

District roundup

KUSHIYA

One underground party member held with pipegun

Jan 31: Police recovered one pipegun and one pipe of a gun from a member of underground party Tuesday night, reports BSS.

On secret information, Daroga Hasan Ali and Asst Daroga Moshir Rahman of Mirpur police raided the house of one Lal Chand and arrested him from Ambaria village. After interrogation, police raided the house of Juj Mandal and recovered one pipegun and a pipe of a gun from his house. However Juj Mandal escaped.

A case has been registered with Mirpur thana.

BRAHMANBARIA

One gets 6 yrs RI under Terrorist Act

Jan 31: A man was sentenced to six years rigorous imprisonment in a case under terrorist act, first time in the district, reports UNB.

Court sources said, Nazmun Ara Sultana, District and Sessions Judge and Tribunal Judge for terrorist act, on January 24 sentenced the accused Milton Miah and fined him Taka 1000 or in default to suffer one year RI more.

According to prosecution story, the accused along with four other accomplices entered the house of Nurul Islam and tried to kidnap his 10 years old school girl on 22 September 1992. But the attempt was, however, foiled.

Later the accused also threatened to throw acid on them.

The Judge, after examining the witnesses and records awarded the punishment amid the crowded court.

AGRI-VARSITY

BAU Bachelors Masters exams suspended

Jan 31: All Bachelors and Masters level theoretical and practical examinations of Agricultural University, Mymensingh Centre, and the Bachelor level theoretical examinations of Patuakhali Krishi College and Hari Md Danesh Krishi College centres have been temporarily suspended, reports UNB.

Director of Public Relations and Publications in a telex message said the decision was taken in an emergency meeting of BAU Syndicate on Saturday. The suspension was announced through a notification issued by the Controller of Examinations of the university.

The suspended examinations were scheduled to be held from January 24 to 31.

New dates of the examinations will be announced in due time, the notification said.

SATKHIRA

Bar assoc executives

Jan 31: Annual general election of Satkhira district bar association was held at bar association hall here on Friday, reports BSS.

Advocate SM Haidar and Advocate Sarwar Ahmed have been elected president and secretary respectively for this year 1993.

The election was conducted by senior Advocate Abu Khaer Mostaq Ahmed and GM Lutfar Rahman.

MYMENSINGH

Agricultural exhibition concludes

Jan 31: A four-day long agricultural exhibition organised by Crop Science Society of Bangladesh (CSSB) at Bangladesh Agricultural University campus was concluded on Thursday, reports BSS.

A total of 22 organisations participated in the exhibition with their exhibits of agrotechnologies relating to crop production. The aim of the exhibition was to accelerate the process of technology transfer.

DINAJPUR

Chilly weather still prevails

Jan 31: Chilly weather with shivering cold wave is prevailing in the district since the last few days which claimed 18 lives so far including one minor boy, reports UNB.

The temperature record here is between 4 and 6 degree Celsius during the last one week.

The normal life in the district is disrupted due to severe cold. Without any warm clothes and blankets the poor people are suffering much.

Local people urged to the Government to supply warm clothes and blankets to the poor and destitutes immediately to avoid further deaths.

MADARIPUR

Eye camp held

Jan 31: A ten-day eye camp was held at Baharakandi primary school of Ghatmaji union under Madaripur Sadar thana recently, reports BSS.

The eye camp sponsored by Bangladesh Lions Foundation and Baharakandi Hakim Miah Smriti Sangha operated upon 75 cataract patients and treated about 1,000 farmers.

On the concluding day, the Deputy Commissioner, Madaripur Abdus Sattar Miah distributed classes and medicines among the patients, it was presided over by Ershad Ali Talukdar.

COMILLA

Contraband goods worth Tk 7 lakh seized

Jan 31: Bangladesh Rifles recovered contrabands worth about Taka 7 lakh from an engine boat in Ghara Bhanga canal of Nabinagar thana, officials said here on Saturday, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip, BDR men raided the engine boat and recovered the smuggled Indian goods on January 18.

The goods included sarees, synthetic cloth, wine, yarn cushion covers and DDT powder. The contrabands were handed over to the Akshara Customs Department.

Another report said acting on a tip, police nabbed two people from Kharampur bridge and recovered 32 pieces of Indian sarees worth about Taka 6,000 from their possession on January 22.

The arrested are Babul Mia and Abul Kalam. The goods were handed over to the local customs department.

MAGURA

Young wife commits suicide

Jan 31: Two people including a young housewife allegedly committed suicide by taking poison in Sadar thana, police said on Saturday, reports UNB.

Local people said Hashem Ali (65) of Majhail village allegedly killed himself after his son Rafiqul Islam beat him up following a family feud Thursday.

Saleha Khatun (22) wife of Obaidur Rahman of Jakrariak village allegedly committed suicide following a quarrel with her family members Wednesday.

Separate cases were filed with the local police.

RANGPUR

17 BCL, JCD, Chhatra Union activists acquitted

Jan 31: All 17 activists of Chhatra League, Awami League, JCD and Chhatra Union, accused in the murder case of a Jamaat leader, were acquitted in a judgement delivered here Thursday, reports UNB.

Additional District and Session Judge Abdur Rahman Patwari found the accused not guilty after examining records and witnesses of the case.

Jamaat district Amir Ataur Rahman Hamidi was killed by some miscreants at Lalbagh area of the town on November 12, 1988.



SYLHET: Dilapidated condition of a bridge on the Sylhet-Salutikor road which needs immediate reconstruction.

— Star Photo

Over 30,000 coastal inhabitants lead century-old life

BIHOLA, Jan 31: Lack of basic amenities and access to healthcare and family planning facilities and education have stymied the socio-economic life of most of the coastal islands, reports UNB.

More than 30,000 inhabitants led a wretched existence in Dhal Char, Char Kukrimukri, Char Motahar and Char Stephen, situated in the confluence of the mighty river Meghna and the Bay of Bengal.

Most residents, rendered homeless by the river erosion, migrated to the island from various parts of the district with the hope of better days that remain a far cry.

The islanders live in a precarious healthcare situation. There is no medical centre or pharmacy, no physician or compounder in some of the islands.

"If one is sick or falls victim to a serious incident one has to accept it as the wrath of God," said Kalimuddin, 40, at Char Kukrimukri. Compared to general situation in other areas, the infants are extremely vulnerable to disease and death.

Almost 90 per cent of people depend on old method of treatment like kobiraj, homeopath, religious leaders and quacks due to the absence of medicare facilities and family planning programmes.

The problem of communication and the very limited transportation facilities with the main land are one of the main reasons for the precarious situation in the islands.

Due to shortage of housing units, people live in excessive densities and without basic amenities like pure drinking water, sewerage and drainage facilities. There is no electricity in any of the islands except Dhal Char where people depend on a privately owned generator.

There are only 25 tubewells in Dhal Char, about 20 in Char Kukrimukri and 10 in Char Motahar. About 10 per cent of households get their drinking water from ponds, even waters from ditches and potholes are used by squatters for washing utensils.

About 90 per cent of the people have no latrines. They use the bushes surrounding their houses to respond to a call of nature. All these make the environment unhygienic and deplorable.

There is neither any government office, not even an administrative unit except the forest department, nor any offices of voluntary organisations to carry out welfare activities.

There is no construction in the islands except one cyclone shelter in Char Motahar, one in Dhal Char and another one in Char Kukrimukri to protect the people from natural disaster. There are only 20 radio sets essential for water forecast report, in Char Motahar about 30, in Dhal Char and 25 in Char Kukrimukri.

"The government has done nothing for the development of the island, not even for cyclone preparedness," said Bidhutbhusan Babul, Chairman of Char Kukrimukri union comprising three islets — Char Kukrimukri, Tal Char and Char Patla.

The 200-year-old island with its 10,000 population has only one two-storey dilapidated cyclone shelter built in 1970.

The roots of the trees, held together the deep soil below to protect it from erosion, help slow down the pace of cyclone and tidal bore which is a permanent threat to the islands.

A team of environmental scientists who recently visited the islands informed that the forest in Dhal Char is subjected to large-scale pest attack. But no step was taken to protect them.

"In Dhal Char, we found many Kewra plants affected by pests which might spread over the whole forest and other islands, if no measure is taken immediately," said Prof Shahadat Ali, who led the team comprising environment experts from various national, international and government organisations including Prof. L M Cook of Manchester University.

There are about 500 ponds in these islands but most of them are derelict. Local fishermen say that huge quantity of shrimps can be produced in the ponds if these are re-excavated and embankments are constructed to save the land from salinity.

Local people urged the authorities to set up schools and banks in those areas to educate local people and facilitate trade and commerce.

They collect hundred maunds of fishes everyday from the sea, but cannot preserve them due to absence of cold storage and ice factory. Most of them are also suffering from shortage of fund, boat, net and other necessary accessories to catch fishes.

Spread over several miles the islands are rich with trees like Kewra and Chhatiya which form an unbroken canopy. There are vast plantations in the islands by the Department of Forest.

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250 bundles CI sheet for fire victims

MUNSHIGANJ, Jan 31: The government has sanctioned 250 bundles of CI sheet and 10 metric tons of rice for reconstruction of gutted shops and rehabilitation of those affected by a devastating fire on January 24 at Tongbari bazar, reports UNB.

Food Minister M Shamsul Islam Khan said this at a gathering of affected shopowners and traders at Tongbari bazar here today (Wednesday).

Some 210 shops and business establishments including the local branch of Krishi Bank and property worth about Tk 12 crore were also gutted by the fire.

The Minister had earlier distributed Taka 20,000 among the poor victims while visiting the Tongbari bazar soon after the fire broke out on January 24.

Considering this market as economically important, Khan emphasised the need for resuming its normal operation. The government has taken necessary steps for speedy rehabilitation of the victims and reconstruction of the business establishments, he said.

The Minister urged the local administration and public representatives to prepare a list of poor victims on the priority basis and to ensure the distribution of government allocation accordingly.

Among others Deputy Commissioner, Civil Surgeon, senior police officials and concerned officials of Munshiganj district and local public representatives were present on the occasion.

Later, the Minister also addressed a public meeting at Munshiganj.

Storm damages crops on 200 acres of land

SIRAJGONJ, Jan 31: Storm that lashed Chalanbeel areas in Tarash thana damaged 250 houses and standing crops on 200 acres of land, reports UNB.

According to witnesses, the severe storm hit the area on the midnight of January 18 creating panic among the people. The storm ended within a few minutes and left a trail of devastation injuring 10 people seriously.

At least one hundred domestic animals died in the incident and thousands of trees were uprooted.

The affected shelterless people have been passing their days in extreme hardship. No relief materials have been sent to them.

They urged the authorities to send relief materials to them without further delay and grant money for their early rehabilitation.

Another report says: Election Commissioner Justice Syed Mesbahuddin Friday called for all out efforts to make the coming municipal elections free and fair.

He was addressing the local elite, officials and candidates of Sirajgonj and Shajadpur municipalities at the local Bhasani auditorium this afternoon.

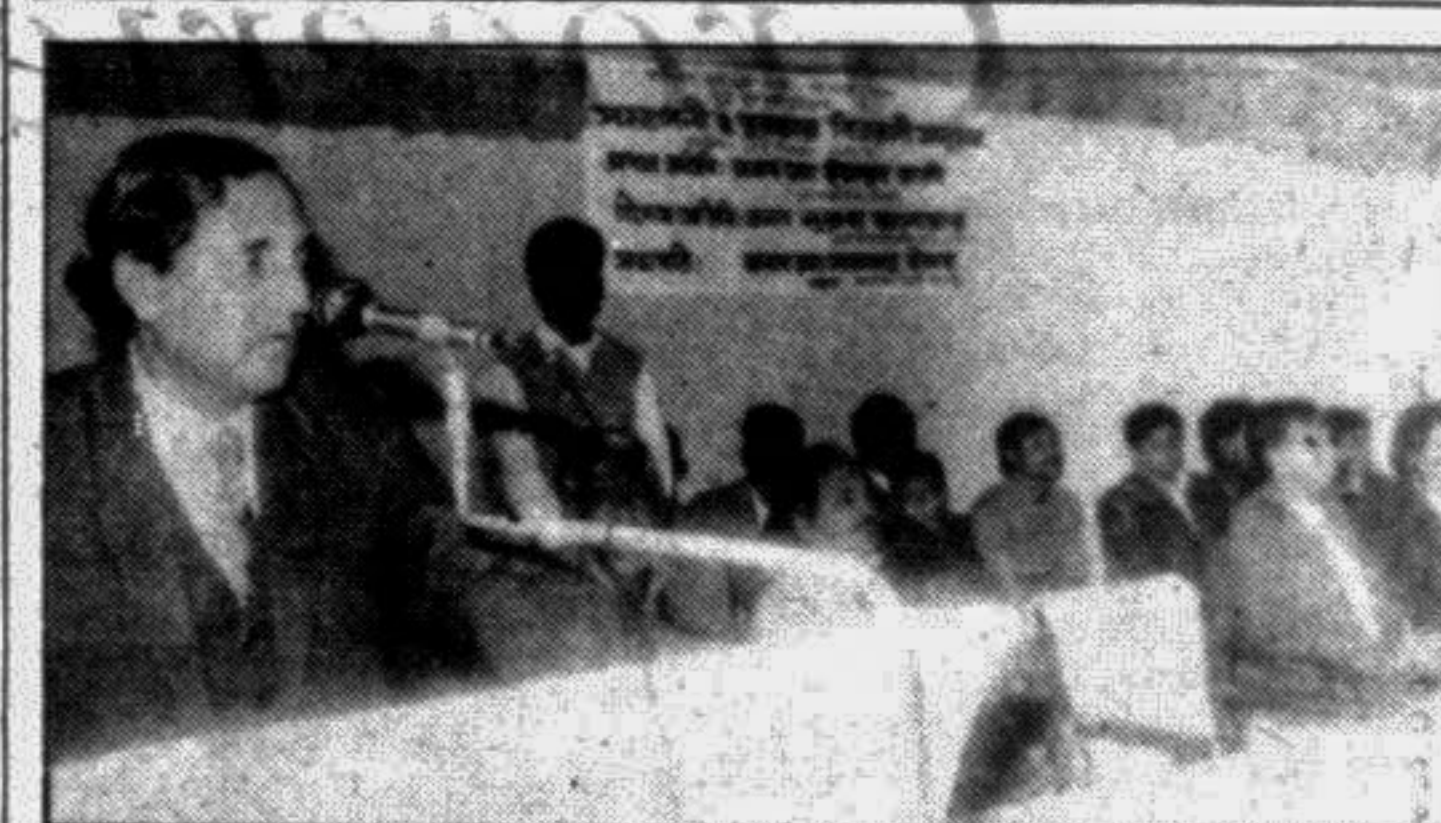
The Election Commissioner said indiscipline during the elections will not be allowed. Any one found guilty of casting false vote will be liable to six months in prison and fine of Taka 500, he reminded.

Another report adds: An young man was caught red handed by villagers as he tried to violate a minor girl in Kaziur thana Tuesday night.

Local people said Choyan Islam, son of the Thana Union Awami League Secretary, forcibly entered the house of day-labourer Alauddin of Meghal village and allegedly violated his daughter Rina (12). Alauddin was not present during the incident.

On hearing hue and cry, neighbours gheraoed the house and caught Choyan red handed.

Choyan, said to be an activist of Bangladesh Chhatra League (M-I) was later handed over to the police.



CHANDPUR: Md. Yakub Ali, Deputy Commissioner, Chandpur addressing the members of Matlab Surjamukhi Kanchi Kancher Mela recently.

— Star Photo

Indian reaction echoes voice of a majority party: Saifur

HABIGANJ, Jan 31: Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman said today that for augmenting national development, resolving outstanding problems and further consolidating democratic system an unfettered national unity and consensus is of paramount importance, reports BSS.

Unfortunately, the defeated party in the last parliament election resorted to foiling the process of development in the name of frequent hartals, strikes, chaos and confusion on trifling matters, not concerned with national interest, he said.

Saifur Rahman was critical of the major opposition party in parliament for their stand on the issue of Babri Mosque, razed to the ground by the Indian Hindu zealots. He said following the resolution taken in the Bangladesh parliament the reaction expressed by the Indian authority has echoed the voice of the major opposition party in parliament.

The resolution in parliament on Babri Mosque issue is nothing but the reiteration of Bangladesh's concern and reminding to the pledge made by Indian Prime Minister for rebuilding the razed mosque to its original site, he added.

He said that the Bangladesh parliament would take decisions on matters its people are concerned, national interests are involved and would never depend on any others reaction and criticism.

Bangladesh enjoys complete communal harmony as per the articles of its Constitution and Islam embodies the principle of tolerance and forbearance to all irrespective of religions or castes, he observed.

The Finance Minister was addressing a student rally in court building premises. Organised by Jatjyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) unit of Habiganj district, the meeting was addressed by special assistant to Prime Minister Abu Haris Chowdhury, BNP central committee member Advocate Atiqullah, BNP Habiganj district President Advocate Afaj Afgan Chowdhury, local Jubodai President Advocate Shamsuddin Chowdhury, JCD central leader Mosarraf Ahmed Thakur, JCD local district unit President G K Gaus and local BNP leader Dewan Masood Chowdhury.

Child killed under wheels of speeding bus

HABIGANJ, Jan 31: A child was killed on the spot under the wheels of a speeding bus on Friday at Taliapara in Madhabpur thana on Dhaka-Sylhet highway, reports UNB.

The dead was identified as Liton (7) of Surma village. Police sources said Liton while crossing the road was killed by the Comilla bound bus from Sylhet, police seized the bus.

The body was sent to morgue for autopsy and a case has been filed with the local thana.

Another message adds: The body of a 24-day old child was exhumed Thursday after a week of his burial at Jatrapasa village in Baniachar thana.

The child was allegedly killed by his father, Jitu Mia. Tahera Begum, divorced wife of Jitu Mia, filed a case in which she complained that her husband killed the child.

On the basis of the complaint, police exhumed the body and sent it to the Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

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Mosquito menace increasing alarmingly in Barguna

BARGUNA, Jan 31: Mosquito menace has increased alarmingly throughout the district causing great inconvenience to the dwellers, reports UNB.

In many places of the district, especially in Amtali, Bamna, Betagi, Patharghata and Sadar thanas, a large number of people have been attacked by malaria due to mosquito biting.

Just after sunset people cannot work in their respective areas due to mosquito bite. Students are the worst sufferers.

Drains, ditches, canals, bushes, derelict ponds covered with water hyacinths and 'dholekalmi' fences are the breeding grounds of mosquitoes.

Mosquito-killer aerosol is sold at a very high price. Mosquito coils have become ineffective due to its low quality and these are also harmful to public health. The price of mosquito nets has also gone up in recent days.

Steps like aerial and ground spray, destruction of water by acinths and bushes have become necessary to combat the menace.

Another report adds Chandkhali bazar, one of the biggest business centres of the district, has long been facing problems due to lack of adequate accommodation, supply of drinking water and drainage system.

During the last two years, the bazar was not expanded to cope with the growing needs of the buyers and sellers creating stalemate in business transaction. The roads inside the market are not spacious enough to facilitate easy movement of goods.

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Farmers demand regular power supply

MANIKGONJ, Jan 31: The farmers demanded immediate steps to ensure regular power supply for better irrigation in Kasado, Esamoti, Bharobouli and Sahili Irri-Boro projects in Shivalaya thana of the district, reports UNB.

They said 4000 acres of land have been brought under irrigation network to cultivate high yielding variety of irri-oro in the area under mechanised system.

So far irrigation work was going on by diesel power pumps. But with the sudden price-hike of diesel the irrigation work is facing setback as cost of production has increased causing great hardship to the farmers.

The farmers urged the concerned authorities to extend power supply facilities to the projects so that the cost of production will come down to a great extent.

The local people also said extension of electricity to the area will facilitate establishment of rice, flour and saw mills and engineering workshops.

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Another report adds Property worth about Taka six lakh was gutted in 10 fire incidents during the last three weeks in the district.

Most of the fire originated from the kitchens.

The ill equipped lone fire station of Manikganj cannot cope with the increasing number of fire incidents. Moreover, the fire men cannot reach the spot timely due to pitiable condition of kutcha road in the district.



Jute Minister A S M Hannan Shah speaking at the inaugural function of Modhu Mela at Kasabpur of Jessore in observance of the 170th birth anniversary of poet Michael Modhusudan Dutta on January 25.

— PID Photo