

Women trafficking intensifies in Jessore border areas

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, Dec 28: Women trafficking in border areas of Jessore district has resurfaced with new intensity recently.

According to information, these women are being collected in numbers and handed over to agents in India through different points of the border by an organised gang.

These gang members working all over the country convince mostly distressed women and girls of poorer families for better life abroad. In exchange, poor father or other family members are given handsome amount of money.

Most of the parents or guardians are promised for further amount of money which they never received. But the poor family members continue their hope against hope.

These traffickers take these girls and women to their gang lords who sell them to their contacts on the other side of the border. Once in their hand, the contacts or the so called agents in India sell these girls and women to a number of companies who dissect upon them to take out eyes, kidneys,

blood and other inexpensive body parts which are later preserved and sold.

Such trafficking is carried out almost everyday through Jessore border as well as other border areas.

A group of 95 women and girls were recently nabbed by police at Jhinkergacha. All of those women and girls were collected from Dhaka Narayanganj, Faridpur and Barisal. It is learnt. Another similar group of women and girls were recently recovered by police from border areas of Chougacha and Sarsha of the district while they were being taken to border points for smuggling out to India.

It is reported that there are many such agencies working in Calcutta, Bararat, Bararat of West Bengal in India exclusively for this trafficking purposes.

Indian national arrested

BDR personnel arrested one Indian national with one Indian Jersey cow from border area of Sharsa thana in the district recently.

It is learnt, BDR men ar-

rested Ananda Bugchi and seized his cow while he was entering into Bangladesh border.

Commanding Officer, BDR, Jessore, Lt Col Nayeem told The Daily Star that Ananda Bagchi has been forwarded to local thana and a case has been filed against him.

His cow, worth Taka 30,000 has been handed over to customs, Jessore, he added.

BSF, BDR routine flag meeting

A flag meeting between Commanding Officer 22 Rifles Battalion, BDR, Jessore, and Commandant 92 Battalion, BSF, West Bengal was held at Benapole recently.

According to source, BDR side was represented by Commanding Officer, BDR, Jessore, Lt. Col Nayeem while BSF side was represented by Commandant, 92 Battalion BSF, West Bengal Mohan. Matter discussed in the meeting included transport of criminals and checking of smuggling more effectively across the border. It was a routine conference, the source added.

Notes from Sirajgonj

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Dec 28: A meeting of Rajshahi Divisional Development Forum was held at the local railway colony premises with district unit President Shah Anwar Hossain in the chair.

Among others Rashidul Hasan, T M Abdul Hamid and Abu Sama spoke on the occasion.

The speakers demanded early implementation of multi-purpose Jamuna bridge project, construction of barrages at Sirajganj and Sarikandi to arrest continuous erosion of Jamuna and protection against desertification caused by the adverse affect of Farakka barrage.

Handball training course held

A fortnight-long handball training course was inaugurated at the Kantanagar High School premises in Kazipur thana under the auspices of Sirajganj District Sports Association.

The inaugural ceremony was addressed by District Sports Officer Yasin Ali. A total of 25 trainees from nine thanas of the district are taking part in the course.

400 mt wheat for test relief work

The Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation have sanctioned 400 metric tons of wheat in Sirajganj district under Test Relief programme.

Out of the local, 45 mts of wheat have been sanctioned for Sadar, 45 tons for Kazipur, 35 tons for Raiganj, 20 tons for Tarash, 40 tons for Ullapara, 45 tons for Shahzadpur, 45 tons for Belkuchi, 15 tons for Kamarkanda, 25 tons for Chowhalli thanas and 25 tons for Sirajganj municipality, five tons for Shahzadpur municipality and 50 tons are kept reserved to meet any emergency.

JP protest meetings held

Sirajganj district and different thana units of Jatiya Party have held public meetings on December 4 in protest of alleged attempt on life of Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury.

Attaining perfection, basic aim of education

CHITTAGONG, Dec 28: Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman said, the basic aim of education was to attain perfection as a social being and for that purpose the environment of the standard of education was essential along with its dissemination," reports UNB.

He said, this while addressing as the chief guest at the prize-giving ceremony of Faujdardhat Cadet College on Thursday.

The minister said, "Institutional management was very important to improve the standard of education and different cadet colleges of the country have been immensely contributing to improve the standard of education with efficient management. The students of these institutions succeeded to develop themselves as the competent soldiers in the struggles of life under stern discipline and correct guidance."

Stressing the need for arranging prize-giving festival in the educational institutions, Noman said, "recognition of success could inspire to attain further success in life and the social progress took place in this process."

He called upon the management of the educational institutions to expand opportunities of extra curricular activities for the students that could finally help to ensure congenial atmosphere in the institutions.

The unit and platoon commanders recalled the memories of the great Liberation War of 1971.

Call for early solution to Farakka problem

KUSHTIA, Dec 28: Jatiya Party acting chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury has called for early solution of the Farakka problem ensuring just share of the Ganges water to Bangladesh, reports UNB.

Lamenting the age old problem, Chowdhury said, "a large part of the country is turning into desert in the absence of natural flow of the Ganges. India continue to draw water unilaterally in the upstream of the river depriving the lower riparian of its due share."

Addressing a public meeting at Amla Bazar Sunday evening, the Jatiya Party leader flayed the government for its failure to protect the interest of workers and farmers. He said, "about 4,500 industrial units were closed rendering thousands jobless since BNP came to power two and a half years ago."

During its election campaign BNP had pledged for creating one crore job opportunities to meet the growing demand of the unemployed youths. "BNP not only failed its commitment but also threw thousands out of employments," he added.

Chowdhury said, "the government has raised the price of fertilizer but failed to ensure fair

price of agricultural products. Low price of paddy and jute made the poor farmers poorer."

He said, terrorism has spread most educational institutions. Political parties, especially the ruling party, are maintaining terrorist groups and gave the students arms that discouraged them to pursue studies. By doing this they have endangered politics and democracy as well."

Two middle aged men were Monday crushed under the wheels of a speedy truck near Mongalbaria Bazar on Kushtia-Bheramara road.

Alleged dacoit held

An alleged dacoit was arrested on Sunday from village Natnapara of Daulatpur thana in connection with a dacoity at the residences of Daulatpur Health Complex doctors.

The dacoit was identified as Kinzar (27) of village Natnapara of Daulatpur thana.

In a daring dacoity on Dec 15, the miscreants looted cash and valuables worth about Taka 1.5 lakh from the residences of three doctors of the health complex.

"Health — a part of uplift activities"

FARIDPUR, Dec 28: Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf said, health is an important indicator of development activities of a country, reports UNB.

The Health Minister was addressing a function organised in observance of the completion of 12 years of service by Dr Zahed Memorial Child Hospital in Faridpur Saturday as chief guest.

"A person with good health and sound mind can think proper, plan better and implement programme efficiently," he added.

Presided over by Abul Bashar Miah, the function was also addressed by paediatrician Prof M Q K Talukder as special guest, Prof Akhtaruzzaman, Head of the Department of Cardiology, Dhaka Medical College Hospital, and the Deputy Commissioner and Civil Surgeon of the district.

The Health Minister said, "the present Mother and Child Health (MCH) index in our country reflects the country's adverse health and socio-economic condition." "The country cannot be allowed to go unchanged," he said.

"The sufferings of the pregnant mother and her new born child has been a chronic one and it needs to be addressed with much vigour in order to redress the problem. The present government is committed to improve the health care delivery system in the country, particularly to establish an effective MCH network," he said.

Yusuf said, "despite financial stringency and logistic constraints, we are trying our best to strengthen the country as well as the first referral center at the thana level."

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District roundup

MALJDEE COURT

CI sheets for flood victims

Dec 28: Government has allocated 17,860 bundles of CI sheets for the flood affected people of the district, says UNB.

Of the total amount, 6,197 bundles will be distributed in sadar thana, 3,380 bundles in Begumganj, 1,466 bundles in Senbag, 2,028 bundles in Comaniganj, 3,380 bundles in Hatia and 1,409 bundles in Chalkhil thana.

Official sources said, the allocated amount of CI sheet for Chalkhil thana has already been distributed among the flood victims.

The distribution of remaining CI sheets is expected to be completed within this month.

GAIBANDHA

13 gay girls arrested

Dec 28: Police arrested 13 gay girls in different raids from sadar railway platform during last one week, says UNB.

The arrested were identified as Jahanara (23), Mukti (19), Julekha (25), Fatema (22), Abeda (25), Shefali (27), Waheda (25), Anju (24), Shumi (28), Rozy (23), Jahan Ara (26), Shaharaj (28) and Rahima (20).

Among them, Rahima was wanted by the police as she was earlier convicted in absentia for three months by the sadar thana Magistrate on charges of immoral activities.

Jahanara (23) was rehabilitated earlier by the district administration.

Mentionable, the number of gay girls is alarmingly increasing in the district due to abject poverty.

FENI

Kidnapped farmer returned by BSF

Dec 28: A farmer, kidnapped by the Indian border guards on Friday, was released by the BSF at a flag meeting with BDR Saturday evening, reports UNB.

Belal Hossain (40), of the frontier village Barkuma was kidnapped from Nijalkapuri by the BSF jawans while he was farming, villagers said.

Bangladesh Rifles at the meeting also protested the firing by the Indian Border Security Force on Muhurichar for the 5th time on Friday. But BSF denied the allegation.

The BDR Commander of Mujumdarhat BOP led the Bangladesh side while the Belonia Company Commander headed the BSF team in the meeting at the Customs Checkpost on Parsuram-Belonia border.

BARISAL

Programme to educate poor boys, girls

Dec 28: Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), a non-government organisation, has taken up an education programme for the poor boys and girls to boost compulsory primary education programme of the government and ensure education for all by 2000 A.D. reports BSS.

BRAC introduced this programme in Barisal sadar, Babuganj, Wazirpur and Gournad thanas of Barisal district, Patuakhali thana of Patuakhali district, Jhalakati sadar thana of Jhalakati district and Bhola sadar, Borhanuddin, Daulatkhani, Lalmoan, Tazumuddin, Charfession and Manpura thanas of Bhola district during the current year.

BRAC has set up 655 schools in these thanas where 655 teachers, has been teaching 21,615 poor boys and girls.

BRAC will set up 30 such schools in Banaripara, 40 in Rajapur, 30 in Bhandaria, 30 in Pirojpur, and 40 in Nalchity in 1994 next, a BRAC source said.

SATKHIRA

One arrested with arms, ammunitions

Dec 28: Police arrested a man and recovered arms and ammunitions from his possession in Debhata Wednesday, reports UNB.

Police raided the house of Tariqul Islam in Sripur area in Debhata, thana and recovered one Indian-made revolver and two rounds of bullet.

Tariqul Islam was arrested and sent to jail.

A case has been filed with the Debhata police station.

DINAJPUR

Diarrhoea claims 2, attacks 50

Dec 28: Diarrhoea has claimed two lives and attacked 50 others in Birganj thana of the district during the last one week, official sources said, reports UNB.

The dead were identified as Asgar (70) and Fatema (11).

Another report adds: A man was killed in a road mishap at Mohanpur in sadar thana of the district on Sunday. The victim, Rashadpala, son of Ramlal of Bantara village, died on the spot when a truck hit him from behind.

A case was filed with the sadar police.

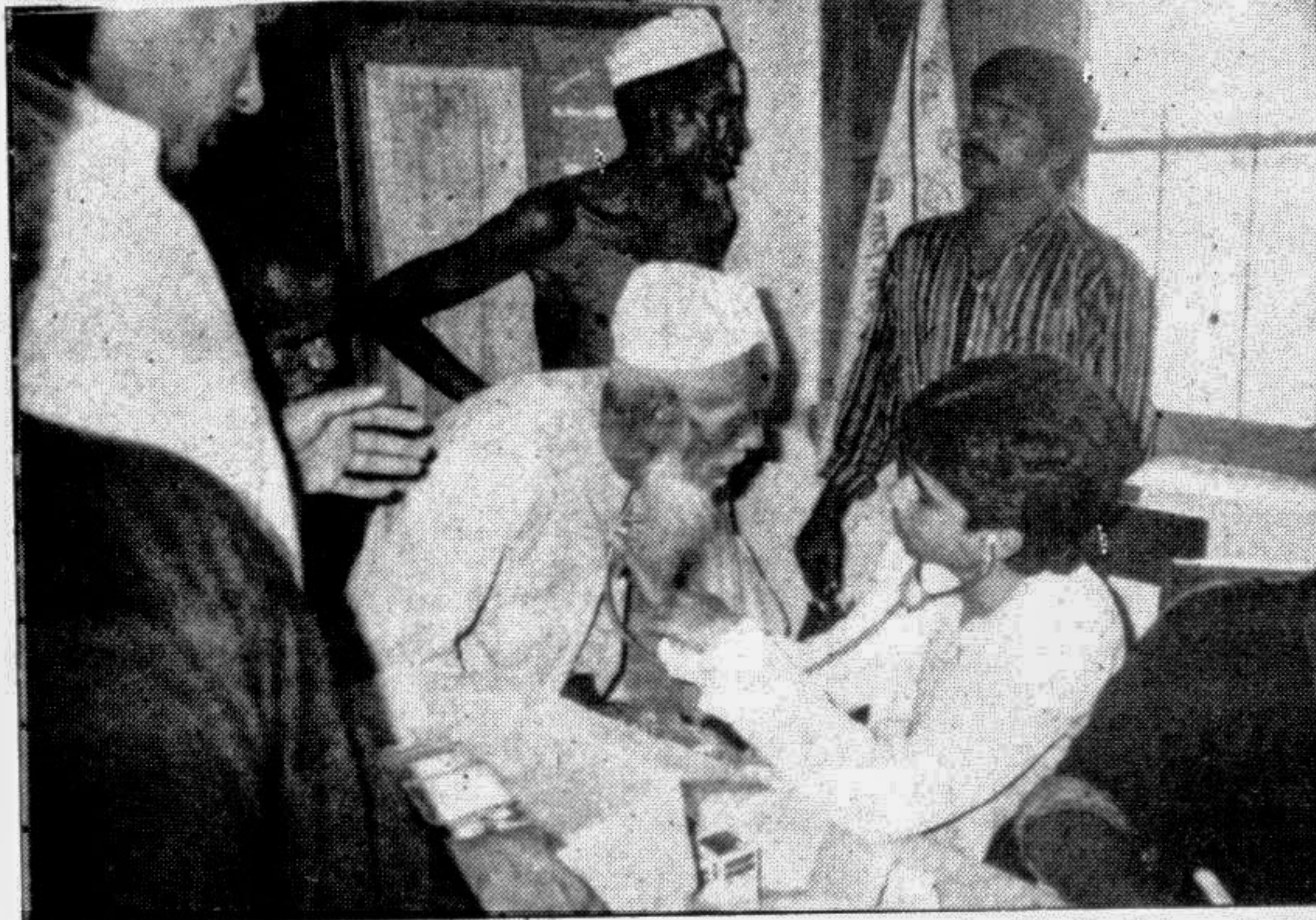
SIRAJGANJ

Five die of malaria, diarrhoea

Dec 28: Malaria and diarrhoea diseases have claimed at least five people including two babies in Belkuchi thana during the last week, says UNB.

Among the dead Saddam (3) of Daulatpur, Amin (3) of Barupur and Ali Hossain (18) died of Malaria while two others Noor Hossain (24) of Goylarchar village and Abu Bakker (30) of Dukuriabera died of Diarrhoea.

Local people alleged that negligence of doctors' responsibility at the Belkuchi Thana Health Complex was responsible for the deaths.



SYLHET: Patients are being treated free of cost at a clinic organised by the International Islamic Relief Organisation at a village under Beanibazar thana recently. Free Medicines were also given among the poor patients. — Star photo

Oilmen for working fund

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Dec 28: About 12,000 oilmen in Sirajganj district have been facing difficulties in running 'ghani' working for want of working capital.

Many oilmen have closed down their 'ghanis' and have been facing unemployment.

It is gathered that about 2000 mini oil mills (ghani) were running in the district which facilitated employment of about 15,000 members of the oilman families.

The rapid extinction of mini oil mills was attributed to flourishing of a large number of mechanised oil mills in different parts of the district including Sirajganj sadar, Shahzadpur, Ullapara and Belkuchi thanas which are able to produce edible oil at a considerable lower cost.

Besides, huge quantity of imported edible oil, including soyabean and palm have flooded the local markets resulting in fall in demand of ghani produced oil.

At present about Taka 1200 is required to run a ghani. But the poor oilmen can hardly invest this sum of money as there is no provision of loan disbursement for this sector of production.

Some of the oilmen, however,

collect running capital from the local money lenders at an exorbitant rate of interest causing higher cost of production.

As a result, the return is not commensurate with the investment because of the above mentioned factors.

Meanwhile, a considerable number of oilmen have given up this age-old profession having failed to cope with the circumstances which have already gone beyond their control.

The remaining oilmen have urged upon the authority to extend loan facilities through the

Poor progress!

BOGRA, Dec 28: Post and Telecommunication Minister Tariqul Islam expressed dissatisfaction over the slow progress of expansion work of Bogra Telecommunication exchange, says UNB.

The minister paid a surprise visit here to see the expansion work of the Bogra exchange on Friday, a PID handout said.

Work for expansion of 1500 telephone connections at Bogra town is underway at the telephone exchange and switching work to connect the new telephone lines have already been completed while cable net work is yet to be completed.

government agencies like BRDB so that they can run this family business smoothly.

Shaheed Intellectuals Day observed

Martyr Intellectuals' Day was observed everywhere in the district in a befitting manner on December 14.

Various political, socio-cultural organisations including BNP, Awami League, JSD (Inu), CPB, Muktiyoddha Sangsad, Zila Press Club, Sangbadik Samity and Belkuchi Press Club observed the day.

The programmes included placing of floral wreaths at the shaheed minar, special prayer and discussion meeting highlighting the importance of the day.

Victory Day programme

Sirajganj district unit command of Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad have arranged 3-day victory programme from December 14.

On December 15, grand assembly of the Freedom Fighters was held at the sangsad premises which was attended by the freedom fighters from all over the district.

The unit and platoon commanders recalled the memories of the great Liberation War of 1971.

Fate of 50,000 weavers uncertain

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Dec 28: The fate of about 50,000 weavers engaged in their age-old profession remain uncertain due to scarcity and high prices of yarn, dyes, chemicals and other raw materials.

Kumarkhali market — one of the biggest and famous handloom product trading centre in the district is now gradually dying mainly due to sudden drop in both, sales centres and purchasers.

The reason behind these causes are many. The prime cause is purchasers are losing interest in buying the products. Fewer sales centres, displaying products are there bringing down their wider choices.

On the other hand, the number of buyers have also dropped discouraging setting up of new sales centres.

Most of these weavers have now faced price hikes of yarn, dyes, chemicals and other raw inputs affecting production which has shown a drastic fall all over the district, according to a source.

A large number of these buyers come from North Bengal on every Fridays and Saturdays to buy the handloom products in large numbers but in recent days smooth business have shown remarkable reduction compared to past records. One source said, "Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation, BTMC has raised the price of cotton yarn to a great extent resulting in imbalance of market competition with cheaper synthetic clothes available in the local markets."

Bright prospect in sowing ground nut

Prospect of ground nut cultivation in certain areas of greater Kushtia district has been proved very bright as well as lucrative.

Farmers of Alamdanga, Chuadanga and certain parts of Kushtia where soil is sandy have achieved very encouraging yield of this cash crop on their fields

with the help and cooperation of Agricultural Extension Department. Positive results show that yield was 60 maunds (raw) per acre at a cost of Taka one thousand while the actual value of the amount comes to Taka 10 thousand

Sandy soil with very less productivity is suitable for cultivation of ground nut and it can be cultivated in both, kharif and rabi seasons and the maximum time required for cultivation and production is only 130 days.

Encouraged by high yield, farmers decide to go for cultivating this cash crop

A scheme has also been undertaken to cultivate ground nut in two thousand acres of land in coming season, it is learnt.

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Staff shortage hampers FP activities

MADARIPUR, Dec 28: Family Planning activities in the district are being hampered as 70 posts have been lying vacant in the department since long, reports UNB.

According to official sources, 17 posts of Family Welfare Assistant in 4 thanas have been lying vacant. Thana wise break up is as follows: Sadar-4, Sibchar-8, Kalkini-3, Rajotr-2.

A total of 15 posts of Medical Assistants are lying vacant in the district. Thana wise break up is as follows: Sadar-2, Sibchar-8, Kalkini-5.

Besides, 13 posts of Aya, 10 posts of Family Welfare Inspector, 12 posts of security guard and driver, 3 posts of Accountant and peon are also lying vacant.

Local leaders urged the government to fill up the vacant posts to gear up family planning activities without further delay.

Output at mills to restart soon

The production at A R Hawlader Jute Mills will be started within a week after the closure of three years, official sources said.

A milad-mahfil was held at mill premises on Friday morning on the occasion. Local politicians, mill management, employees and workers of the mill and local businessmen were present.

Mill sources said, 75 per cent formalities for reopening the mills, which is the biggest in the southern part of the coun-

try, were already completed. With the reopening of the mills about 1500 workers are expected to get back their jobs.

Newsprint prices up

The price of newsprint has shot up in the district in the last one month causing untold suffering to the students and the publishers.

Meanwhile, due to short supply each ream of crown newsprint has been selling since last two weeks at Taka 340 as against Taka 260 while while fultsape paper per ream is being sold at Taka 190 as against Taka 165.

Erosion renders 20,000 people homeless

SATKHIRA, Dec 28: Some 20,000 people were rendered homeless in 18 villages of the district due to erosion by Kalindi and Inchemati rivers during the last few months, reports UNB.

Local people said, the rivers have already eroded away some frontier areas in six places of the district, several metres of Kalindi riverside areas in Nadiya, Nathari and Katamari, were present.

The river Inchemati has so far devoured 3,000 metres area in Debhata, 2500 ft in Kharhat and 3000 ft in Khanja.



GOPALGANJ: A severely damaged road on Mukshedpur-Boraitala route under Mukshedpur thana. The bridge also needs reconstruction works for smooth traffic movement. — Star photo