

Upazila roundup

RAJSHAH

Teachers hold rally to realise demands

Feb 16: Non-government school teachers held a rally Tuesday at Shaheb Bazar Bara Masjid Square to press home their 15-point demand, reports UNB.

Presided over by Abul Hossain, the rally was addressed, among others, by Prof Hasan Azizul Haque, SM Abu Bakar, Nurul Islam and Fazlul Haque.

The speakers alleged that step motherly attitude were shown to non-government teachers by the present democratic government and called for urgent remedial steps towards removing disparity with the government teachers.

TANGAIL

Tk 3.53 cr savings collected

Feb 16: The district Savings Department has collected an amount of Taka 3.53 crore during the first half of the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

An official source said target for 1991-92 had been fixed at Taka 5.50 crore for the district.

Taka 5.85 crore were collected in the district in 1990-91 while target was Taka five crore.

FARIDPUR

College annual sports held

Feb 16: The annual sports competition of Yasin Government College was held recently at the college premises, reports BSS.

The sports programme was inaugurated by Md. Abdur Rahim, Deputy Commissioner of Faridpur.

About sixty-five students both male and female participated in the daylong sports. Khandokar Nurul Islam, Principal of the college distributed prizes among the winners.

BRAHMANBARIA

One held, pipe gun recovered

Feb 16: Police arrested a youngman and recovered a pipe gun from his possession here Friday evening, reports UNB.

Police said, while moving suspiciously in Sherpur Mazar in the town the miscreant identified as Kazzal (22) was challenged by them. At this he tried to escape in vain.

Later police recovered the gun from his possession and a case has been lodged in this connection.

GOFFARGAON

Religious edn can stop moral degradation

Feb 16: A discussion was held at Hattimabad Hafezia Forkania Madrasa premises on February 12 in memory of its founder and noted social worker and politician Maulana Abdul Halim, who died recently, reports BSS.

The foundation was presided over by Maulana Mohiuddin Khan, Editor of the monthly 'Madina', former Religious Affairs Minister Mufti Mohammad Wakkas, Maulana Shaikat Ali, journalist and writer Faizus Salheen and Maulana Emdadul Huq among others participated in the discussion.

The speakers stressed that religious education can play an important role in preventing moral degradation in the society.

DINAJPUR

Youngman beaten to death by dacoits

Feb 16: A youngman was beaten to death by a gang of dacoits at Birul upazila in the district Saturday last, police said, reports UNB.

Shanti Mohan Roy of village Mollapara of the upazila was allegedly killed by miscreants on February 8 when he resisted their attempt to lift his herd.

The dacoits beat him mercilessly. He was sent to Sadar hospital in unconscious condition and succumbed to injuries the following day.

A case has been filed with the Kotwali police in this connection.

CHANDPUR

8 degree examinees expelled

Feb 16: Eight students were expelled for adopting unfair means in the degree examination from Chandpur Govt. College and Kachua centres on Monday, the first day of examination, reports BSS.

The examination is going on in all four centres of the district peacefully. Strict measures were taken to check unfair means in the examination.

NAOGAON

Retd rly executive dead

Feb 16: Md Ashraf Ali, a retired Deputy Chief Traffic Commercial Manager of Bangladesh Railway and a noted social worker, died recently after old age ailment at his village residence in Khattwasar Raniagar in the district, reports UNB.

Ashraf Ali, 82, left behind his widow, two sons and host of well wishers to mourn his death.

A graduate of Calcutta Islamia College, he was closely associated with Sher-e-Bangla A K Fazlul Haq, Khawaja Nazimuddin and Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.

COMILLA

Week-long orientation training

Feb 16: A two-week-long orientation training workshop on Co-operative and Rural Development for the BCS (Account and Evaluation) officers was formally inaugurated in BARD of Kotbari, Comilla recently, reports UNB.

K M Tipu Sultan, Director General of BARD opened the workshop February 8.

The inaugural session was addressed among others by Fazlul Bari, Director, Administration and Training, Syed Aminur Rahman, Joint Director, Rural Economy and Abul Kalam Azad, Assistant Director Training of BARD.

Fifteen BCS cadres participated in the training course.

MAGURA

Procurement of aman falls short of target

Feb 16: Aman paddy procurement in four upazilas of the district has fallen short of the target, official sources said here, reports UNB.

The District Food Controller said, the target was set at 2,000 metric tons of paddy for the current season, but only 200 metric tons had been procured during the last 80 days through six purchasing centres.

Giving the reason, he said aman paddy was being sold in rural hats and bazars at Taka 270 to 280 per maund while the government price was fixed at Taka 245 per maund including transport cost.

BOGRA

Dacoits loot valuables from 7 houses

Feb 16: Dacoits looted cash and valuables worth about Taka 3 lakh from 7 houses in Shibganj Upazila of the district recently, reports UNB.

Police said a gang of dacoits equipped with fire arms and other lethal weapons stormed the houses one after another in the upazila headquarters and decamped with cash and 20 tolas of gold ornaments.

A case has been filed with the Shibganj police.

MADARIPUR

Traffic jam causes sufferings

Feb 16: Traffic jam has become a common phenomenon in the district town causing immense sufferings for the dwellers, reports UNB.

Random parking of vehicles in busy areas and occupation of footpaths by small traders create jams obstructing pedestrians and traffic.

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 rickshawpullers has worsened the already precarious situation.



JHENIDAH: Police seized 24 Indian cows on Thursday at Tetultala under sadar upazila. —Star photo

50,000 children suffer from malnutrition

PAIBNA, Feb 16: About 50,000 children of different age groups have been suffering from malnutrition and other diseases in 9 upazilas of the district, reports UNB.

A survey conducted by the district administration shows that malnutrition among the children have increased to a great extent following the visitation of recurrent floodings, droughts and other natural calamities during the last few years which caused severe food shortage.

The number of child patients in the district is increasing day by day. Children of the poverty stricken families are facing death, blindness and other malnutrition related diseases.

Most of the poverty stricken children are engaged in hard work in hotels, restaurants, mills and factories with meagre wages to maintain

their livelihood. About 500 poor people have regained their eyesights after operation conducted at 6 eye camps in the district recently.

The camps were jointly organised by the Pabna Pioneer Lions Club, The Radhanagar Community Centre, the Pailanpur Jubo Kalyan Samity, Pabna Pourasava and the Arifpur Boys Club.

About 6,000 patients with eye complications were provided free treatment and medicines in these camps.

A medical team of Sirajganj eye hospital and local eye specialists extended their assistance to make the camp successful.

Indiscriminate cutting of trees for use as firewood in the brickfields is gradually destroying the green vegetation in the district.

According to official sources, there are 57 brickfields in the district, of them, 45 have

legal licences. Despite the government ban the brickfield owners have been burning wood as fuel although a sufficient quantity of coal was available in the depot at Ishardi.

A total of 2619 metric tons of coal worth about Taka 10 crore have been laying unsold at Ishardi for a long time. A large quantity of coal was also stolen from the depot, the sources added.

A meeting between the Deputy Commissioner, Upazila Nirbahi Officer and brickfield owners was held recently in this connection in which the DC urged the owners not to use wood in the brickfield.

Local people urged the authorities to take necessary action against the burning of woods in the brickfields and protect the nature from ecological imbalance.



GAZIPUR: The local people caught two child-lifters with three children near Rice Research Institute, Joydevpur recently and later handed over to Joydevpur police. —Star photo

Tk 20 cr smuggled goods seized, 341 held

JHENIDAH, Feb 16: Bangladesh Rifles seized contraband goods worth about Tk 19.97 crore and arrested 341 smugglers from different areas in bordering districts of Jhenidah, Jessore, Magura, Chuadanga and Meherpur during the last year, reports UNB.

Of the total, Tk 13.58 crore worth of goods were seized by BDR Jessore while goods worth Tk 6.38 crore by BDR Chuadanga.

A total of 4052 cases were filed during the period. Contraband goods worth Tk 13.73 crore were seized while being smuggled into the country and goods worth Tk 6.24 crore were seized while being smuggled out to India.

The goods included saree, cloths, cattle, sugar, salt, crockeries, blade, bicycle, spares, cosmetics, ganja, heroin while those outgoing

includes VCR, VCR, copper brass, kasha, polyester cloth, hilsa fish and old garments.

When contacted Commanding Officer, Chuadanga, Lt Colonel Mustafa Anwar admitted that smuggling was still going on but at a slow rate.

Replying to a question he said poverty, unemployment and variation of price level between India and Bangladesh mainly accounted for smuggling.

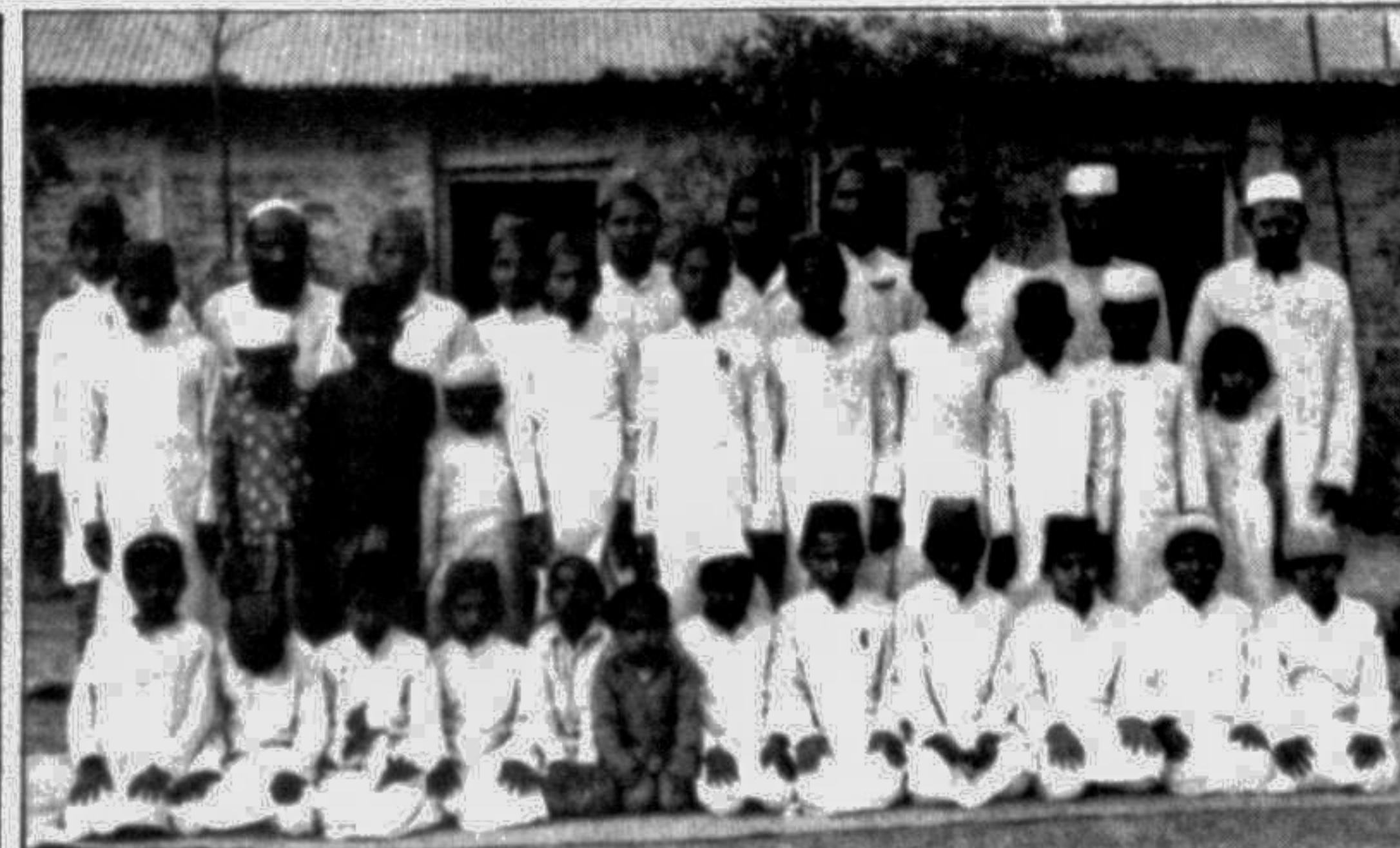
Smuggling could be checked only with full co-operation from the local people, he added.

BSS adds: Social Welfare and Women Affairs Minister Tarique Islam has said the present government had undertaken an ambitious programme to double the food production to meet the increasing demand of the country.

He said, the Canal Digging Programme had been initiated as a positive and production-oriented system for boosting agricultural output, developing pisciculture and draining out of stagnant water.

The Minister was addressing two separate public meeting arranged in connection with inauguration of the Canal Digging Programmes at Keshabpur Upazila of Jessore district and Kotchandpur Upazila of Jhenidah district. Shahidul Islam, MP also spoke on the occasions.

About 4,500 acres of land will be brought under irrigation and consequently 15,000 tons of additional crops will be produced after completion of the re-excavation of the six-kilometer long Khosakhali Canal of Keshabpur and the two-kilometer long Shekher Canal of Kotchandpur.



RANGPUR: An orphanage run by the Al-Amin Trust near local cantonment. There are now 35 orphans who are provided with all sorts of requirements. —Star photo

Erosion of Sugandha engulfs vast area

JHALAKATI, Feb 16: The river Sugandha has engulfed vast area along West Char Dapodia and North Timirkati belt of Nalchiti upazila of the district, reports UNB.

A large number of families have been made homeless by the continued erosion of the river. About hundred acres of land have also been washed away.

The homeless families have moved to Kumarkhali Bazar and its adjoining areas, instead of occupying the vast char land which has emerged on the other side of the river.

The local people urged the authorities to take appropriate steps so that they can settle on the new chars.

The river has also washed away highways and roads, causing transportation problem.

The ferry ghat at Dapodia on Barisal-Patuakhali route has been threatened. Many shops and homesteads have gone into the river. The Dapodia-Kumarkhali road has been damaged near north Timirkati river.

85 pc infants in city under EPI

CHITTAGONG, Feb 16: Eighty-five per cent of the infants in the Chittagong City have so far been brought under expanded Immunization Programme (EPI), reports BSS.

Mayor of Chittagong City Corporation, Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin inaugurated a workshop of EPI and polo as chief guest at Chittagong Club here recently.

Organised by Bangladesh Polio and National Immunization Committee, the inaugural ceremony was presided over by Rtn Abul Hossain. It was addressed, among others by Rtn Iftekerul Alam, Rtn Governor Prof Jalal U Ahmed, Dr Lutfor Rahman Talukdar, Dr Anjumara Islam, Miss Marycornel.

Mayor Nasiruddin underlined the importance of reducing child mortality rate through EPI and urged all non-government and the voluntary organisations to come forward for making the programme a success.

Housewife violated

DINAJPUR, Feb 16: A housewife has allegedly been raped by her factory master in Birampur Upazila on Wednesday, reports UNB.

According to police, Bulbul, wife of Abdul Latif of village Diwar in Birampur Upazila took a job under Mohsin Ali, owner of Ansar Bidi Factory a few days ago.

Mohsin Ali was trying to allure the housewife for illicit connection but she refused. Finding no other way, he brought Bulbul at the residence of another worker Ambia, wife of Latif where she was violated at daggers' point.

A case has been filed with Birampur Court in this connection.

Accomplice of Mukim Gazi arrested

PATUAKHALI, Feb 16: Police has arrested a notorious dacoit 'Quddus' -- the terror of the region from Shakhari Bazar area of Amtali Upazila, reports UNB.

Local sources said, Quddus was a follower of Mukim Gazi, a notorious dacoit already under custody now.

According to a report, Quddus comes from village Bashbunia of Galachipa Upazila in Patuakhali district.

He was wanted by the police on several charges including murder, hijacking and launch dacoity.

People of the area felt relieved over the arrest of Quddus, it is learnt.

Huge CI sheets of relief in godown

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Feb 16: At least 670 bundles of CI sheets have been lying under lock and key in the godown of the Relief and Rehabilitation Department of Rangpur for more than one year.

Due to embargo, it could not be distributed among the distressed although a deluge with full fury swept over the district a few months back leaving huge families in untold sufferings following vast damages of standing crops, houses and cattleheads.

According to information, those quantities of relief tins were sanctioned for the district and reached just before the fall of the autocratic Ershad regime, but before its distribution Ershad was ousted and the new democratic government stopped its distribution putting an embargo and since then the entire stock kept within the four walls of the godowns owned by the Relief Department.

The district administration, made a number of correspondences with the higher authorities to release sealed stock of

CI sheets for distribution in the distressed areas. But the authorities concerned did not yet respond to it.

Under the Universal Primary Education Programme, about 2 lakh and 45 thousand sets of primary books are being distributed at free of cost among students of 702 government and 212 non-government primary schools in the district during the current academic year.

According to information, there are over 3 lakh and 25 thousand students are enrolled, of them about 2 lakh and 40 thousand are regularly attending in the schools.

Work on the construction of 13-kilometre long road under Growth Centre Development Programme began at Mithapukur Upazila recently.

About 125 metric tons of wheat are being spent for the scheme under the supervision of the Local Government Engineering Bureau (LGEB).

The road will link Shatibari, Barabul and Balua Bandar with upazila headquarters.

Ramshagar Lake site deserves improvement

DINAJPUR, Feb 16: Ramshagar, the picturesque artificial lake in Dinajpur which could otherwise become a tourist attraction is now in complete shambles wearing a forlorn and deserted look, reports UNB.

Every day during the winter season countless families come here for picnic and also to enjoy the beauty of nature. But no move has yet been taken to make it extra appealing.

The Forest Department planted some trees in and around the artificial lake and built a rest house.

The Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) took some land on lease near the lake for the construction of a motel and accordingly fund was allocated.

But in September '77 the fund was withdrawn and used for improvement of BPC's motels at Cox's Bazar.

Till now the BPC is paying rent for the above site although no construction has been done.

The water area of Ramshagar lake falls under the Fisheries Department which is promoting pisciculture there.

Prior to independence this was under the Department of Livestock and the officials were exploiting the water resource for duck farming.

Apart from the plantation of trees and construction of some picnic sheds nothing has been done to develop the spot for

tourist resorts. Local people urged the authorities to take initiative for the development of the site into an ideal tourist spot.

Arrest of Maksud's killers demanded

The district unit of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) demanded immediate arrest of the killers of Maksud, president of JCD, Dinajpur Government College Unit.

In a press conference on Friday, the leaders said they would launch movement if the murderers were not brought to book.

The leaders also accused the Chhatra League, college unit, of committing terrorism in the area. They demanded restoration of peace on the college campus.

Syed Jahangir Alam, convener of the district unit, Mukul Chowdhury, joint convener and other leaders addressed the press conference.

Dacoits stormed a house at Birul Upazila and looted valuables worth about Taka one lakh, police said here on Friday.

According to witnesses, a gang of armed dacoits entered the house of Abul, a union parishad member of Khoyeran village at about 12 pm on February 5 and took away valuables including cash and gold ornaments.

A case was filed with the police in this connection.

Proper care needed to raise bamboo output

CHITAPAINAWABGANJ, Feb 16: Bamboo clusters in the district are on the verge of extinction due to indiscriminate felling for domestic use and cash, reports UNB.

Local people said plantation was also meagre compared to the loss resulting from wanton felling of bamboo.

Thousands of bamboos were being cut and sold everyday in the villages of Shibganj, Nachol, Gomostapur, Bholahat and Sadar upazilas of the district.

According to an unofficial estimate, at present there are more than 10,000 bamboo groves in the district. But most of these groves are in poor condition due to lack of proper nursing. Many of them have already been destroyed.

The poverty-stricken villagers not only sell their bamboo but also dig out the bamboo roots and sell them to the brick field owners or potters.

Sometimes, bamboo groves are also destroyed to retain land for house building purposes.

Due to the prevailing scarcity, the price of bamboo has increased several times causing untold sufferings to the poor consumers.

Agriculture experts said, bamboo production can be increased significantly provided proper nursing and scientific methods of cultivation are taken.

At least 20 tender plants can be grown from a cluster instead of 2 or 3 plants per year, they added.

The scarcity of bamboo has also rendered about 75 per cent bamboo artisans unemployed. Due to the exorbitant price of bamboo they can not earn profit from their products.

Local people urged the authorities to take measures for increasing the production of bamboos in the district.

Price of betel nut drops

BARGUNA, Feb 16: Price of betel-nut has registered a sharp fall pushing down the growers of this cash crop to severe economic hardships, reports UNB.

Growers claimed poor yield due to natural calamities and imported varieties contributed to this fall, the lowest in five years.

Ripe betel nuts are now being sold at a rate less than half than that of the corresponding period of last year.

About 30 per cent people of Sadar, Amtali, Banna, Betagi and Patharghata upazilas purchase their food and other commodities by selling betel-nuts from September to December every year.

Rice sold here last year at Tk 10 to 12 per kg according to quality.