for town dwellers at all. So the people of this town have been suffering since long. After sun set some areas of the town plunge into darkness for frequent power disruption.

Although drinking water supply system was introduced here few years back, the supply position could not be extended in one third area of pourashava due to lack of pipe line which is yet to be implemented despite repeated appeals to the concerned authorities.

10,000 children earn bread for family

BORGUNA, Feb 7: About 10 thousand children below 12 years are at present working as labourers in the district to help their destitute families, reports UNB.

According to a survey conducted by local elite, the child labourers mainly work in hotels, restaurants, bidi factories, motor garages and workshops. They also work as rickshaw-pullers, newspaper hawkers and domestic servants.

Flash floods, cyclones, drought and other natural calamities rendered marginal and landless farmers destitutes over the years, the survey revealed. As a result, poor parents had to send their children to work as labourers just for survival.

These children stay at railway stations and abandoned places after their day's work for over 12 hours.

Hosiery industry

Improper policy, fund shortage hinder normal growth

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Feb 7: Improper government policy and shortage of requisite funds hamper the usual growth of the Hosiery Industry of the country.

At present there are about 2,000 small and large hosiery mills in the country of which 1200 mills are located in and around Narayanganj town. The rest 800 mills were established in Dhaka, Pabna, Comilla and Rangpur.

Out of the total hosiery mills, seventy per cent are run by small capital holders, 25 per cent by medium fund holders and the rest are run by the economically solvent persons who actually finance 60 per cent mill owners.

According to an estimate, the total investment in the sector would stand at about Taka 100 crore. Of the total, Taka 60 crore have been invested by the owners of the five per cent mills, a related source disclosed.

The average daily production of the 2,000 mills is estimated at 1,50,000 pounds of fabrics and 75,000 dozens of ganjees. The value of the production will be about Taka two crore.

The government fixed an export target for the hosiery mills at Taka 56 crore for the year 1990-91. During the year, the hosiery industries including the weaving sector suc-

ceeded to earn Taka 450 crore through export. This year, the hosiery and weaving sector expect to earn Taka 1,000 crore against the government target of Taka 583 crore through export provided they get government's full cooperation.

It can be mentioned here that the expansion of the hosiery industry has contributed much to the development of the cotton textile industry in Bangladesh. The hosiery industry from the very inceptions has made stride in the development and also playing an important role in the national economy.

The hosiery industry of the country faced setback during Liberation War. Valuables including machinery and finished goods worth over Taka one crore were totally destroyed during the period. In spite of various short comings and hurdles, the industry has developed to the present stage.

At present over 70,000 workers and employees are working in the industries. Besides, another 15,000 are connected with the industry include wholesalers, retailers, hawkers, laundries and packers.

The President of the Bangladesh Hosiery Association informed this correspondent that the government had imposed VAT on knitting sector where as the other technology

of making clothes i.e. weaving sector are free from paying such taxes. He further expressed that it is unwise and impractical from the neutral point of view.

In spite of bright prospects for the development of the industry, little has been done to the smooth growth of it during the considerable period of time.

A close source of the sector said that the owners of the hosiery industries had been facing scarcity of yarn, spare parts, non-availability of adequate licences to import better quality of cotton yarn, scarcity of raw materials, shortage of requisite fund, lack of technical know-how.

A textile expert disclosed that realistic and comprehensive planning is needed to help the smooth development of the hosiery industries. The genuine industry owners should get licences to import high quality of yarn including the raw materials, the source informed. Loan on easy terms should be extended to the small and medium industry owners to help them run their business smoothly, the source added.

A Taka 10 crore project of BSIC to establish a hosiery industrial estate on 58.52 acres of land at Harihar Para, Fatullah is underway.

Notes from Magura

MAGURA, Feb 7: A cultural function was held at Magura Textile Mills premises under the auspices of Magura Textile Mills Srani Karmachari Union recently, reports UNB.

Nirmal Chandra Sarkar, Deputy Commissioner of the district attended the function as chief guest while Police Super Abdul Rahim Khan attended as special guest.

The function was also addressed by Faruqul Islam, President of the union.

One beaten to death

A man was beaten to death allegedly by his rival partymen recently due to land dispute in Sadar upazila of the district, police and witnesses said.

The victim identified as Enjor Ali (35) was attacked by the rival group armed with lethal weapons leaving him critically injured. Enjor was rushed to Sadar hospital and soon after admission, he succumbed to injuries.

A case was filed with Sadar police in this connection.

Ershad's release demanded

Jattiya Party workers meeting here demanded release of the party Chairman and former President H M Ershad and other political prisoners.

Two separate meetings were held one at Katakhal and another at Belnagar School premises in Sadar upazila where 300 new comers joined the party. They expressed total solidarity with the party's ideology and leadership of Ershad.

Tk 48.61 lakh for drainage system

Public Health Engineering Department has sanctioned Taka 48.61 lakh for the development of drainage system in the Sadar upazila.

The scheme has been taken up under the annual development programme with Dutch financial assistance.

Official sources said, the work will be started soon and is expected to be completed by June next.

Bidis being sold without bandrolls

MADARIPUR, Feb 7: Bidis are being sold here without bandrolls to evade duty causing large amount of revenue loss to the government, reports UNB.

It is alleged that many bidi factories are involved in this malpractice connivance with local Customs and Excise Department officials in 10 upazilas of Madaripur and Saratpur districts.

Local people alleged that bidis are being sold without bandrolls but in some cases used bandrolls collected from the retailers were reused to evade taxes.

Moreover, the actual production of the factories is not shown in the document submitted to the excise officials.

Local people have urged the authorities to check duty evasion which is depriving the government of huge revenue income from bidi manufacturers.

It is alleged, concerned officials remain indifferent to this malpractice for unknown reasons.

Meanwhile, consumption of bidi is increasing day by day following the price hike of different low brand cigarettes throughout the district.

Local people urged the authorities to take remedial measures immediately.

Construction of bridge needed

MAGURA, Feb 7: Road communication between Salikha and Mohammadpur upazila headquarters remained suspended for more than two years since the collapse of the wooden bridge on river Chitra, reports UNB.

According to report, 20 Km long road is the link road between Salikha and Mohammadpur.

Salikha Upazila Parishad constructed a wooden bridge on the river three years back but it collapsed six months later.

Meanwhile, transportation and supply of commodities to hats and bazars of the upazilas were being carried on with much difficulty.

Concerned authorities have been urged to take necessary steps to construct a pucca bridge on the road.

877 metric tons wheat for relief, rehabilitation

The government has sanctioned 877 metric tons of wheat for relief and rehabilitation work in 20 projects in four upazilas of the district during the current dry season.

Officials said 298 metric tons has been earmarked for 7 projects in Sadar, 176 for 4 projects in Sreepur, 155 for 3 projects in Salikha and rest 249 tons has sanctioned for 6 projects in Mohammadpur upazila.

The projects include canal digging, repair of road and embankment and earth work. Works on the projects have

According to sources, only 7,000 rickshaws plying on the roads have valid licences and those without licences could be more than double this number.

Lack of traffic knowledge of the rickshawpuller has worsened the already precarious situation.

Magura

Bidis without bandrolls are being sold in rural hats and bazars of the district depriving the government of considerable amount of revenue.

Official sources said, under the existing law, Taka 37 is to be paid as Excise Duty for every one hundred packets of bidi through bandrolls. But used bandrolls collected from retailers are being stocked to evade the excise duty. Actual production of bidi factories is not shown on paper to hood-wink tax officials.

It is alleged, concerned officials remain indifferent to this malpractice for unknown reasons.

Meanwhile, consumption of bidi is increasing day by day following the price hike of different low brand cigarettes throughout the district.

Local people urged the authorities to take remedial measures immediately.

Construction of bridge needed

already been started and is expected to be completed by May.

Engineers' body unit executives

The annual conference of the district unit of the Engineers' Institution of Bangladesh was held at Sadar upazila recently.

Sofuddin Ahmed, President of the unit attended the function as chief guest while Monirul Haque, President of Jessore unit attended as special guest.

Among others, Giasuddin, Neamat Ali and Sheikh Nobil Ali addressed the conference.

Engineers from Sadar, Salikha, Sreepur and Mohammadpur upazilas took part.

A committee was formed for the current year with Md Abdul Quddus and Sheikh Nabib Ali and President and Secretary.

Malaria claims 5, attack 100

PABNA, Feb 7: Malaria disease claimed at least five lives including two babies and attacked 100 others during the last week in three upazilas of the district, officials sources said, reports UNB.

The victims are Abdul Razzak (40), Saiful Haq (20) of Sadar upazila, Shahjahan Ali (30) of Bhangora, Rupaa (21) and Nipu of Faridpur Upazila died of the disease during the period.



PABNA: A four-day long flower show was arranged here at the local Town Hall premises recently. — Star Photo