

District roundup

MUNSHIGANJ

"Govt firm to remove illiteracy from society"

Nov 6: Commerce Minister M Shamsul Islam Thursday underscored the need for implementing the 'food for education' programme in order to eradicate illiteracy from society, reports BSS.

He said, the present government has attached top priority on education sector to free the nation from curse of illiteracy.

The minister was addressing as the chief guest at a scholarship giving ceremony organised by the ex-students association of *Bazrojoginee J K High School* under Munshiganj district here.

The minister said the present government was determined to spread the light of education in the remotest corners of the country through proper implementation of compulsory primary education, 'education for all' and 'food for education' programmes.

Islam called upon the students to establish themselves as the worthy citizens through acquiring proper knowledge for the sake of the development of the country and people.

The minister also urged the ex-students and the guardians to play their due roles to establish a congenial atmosphere in this institution to uphold its hundred years old glory and image.

NATORE

662 cases filed in nine months

Nov 6: At least 662 crimes including 25 murder cases have been recorded in the first nine months of the current year in the district, says UNB.

According to official sources, five dacoities, eight highway robberies, 68 clashes and 132 thefts and other cases were recorded from January to September.

During the same period at least 150 people committed suicide in different thanas of the district. Poverty, women repression, family feud and failure in love were said to be main reasons behind the suicide.

Local leaders said, crimes are on rise in the district due to deteriorating law and order situation. The peace-loving people have urged the concerned authorities to take drastic action against the anti-social elements.

BARGUNA

Spread of diseases due to lack of latrines

Nov 6: A large number of people in Barguna and Patuakhali districts do not use sanitary latrines due to their ignorance about hygiene, reports UNB.

A survey report made by UNICEF revealed that about 50 per cent of the diseases are caused due to lack of sanitation facilities. Almost all the rural people are defecating in the nearby bushes, ponds, canals, beels, roadsides and open fields polluting the environment.

Diseases like typhoid, paratyphoid, cholera and dysentery are also spreading fast in the areas for lack of drinking water and use of adulterated food-stuffs.

Infants are the worst sufferers of the diseases. Children are often attacked by diarrhoea and intestinal diseases due to lack of hygienic sense of mothers. The report revealed that 40 per cent of the sufferers are infants upto the age of five years due to unhygienic habits followed by the mothers while cooking food and serving the foodstuff.

The survey report also revealed that only seven per cent people are using sanitary latrines and the rest cannot afford to use the same due to financial constraints.

JAMALPUR

BRCS gives medicines to flood affected victims

Nov 6: Four medical teams of the Bangladesh Red-Crescent Society (BRCS) has been giving treatments and distributing medicines in flood affected areas in the district, reports BSS.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Society is giving financial and medicare aid in the programme.

Each team consists of one medical officer, one medical assistant two Jubo red Crescents and volunteer.

District unit Red Crescent Society sources said that 20 thousand population were brought under the programme so far.

SIRAJGANJ

Diarrhoea claims another 8 lives

Nov 6: Diarrhoea claimed eight lives in four thana of the district during the last 48 hours, unofficial sources said, reports UNB.

Official count, however, but the death figure to three only.

They are, Al Amin (10), of Mahanpur village in Raiganj thana, Monowara (31) of Krishna Govindapur and Anowara (8) of Uttar Pikepara village in Kazipur thana.

With this, the death tolls rose to 88 and 5,971 others were attacked by the disease in the last 33 days. Unofficial sources said the death toll to 130.

Deputy Civil Surgeon Dr Sukur Ahmed told UNB today that the overall diarrhoea situation in the district is improving and is expected to come under control within a week.

A total of 127 medical teams are working round the clock in the affected areas. And 15 temporary clinics were also opened in the areas to combat the disease, officials added.

SHERPUR

Meeting of law, order committee

Nov 6: A meeting of the law and order committee was held at Sherpur DC hall room recently, says BSS.

The meeting was presided over by Ataur Rahman Majumder, DC, Sherpur. It was addressed among others by Mahiuddin Siddiki, ADM, Sherpur Abdul Waidud, SP, Sherpur Alhaz Habibur Rahman, president, BNP district unit, Abdur Razzaque, Chairman, Sherpur Pourashava, Mazibur Rahman, TNO, Sherpur Sadar, Amjad Hossain, president Sherpur Chamber of Commerce Advocate Abdus Samad, president Bar Association, Sherpur, Advocate Abdul Kader and Abu Bakar, Editor weekly Daskahania.

Another BSS report says: A discussion meeting organised by the Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Juba Dal, Sherpur district unit was held at the local BNP office recently.

Hatam Ali, president of district Jatiyatabadi Juba Dal presided over the meeting.

It was addressed, among others, by Abdur Razzak Khan-dakar, Mazibur Rahman, AT M Amir Hossain, Parvez Roup Pingku and Muklesur Rahman Jiban.

COX'S BAZAR

Become worthy citizens of nation: Oli

Nov 6: Communications Minister Oli Ahmad Thursday said the democratic government is pledge-bound to ensure peaceful and congenial atmosphere in all educational institutions of the country, reports BSS.

He was addressing the students and teachers of Chakaria Degree College here.

Presided over by Principal of the college Mokteur Ahmad Chowdhury, the meeting was also addressed by Syed Wahidul Alam PM, Redwan Ahmad MP, and Enamul Haq Marzooq MP.

Oli Ahmad called upon the student community to become worthy citizens of the country for shouldering the future leadership of the nation.

Later, the minister also addressed the teachers and students of Kishalaya, Adarsha Shiksha Niketan at Khutakhali.

KUSHITIA

Removal of corrupt sugar mills' officials demanded

Nov 6: Sugarcane growers of the district staged a demonstration in front of the Kushitia Sugar Mills on Tuesday protesting alleged corruptions of some officials of the mills and demanded their immediate removal, says UNB.

The organisers alleged that corrupt and dishonest officials were causing financial losses to growers and demanded their immediate removal.

The speakers at a rally held later in the mill premises, called upon the authorities to supply fertilizer, pesticide at market rates, molasses as fodder for cattleheads.

Presided over by Zahurul Islam Btmol, the rally was attended among others by former MP Abdul Wahab, Israil Hossain Apu, Likat Ali, Abdul Kuddus and Fazle Bari alias Kulu Biswas.



SYLHET: British HC to Bangladesh Peter Fowler recently visited the central office of an NGO here and exchanged views with the staff of the organisation. — Star photo

Gas turbine plant running without gas supply

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Nov 6: The 71-megawatt gas turbine of Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) at Baghabari in Shahzadpur thana incurs loss amounting to crores of taka every year due to use of oil as fuel in absence of gas. Higher cost of production leads to such loss of the government, said a source.

It is gathered that the 71-megawatt gas turbine was set up on 25 acres of land at a cost of Taka 200 crore in 1991 with 40 per cent financial assistance from the French Government.

The Eastern Mercantile Company of France supervised the construction work with 12 manpower including two engineers and 10 employees who are paid Taka three lakh every month as service charges. The 17 trained engineers of Bangladesh are not considered fit for the work. Instead, the French technicians are engaged in supervising the work for next one year. The Baghabari gas turbine plant is one of the five such projects of the country which supply electricity in the national grid lines. The project can produce 80 megawatt of electricity in place of 71-megawatt.

At present oil in place of gas is used as the fuel as there is no gas lines in the northern zone of the country. Every hour

25,000 litres of oil is required for the project. However, if gas is supplied, production cost per unit of electricity will be only eighty paisa. Due to heavy cost of production, the gas turbine is operated only at the peak load hours. But the gas connection in the project can ensure more production of electricity for the national grids at a lower cost.

The experts have urged upon the authorities concerned to extend gas supply network at Baghabari turbine to run the project in full swing to boost power supply of the country.

9 WDB staff suspended

Another report says: Nine officers of Sirajganj and Ullapara Divisions of Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) have been suspended temporarily for alleged misappropriation of fund amounting to Taka 2.75 crore. The suspended officers are: Bishnu Pada Halder, Executive Engineer of Sirajganj and Ullapara, Abdus Salam Chowdhury SDE-1, K M Fazul Karim SDE-3, Zamir Uddin, SDE-Ullapara, Abdul Mannan Matbar, Section Officer 1/3, Mainul Haq, Section Officer 1/2, Abdul Bari, Section Officer 3/2, Shah Jaihal Abedin, Section Officer 3/3 and Ansar Ali, Section Officer of

Ullapara. It is gathered from the official sources that the concerned officers in collaboration with some contractors and vested interests have misappropriated government fund amounting to Taka 2.75 crore by illegal extension of works and submitting false bills and vouchers.

It is reported that Taka 90 lakh was spent for Belkuchi protection project without period approval of the authority. The quality of work is said to be not satisfactory and huge amount of money was grabbed in disguise of extended works through false bills and vouchers.

In Kazipur thana, schedule of work was not maintained. Massive irregularities were also reported in the works of Sirajganj town protection embankment. Alleged false bills and vouchers were also submitted in repairing works of abandoned Ullapara projects of WDB.

Besides, extension work of different projects and work orders to some selected contractors without tender notices lead to misappropriation of fund.

An organised group is said to be involved in this type of malpractice which needs early inquiry of the higher authority.

Calico Mills workers gherao Pabna DC

PABNA, Nov 6: Some 1,000 workers of the closed Calico Cotton Mills gheraoed the Deputy Commissioner's office today (Wednesday) demanding its immediate reopening, reports UNB.

The workers also submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner containing their demands and held a rally in front of the office.

The rally was addressed by CBA president Khandoker Abul Bashar and workers' leaders Abdullah Al-Masud and Amjad Hossain.

The authorities closed down the mills in January last following staggering loss of the mills.

Addressing the rally workers' leader said the authorities closed the mills leaving hundreds of workers jobless and of them Keramat Ali, 38, and Habibur Rahman, 32, had died last month due to lack of treatment.

Portraying the misery of the workers the leaders said another worker Jubatri recently committed suicide as he failed to face the menace of poverty.

They called upon the authorities to immediately reopen the mills considering the wretched condition of the workers.

A slap costs an innocent life

SIRAJGANJ, Nov 6: An innocent man has succumbed to his injuries at Sirajganj General Hospital on Wednesday following an attack by a group of mastans, police said Friday, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Abdur Rahman (35) of Gonerhati village in Sadar thana of the district.

Witnesses said two people of Gonerhati village hired a rickshaw from the town to reach their village on Sunday. But on the way, one of the passengers, named Sekander (45), slapped the rickshaw puller following a dispute over fare.

At this, the rickshaw puller returned to his village Junpur and blocked the road near Junpur embankment with a group of young men to take the revenge on the people of Gonerhati village on the same day.

The angry young men stopped Abdur Rahman of the village, who knew nothing about the incident, while he was returning from the town.

They allegedly beat him with iron rods, sticks and other lethal weapons simply on the ground that he hailed from Gonerhati.

Rahman was seriously injured in the attack and was admitted to the Sirajganj General Hospital where he died Wednesday morning.

A case was filed with Sadar thana accusing seven people. None was, however, arrested.

Ratan now young lady

PABNA, Nov 6: Whether it's fortunate or not, Ratan is now a young lady! Once a father of two daughters Ratan of Kumarpura village in Chatmohar thana, became a woman after undergoing an operation to cure his hormone disorder on Monday.

Hormone disorder has reportedly caused Ratan's masculinity to change into a fully endowed woman.

Faridul Islam Ratan, 28, a day labourer of the village, had been suffering from a hormonal disorder for the last six months, during which period his body was undergoing some radical changes.

According to doctors, Ratan was suffering from a shortage of the male testosterone hormone and presence of excessive female oestrogen hormone which caused the gender change.

Dr Golam Mahub, a surgeon of Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) operated upon Ratan at the RMCH on Monday, turning him into a young lady.

Ratan, married to Nasima Khatun, 21, for 12 years, has two daughters — one seven year and the other two year old.

While talking to UNB, Dr Abdul Momin, Assistant Surgeon of Pabna Sadar Hospital, informed that there are both male testosterone and female oestrogen hormones in the human body. But the quantity of testosterone in man's body is generally much more than the oestrogen hormone.

When testosterone decreases and oestrogen hormone increases in a man's body, then the sex changes itself automatically, which happened in Ratan's case, he added.

A similar case occurred in Rajshahi University in 1982 when Abdus Samad, a student of the university, became a woman due to hormone problem. She later got married to one of his friends.

Country on the verge of bankruptcy, says Menon

JHENIDAH, Nov 6: Workers' Party leader Rashed Khan Menon MP today alleged the country was on the verge of bankruptcy as the BNP government was running it with the 'recipe' of the World Bank and the IMF to appease the donors, reports UNB.

The Awami League and the Jatiya Party were also following the suit in competition with each other to please the donors, he said addressing a rally as chief guest at the Jhenidah Wazir Ali High School ground.

Referring to the situation in the jute industry, he said it was facing ruination. Other industries are also on the shambles due to lack of proper steps from the government. Retrenchment is being carried out in the jute industry, accentuating the unemployment problem in the country.

Criticising the government for introducing the Anti-Terrorism Act, he said the BNP had betrayed with the joint

declaration of three alliances. Instead of scrapping all the black laws, the BNP government has introduced a new one, he added.

"Black money, black law and terrorism are the pillars now supporting the BNP government," the left-wing lawmaker told the gathering. "Under the umbrella of administrative machinery, the BNP government is patronising terrorism."

Menon alleged, fundamentalist Jamaat-Shibir were practising terrorism and tendon-cutting politics in the country and the government was supporting them.

Speaking on the programmes of his party, Menon demanded withdrawal of all 'false' cases against Workers' Party activists and immediate halt to harassment of them.

"We are trying to change the structure of government under the slogan of save jute, save industry, save farmers and save the country."

Smuggling, use of Indian motor cycles unrestricted

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, Nov 6: Nearly fifty smuggled Indian motor cycles are being used openly at local town causing no concern to any quarters for sometime.

According to informed sources, a good number of Indian motor cycles including Vespa-Bajaj, being used and owned by the workers of some political parties and musclemen of the town.

The users of these motor cycles have no genuine papers in favour of their ownership.

Detailed information received from different circles indicate that out of two Vespa-Bajaj one bearing number Dh-Met-A-02-0663 and the other one without number are allegedly smuggled into Bangladesh from across the border.

It is also alleged that Honda 100-CDI Registration no. Dh-Met-02-0462, one Yamaha 100, Registration no. Dh-Cha-02-3431, another two having Registration no. Dh-Met-A-04-00924, and a Kawasaki with Registration no. Dh-Met-A-06-78081 are among those reportedly smuggled from India and have no valid paper.

The sources, told that these owners have collected false Blue Book and fake Registration numbers for eycwash to use the motor cycles. It can be easily verified with the records of RTA, if any initiative is taken.

It is also alleged that recently a Vespa T-50 smuggled from India was caught by Kotwali police. But later, it was released for reasons only known to them. It is also reported that the business of the person who was caught is smuggling of Indian Vespa and sale through a new device of false paper and transfer.

Another source told that an organised gang is actively engaged in this trafficking since long under patronage and blessings of the police and BDR. The borders of Siharsha thana and that of Moheshpur thana in greater Jessore remain busy for this transaction, it is alleged.

One gang rapped

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Nov 6: One, Farida Parvin (20), daughter of Noor Muhammad of village Ramnagar under Kaliganj PS of the district was allegedly gang rapped by some miscreants recently.

It is reported that Amir Ali Sana, Saped Sana and Ranjan Sana of the same village called out Farida from her house and took her in a near by paddy field. The miscreants gang rapped her forcibly. After hearing her shouts, her mother went to the spot and rescued her. A case was lodged with Kaliganj PS.

Illegal extraction of trees from Sundarbans going on unabated

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Nov 6: Large-scale illegal extraction of different sizes of trees and *golpata* from different areas of the Sundarbans are going on unabated, it is reported.

According to sources, some organised gangs in collaboration with some dishonest forest officials are stealing the wood, *golpata* and other forest resources abundantly.

The illegal cutting and collection of forest resources is going on mainly in Sutarkhali, Gurbari, Jorshing, Kharbari, Khasitana under Baniakhali, Kalabogi, Kasirabad forest ranges.

The unauthorised cutters sail their boats with the booty through river Sibsha without any challenges.

Some local people informed this correspondent that the unauthorised wood cutters and carriers have 'give and take' contracts with some forest officials for which the illegal persons do not care to carry on

their trade even at day time. Few local people complained that the forest officials harass and lodge cases against them when they go to collect dried branches of trees. They informed that the forest officials do not say anything to the owners of hundreds of boats who are carrying illegal woods and *golpatas* from the Sundarbans for the reasons not known to them.

This correspondent tried to contact the Divisional Forest Officer several times to comment on the illegal extraction of trees from the Sundarbans but failed.

One of the forest officials who did not want to be identified told this correspondent that some high officials issue passes for collection of trees.

The official said that the sub-ordinates simply carryout the instructions of the higher officials otherwise they can lose their jobs, or might be transferred to other places.

Tk 1.21 cr post-flood plan taken up in B'baria

BRAHMANBARIA, Nov 6: A post-flood Agriculture Rehabilitation Programme has been taken up at a cost of Taka 1.21 crore in Brahmanbaria, an official handout said, reports BSS.

State Minister for Relief, Harun-Al-Rashid inaugurated the programme by distributing fertilizer and seeds among flood affected farmers at a simple ceremony held at Norsingsar community hall here today.

Under the programme, 1177 metric tons of fertilizer, 1614 metric tons of seeds of wheat, 47 metric tons of boro, 30 metric tons of pulse, eleven metric tons of aman, 4.5 metric tons of mustard and 1.5 metric tons of maize will be distributed among the farmers of the district.

The State Minister also inaugurated two newly con-



COMILLA: A child is reciting a self composed poem at the 'Sabbir Shikha Shahitya Sammelan' held here on October 29. — Star photo