

Prices of essential commodities up

MAULVIBAZAR, Jan 21: Prices of essential commodities have registered a sharp rise in the haats and bazars of the district causing suffering to the common consumers, reports UNB.

Local people said prices of onion, garlic, chillies, sugar and vegetables have gone up during the last fortnight.

Moreover, prices of powder milk, butter, ghee, soyabean oil, mustard oil have shot up beyond the purchasing capacity of poor consumers.

Some consumers alleged that some traders have been hoarding the essential commodities to create artificial scarcity in the market in connivance with a section of dishonest officials.

At present onion is being sold at Taka 32, chillies at Taka 60, sugar at Taka 30 and salt at Taka 9 per kg while the seasonal vegetables — potato is being sold at Taka 10, karalla at

Taka 20 per kg, cauliflower and cabbage at Taka 10 per piece.

Local traders have urged the authorities to form a mobile court to check the price-hike of essential commodities for the interest of the poor consumers.

Another message adds: High price of white-print paper has seriously affected printing and publication sector of the district.

According to market sources, the recent price hike was caused by the short-supply of the printing papers including newsprint and white print.

Some unscrupulous traders are reportedly taking advantage of the situation and raised the market-price abruptly. As a result, owners of local printing press are facing problems.

Meanwhile, a prices of books and copy books have also increased affecting the students in particular.

Another reports says: Finance Minister M Saifur

Rahman assured that government would continue to allocate highest amount in Education Sector in the coming years.

The minister was addressing here as chief guest at the annual conference of the non-government high school teachers on Sunday.

Saifur Rahman said, Taka 400 crore would be spent in the Education Sector in addition to Taka 3000 crore which was allocated earlier.

Of the total amount, Taka 190 crore would be spent to develop non-government primary schools, the minister added. A total of 5400 non-government primary schools has been taken up under the development scheme this year.

The teachers attending the conference demanded to set up a Teachers Training College at Moulvibazar to meet the long-standing demand of the people of this area. They also demanded for a regional sec-

ondary and primary education office in the district.

The Finance Minister also assured the teachers to look into their genuine demands with due consideration, said an official handout.

Best institutions

Meanwhile, three educational institutions have been adjudged as the best ones for their excellent performances in the last academic year.

The institutions are: Moulvibazar Women's College, Kulaura Nabin Chandra High School and Sreemangal Anwarul Alam Madrasa.

Official sources said, Prof Syed Abdur Rahim of Moulvibazar Government College; Md Mohiuddin Ahmed, Assistant Teacher of the Birds Residential School, Sreemangal thana; and Moulana Abdul Jabbar, teacher of Rajnagar D S Madrasa have been named as the best teachers for the year 1993.

9000 get free treatment

CHANDPUR, Jan 21: Nine mobile eye camps, organised by various organisations, set up between mid-October and mid-December last year have provided free treatment to nearly 9000 people in the area, reports UNB.

The medical team led by Dr Sk Anwar Hussain, Chief Surgeon, Mitharul Huq BNSB Eye Hospital, had extended technical assistance to the eye camps for successful operation of 457 cataract patients and treatment of 8,257 outdoor patients with eye complications.

The cataract patients were also given spectacles free of cost.

According to organisers, three mobile eye camps were held at Matlab, Hajiganj and Faridganj thana in Chandpur district. Five mobile eye camps were organised in Comilla.

Among them one at Comilla town, two at Devidwar thana and one each at Muradnagar and Chowddagram thana. The

last eye camp was set up at Ramganj thana of Lakmipur district.

The eye camps were organised mainly by the Chandpur Rotary Club, the Lions Club of Chandpur, Rupashi, the Rotaract Club of Chandpur, the Dhanmondi Rotary Club of Dhaka.

Awami League Chandpur district unit organised a symposium at the party office in observance of Bangabandhu's Homecoming Day on January 10.

Md Shafulah, president of Chandpur district unit of Awami League, presided over the symposium.

Advocate Sirajul Islam, ex-MP, Advocate Fazul Huq Sarker - General Secretary of the unit, Advocate Abdul Awal - central leader, Gonesh Karmaker — organising secretary, Majibur Rahman Bhuiyan and Masud Alam Milton - student leaders, also spoke on the occasion.

District roundup

NATORE

Pry school teacher suspended for wheat misuse

Jan 21: District Primary Education Officer put under suspension a headmaster of a government primary school for his alleged misuse of wheat under Food for, Education Programme, reports UNB.

Hazrat Ali, Headmaster of Nagarpura Government Primary School, allegedly distributed the wheat among his son and another two students who are the sons of another two teachers.

After investigation the authorities suspended Hazrat Ali on Monday. Further investigation is on, the sources added.

RAJBARI

Construction work inaugurated

Jan 21: State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahanaara Begum inaugurated a construction work of Arabaria Water Resource Project costing Taka 32 lakh on Sunday at Ramkantar and Banibaha unions of the sadar thana, reports UNB.

While addressing the inaugural function Jahanaara Begum said the present government believes in the politics of production and development.

Under the project a water regulator and a sluice pipe of 1.22 metre diameter would be commissioned and an 1100 metre link canal would be re-excavated.

About 2000 acres of farm land would come under irrigation facilities which will help produce about additional foodgrains of Taka 31 lakh after completion of the project.

The State Minister also inaugurated a school building, said an official handout.

According to official sources, implementation of 133 schemes costing about Taka 3.25 crore including a foreign exchange component of Taka 2.56 crore under the rural development project-4 is going on in full swing in the district.

The works on the schemes are expected to be completed by June next.

MADARIPUR

Migratory birds start arriving

Jan 21: Hundreds of migratory birds have been flocking in the charlands here and the neighbouring districts in the last few days, reports UNB.

Siberian ducks, sandi, pankouri and pintail ducks, knight herons and other migratory birds have been sighted in the marshes, rivers and beels of the area.

The migratory birds have started coming in flocks to the coastal and char areas of the greater Patuakhali region as winter approaches.

According to the local people, the birds have arrived in the charlands of Dasmina, Galachipa, Bauphal, Dumki, Mirjagonj, Kalapara, Amtali, Patharghata, Betagi, Bama and Patuakhali sadar thanas.

The birds have also been sighted on the "Durgasagar" area of Barisal district.

It may be noted that the number of migratory birds have been declining in the last few years due to the scarcity of fish and the increase of raids by hunters and bird-catchers, despite a government ban.

JESSORE

Tk 42 lakh smuggled goods seized

Jan 21: Goods worth Taka 41,84,040 were seized during the first fortnight of the "Operation dig out" launched by the BDR 22 Battalion Jessore from the first day of this month, reports BSS.

Six persons were arrested, two absconding, an informed source said. One hundred and thirty-nine cases have been instituted in these connections.

The seized goods included sari, blouse pieces, clothes, salt, cows, sugar, imitation jewellery, crockeries, fruits, bicycle and bicycle spares, and machinery spares.

During the period Taka two lakh and forty-four thousand were realised as duty for bringing three hundred and seven cows through Navarone corridor.

C'NAWABGANJ

Handloom factories closed down

Jan 21: The increase in the prices of raw materials caused several handloom factories in the district close down, rendering a large number of workers jobless, reports UNB.

The exorbitant prices of the yarn, weaving ingredients, dyes and the non-availability of funds have made handloom product prices beyond the purchasing capacity of the common people.

The smuggling in of Indian sarees and cloths across different borders of the district at a comparatively cheaper rate has also considerably reduced the demand of local handloom products.

Local handloom products, which were in popular demand when cheaper before, include sarees, lungis and napkins.

SAVAR

Three girls abducted

Jan 21: Three girls, including two dancers, were abducted by armed miscreants from a fair at Shaturia thana in Manikganj Sunday night, local people said, reports UNB.

The girls were identified as dancers — Anjona (18) and Sondhya (19) and Saathi (15), a resident of Satura Sadar town.

According to witnesses, Anjona and Sondhya were abducted at gun-point by a gang of at least 20 hoodlums from the pandal of "puppet dance" of a village fair styled as "Sree Sree Burir Mela" at Shaturia at about 9 pm.

Saathi was kidnapped by another armed gang while she was returning home from the fair.

While contacted Savar police could not give any details of the incident and so far none was arrested in this connection.

RAJBARI

Loan given to destitute women

Jan 21: The State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahanaara Begum called upon the affluent section of the society to extend their cooperation for the betterment of the women community, says UNB.

The State Minister was addressing at a function, organised by Women Rights Implementation Association of Bangladesh, on the occasion of distributing loan-money among some destitute women at Goalandia here Saturday.

The loan was given with a view to help the destitute women for achieving self-reliance by adopting income-generating project run by the association, said a PID handout Saturday.

MAJDEE COURT

Number of quacks on rise

Jan 21: The number of quacks is on the rise in six thanas of the district, reports UNB.

The villages of Senbag, Chatkhil, Companiganj, Hatya, sadar and Begumganj thanas of the district are plagued with these quacks.

Prolonged unemployment has driven HSC and SSC passed youths to take up quackery in the rural areas. A few of them have basic training on primary health care. The landless and the poor people who are unable to pay the medical expenses of hospital are going to these "doctors" and are being prescribed medication for a nominal fee.

Some government health workers are also working as doctors in the rural areas. The number of quacks are increasing due to shortage of doctors in remote areas.

A number of hospital doctors and staff are also allegedly taking illegal gratification from the poor patients for providing them with prescriptions.

Moreover, due to bad communication system people are reluctant to go to the health complexes where medicines are hardly available.

Local people allege that the quacks prescribe wrong medicine most of the time much to the inconvenience of the patients.

SIRAJGANJ

477 committed suicide last yr

Jan 21: At least 477 people committed suicide in 16 northern districts during the last year, according to a survey report here, reports UNB.

According to the report, the highest suicide incidents took place in Bogra and Pabna of whom most are women.

Sources said family feud, poverty, failure in love, dowry were the main reasons behind the suicides.

Of them, 82, committed suicide in Bogra, 54 in Pabna, 6 in Panchagarh, 40 in Thakurgaon, 58 in Dinajpur, 22 in Joypurhat, 40 in Gaibandha, 14 in Nilphaman, 6 in Lalmonirhat, 16 in Kurigram, 12 in Rangpur, 32 in Naogaon, 4 in Chapainawabganj, 50 in Natore and 10 in Rajshahi.

Rabies claims ten lives

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Jan 21: Rabies claimed ten lives and attacked one hundred others in the district during the last six months due to acute scarcity of anti-rabies vaccine, reports UNB.

Local people alleged that the rabid dogs have increased alarmingly in the district in the recent times as the concerned authorities failed to eliminate the dogs.

It is alleged that the treatment of the rabies, a fatal virus disease causing madness mainly in dogs and foxes, is being hampered greatly due to non-availability of anti-rabies vaccine in the hospitals and health complexes.

However, a small quantity of vaccine is available in some places of the district but the price is very high and out of buying capacity of the common people.

According to officials of the concerned department only 25 per cent of the total requirement is being supplied by the authority.

Meanwhile, the alarming rise in the number of rabid dogs in the town has become a menace to the dwellers. These dogs with scabby skins are seen roaming here and there in the town.

The pedestrian can hardly avoid their contact while waling through the roads. The school going children are the worst sufferers. Besides, buyers and sellers of the market are also facing trouble for this.

Another reports says: The number of tubewells maintained by the Public Health Engineering Department of the district has been proved inadequate for meeting the people's demand for drinking water.

Sources say that about 600 tubewells, installed in the last few years, scattered all over Shibganj, Bholahat, Gomostapur, Nachol and Nawabganj thanas are out of order.

Appeals for the resinking of the chocked up tubewells have neither been heeded by the department nor the respective area union parishads.



SYLHET: The dilapidated condition of a road in the town. — Star photo

Withdrawal of subsidy on agri inputs criticised

KISHOREGANJ, Jan 21: Awami League General Secretary Zillur Rahman on Monday said that his party would take steps to change the fate of the farmers, if Awami League is voted to power, reports UNB.

Criticising the government for withdrawing subsidy on agricultural inputs, Zillur alleged the country would be ruined if the BNP government stayed in power.

The Awami League General Secretary was addressing a public meeting held at Lohajuri High School ground in Kotiadi. The meeting which was presided over by Giasuddin Master was organised by local unit of the party.

Zillur Rahman charged the government with indulging in corruption, nepotism and in politicising administration. He further criticised the government for pursuing wrong policy and said it was due to this policy that 4,000 mills and factories were closed down, which led to unemployment of thousands of workers.

He said government had failed to generate employment as it could not set up a single mill or factory in last three years. Unemployment and number of the landless increased manifold during the BNP regime, he said.

He urged all concerned to fight what he described as the neo-autocratic regime.

The meeting was also addressed by Abdul Hamid MP, Advocate Jinnatul Islam, Habibur Rahman Habib and M A Afzal.

'Make edn movement a success'

DAUDKANDI (Comilla), Jan 21: Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain on Sunday urged the teachers community to make the education movement a success as it was designed to transform the country's human resource into a productive force, reports BSS.

"The nation has entrusted you all with a noble task to build a prosperous future generation and you all have to take this responsibility not as mere profession but as a mission," he said.

The energy minister was addressing as the chief guest the closing ceremony of Daudkandi thana Primary Education Fortnight '94 in observance of national education fortnight here on Sunday.

Dr Mosharraf said education

means development and spreading of education means fostering a prosperous nation. "That is why, education is the most priority sector of the present government," he said adding "the government has given the highest allocation in the sector to achieve the target of education for all by the year 2000."

"To achieve the targets of family planning, poverty alleviation, ecological balance, agriculture development and so on the target of education must be achieved," he reiterated.

Turning to 'Food for Education Programme', first of its kind in the country introduced by the present government, Dr Mosharraf Hossain said the government had taken up a union in every thana of the country under the programme

as the first phase but it would be expanded to every union in phases.

He said the government had chosen this strategy to provide some incentive to encourage the rural poor people to send their wards to schools. He urged the poor people to send their children to schools to make their future bright.

Later, the minister distributed prizes among the students of some primary schools for their outstanding performances.

District Education Officer Abdul Mannan, general secretary of Daudkandi Thana Primary Teachers Association Anwarul Kabir, local chairman Shamsul Hoq, social worker Abdul Latif Chowdhury and Headmaster of Daudkandi High School also spoke.

Acquire qualities of worthy citizens, Huda urges students

BHAIRAB, Jan 21: Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda on Sunday exhorted the students to pursue their studies for growing up as worthy citizens by acquiring the traits of leadership so that they could give future leadership and correct sense of direction to the nation, reports BSS.

Speaking as chief guest at the freshers' reception of Rafiqul Islam Mahila College here the Information Minister said the student community was deprived of proper education due to erosion of values and pollution of academic atmosphere because of terrorism on the campus side by side with the economic debacle during the long nine years of autocratic rule. He said building up of educated and skilled manpower was essential to achieve the cherished national objectives.

Barrister Huda said democracy had been established in the country after much sacrifices and long drawn struggle of the people against autocracy. The present government elected

by the people has been making relentless efforts to give institutional shape to democracy and achieve economic emancipation of the people by upholding their fundamental and constitutional rights, he added.

The Information Minister called for facing those politically who were trying to create disorder in the society through negative politics. The people of the country have refrained from responding to a particular quarter which is out to create chaos through hartal and other harmful activities. The nationalist force has emerged victorious time and again in the elections by winning the support and confidence of the people, he added.

He said only the BNP government has been successful in holding free and fair elections. During its tenure the process of elections had been fair and impartial under peaceful atmosphere. As a result, the right of franchise of the people has been established, he maintained.

Barrister Huda pointed out

that the people knew of the unprecedented vote dacoity and rigging of those who had participated in the election of 1981. At that time the voters could not even go to the polling centres. But the election process under the present democratic dispensation of the BNP government has been acclaimed world-wide, he said.

Seeking the all-out cooperation of all quarters for upholding the democratic process and giving institutional shape to democracy, the Information Minister said this would consolidate political stability and expedite the economic emancipation of the people.

Referring to the glorious role of Chhatra Dal in maintaining congenial atmosphere on the campus, he said the present government under the leadership of Begum Khaleda Zia has spread out the politics of development everywhere in the country through successful implementation of the 19-point programme of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman.

Green belt along coastal areas to be built up

BARISAL, Jan 21: Government has decided to build up green surroundings around the vast coastal areas of the country with an allocation of Taka 245 crore, official sources here said, reports UNB.

According to the sources, this green surroundings, with the financial assistance from the World Bank, will help protect lakhs of people of the coastal areas from cyclone and tidal bore.

This project is expected to be started soon and completed by the year 2000, the sources added.

Another report says: Water Development Board of Bhola division has been implementing seven major projects in three thanas of the Bhola district.

The projects include development of 660 km creeks, construction of 20 km of alternative embankments, resectioning of 145 km embankments, 3 sluice gates and development of 30 km road.

According to official sources, work on these projects has already started in the fiscal '92-'93 and is expected to be completed by fiscal '96-97 with an expenditure of Taka 145 crore.

The three thanas are: Tazumuddin, Charfassion and Daulatkhan.

Of the projects, 200 km creeks, construction works on 3 sluice gates, 10 km embankment, resectioning and development of 15 km alternative embankment are expected to be completed during the current fiscal year with an allocation of Taka 30 crore.

Meanwhile, Kotwali police seized 670 pieces of Indian sarees worth Taka 3 lakh in the last week from the local launch ghat.

Police also recovered 48 bottles of phenisidyl syrup from a rickshaw on Jan 10. The phenisidyl was being carried by a rickshaw passenger who was heading towards the town from Natullabad central bus terminal.

When challenged by the police, the passenger managed to flee leaving the bottles in the rickshaw.

A case has been filed with the police.

CHANDPUR: A woman is taking water from the direct pipeline in poura area. — Star photo

Complex procedures bar to loan facility

MAJDEE COURT (Noakhali), Jan 21: Many farmers in six thanas of the district alleged that due to complex procedures and high rate of interest they could not avail the bank loan facilities, reports UNB.

They said lower prices of fertiliser and seeds are needed as well as bank loans with token interest rates to boost agri production.

The farmers have been compelled to sell their crops in advance to the money-lenders for a nominal price because they do not have the money to pay back the high-interest loans the money-lenders demand.

Paddy is now selling at Taka 170-190 in the market, where production cost is about Taka 240. The low price of the paddy in the market is being attributed to the absence of any government purchasing centre.

The farmers say it takes time to get bank loan after meeting a

series of formalities while the loans offered by the money-lenders are easier to get.

Taking advantage of the situation, the money lenders are doing brisk business by giving credit to the farmers at high rate of interest against security of their standing crops.

Meanwhile, the prices of agri inputs have gone up and irrigation facilities are too costly in the district.

PDB staff suspended

BRAHMANBARIA, Jan 21: Power Development Board of the district put under suspension a metre inspector for alleged involvement in changing the metre reading, an official source said, reports UNB.

The department sources identified the staff as Ali Azam



GOPALGANJ: Many people cross the bamboo bridge on Gopalganj Manikhar road daily. Rickshaws carry passengers over the bridge regularly which is very risky. — Star photo

Six primary schools to be constructed

MOULVIBAZAR, Jan 21: The government will establish six primary schools in Kulaura thana under a project during the current financial year, official sources said, reports UNB.

The schools will be established at Istachara, East Fatikbly, Midupur, Rasulganj, Lathi Chhara and Chatera villages.

The projects will be implemented by the thana Engineering Department at a cost of Taka 19.20 lakh, it added.

Another message adds: Poultry diseases have broken out in an alarming proportion in the district claiming a heavy toll of birds.

In the absence of protective and curative measures by the livestock department the diseases have been spreading to nearby areas.

While contacted, official sources said acute scarcity of medicines has been prevailing in the district creating problems to combat the menace.

Wife beaten to death by husband

DINAJPUR, Jan 21: A man has allegedly beaten his wife to death and then dumped her body in an unknown place in the town, says UNB.

Nazma Begum, 22, the second wife of Azizur Rahman, was killed on January 11 following a family feud and then the husband kept the body in his room during the night and the following day he dumped the body to an unknown place, according to Rabeya, Rahman's first wife, and Jebun Nahar, his mother.

Abu Bakkar Siddique, UP member, who had lodged a case with Kotwali thana, was told by Rabeya and Jebun Nahar that they had not reported the incident to the police fearing their own life.

Azizur Rahman went into hiding after the incident.

In another incident in the area, Advocate Monzurul Islam, 40, was stabbed by unknown miscreants Friday while he was returning home after buying a mosquito coil from Iqbal school area in the town.

Islam was admitted to the general hospital and a case has been lodged with the police.