

Road accidents left 456 dead last year

JAMALPUR, Jan 24: At least 456 people were killed and over 2000 injured in road accidents in 16 northern districts during the last year, reports UNB.

According to the estimate of different hospitals and health complexes, 154 died in Bogra, 50 in Sirajgonj, 23 in Jyapurhat, 24 in Galbandha, 25 in Rangpur, 35 in Dinajpur, 11 in Thakurgaon, 8 in Panchagarh, 17 in Nilphamari, 6 in Kurigram, 2 in Lalmonirhat, 16 in Naogaon, 28 in Natore, 10 in Rajshahi, 39 in Pabna and 7 in Chapainawabganj.

By this time, about 300 injured people have become crippled, the sources said.

The main causes of the road accidents were overloading of passengers and goods, reckless driving, playing of worn out vehicles, driving by the inexperienced men, overtaking and indiscriminate violation of traffic rules.

The sources said, as the Rangpur-Nagarbari road have

been turned into highway, the drivers of the long-route vehicles who are mostly drunk care little for abiding the traffic rules.

Another reason of the frequent accidents was said to be the absence of strict implementation of the law for compensation of victims by the owners of the vehicles.

A women's college will be established at Balizuri in Madarganj thana of the district to spread the light of education among the women of remote rural areas, local people said.

The foundation stone of the college titled "Mirza Kashem-Nurunnahar Women's College" will be laid by Mirza Azam MP, on February 2.

Meanwhile, two acres of land has already been donated by Alhaj Mirza Abul Kashem, father of Mirza Azam, for the establishment of the college. He also assured necessary fund for the institution.

Besides, Mirza Kashem, a reputed philanthropist of the

locality also established several educational and religious institutions in the district which included Abdul Alim-Mirza Kashem Senior Madrassa, Nurunnahar Hafeza Institute Centre and Madrassa, Mirza Kashem Modern School and one public library.

A special general meeting of the district Union Parisad Secretary Association was held on Saturday at Sadar thana complex.

Presided over by Jahangir Alam it was also addressed by central president of the association Golam Rasul as chief guest and district unit secretary Nawab Ali.

A total of 65 secretaries of Union Parisads of seven thanas of the district attended the meeting.

The speakers urged the members to make the sit in of the association a success on February 5 in front of the National Press Club to press home their 4-point demand.

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Electrification work going on

BARISAL, Jan 24: Electrification programme of the Rural Electrification Board (REB) is going on in 450 villages of Barguna and Patuakhali districts under Barisal division, official source here said, reports UNB.

Financed by the World Bank, about 1350 kilometres power distribution lines are being constructed under the programme at a cost of Taka 46 crore. Meanwhile, more than 350 kilometres of the power lines have already been set up.

With the implementation of the programme, 450 villages of Patuakhali sadar, Baufal, Betagi, Mirjaganj, Barguna sadar and Amtai thanas will be brought under rural electrification network during the current financial year.

Another report says: Armed miscreants amputated hands and legs and gouged out two eyes of a prosecution witness of a case.

The victim Anwar Hossain (25) of Charkana village in sadar thana was an important witness of a case filed in the local court against some people, police said.

The miscreants kidnapped Anwar from Charkana Bazar area at gun-point on January 15 and took him to a nearby paddy field where they assaulted him barbarously.

Later some villagers found him unconscious and sent him to Barisal Medical College Hospital.

A case has been lodged with the Kotwali police and so far none was arrested.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Krishi Bank of Barisal region lodged more than 1000 certificate cases against the defaulter loanees.

Rajshahi, city of meetings

RAJSHAHI, Jan 24: Rajshahi has become the city of meetings now a days as the election date drawing nearer, reports BSS.

Iliterate parents of the two neighbouring villages. Who have of late conceived the importance of education in life, feel proud when they see their sons and daughters with books, tools and immaculate smiles every morning on way to these institutions.

Expressing their satisfaction to visiting BSS correspondent Shamsul Alam Belal recently, the villagers said their long prevailing frustration for low literacy, especially among girls had now gone with the establishment of Panchgaon High Schools and Rajkhola Vocational Training Centre.

Girls dominate the enrollment now with over 60 per cent in Panchgaon High School established in 1985 and cent per cent in Rajkhola Vocational Training Centre established in 1989 under Panchgaon union of Rajnagar thana.

Dr Quazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, a leading economist and development planner of the country, took the lead for setting up these two institutions now located at two miles distance from each other. A sense of enthusiasm is sweeping the whole area which has so long been devoid of high school education.

Local elite said, the literacy rate had now shot upto 10 per cent in Panchgaon union of 30,000 population which in Rajnagar thana was recorded at 9.4 per cent and Maulvibazar district 14 per cent.

Dr Ahmad collected a total of Taka 2.80 lakh from various sources both at home and abroad to set up the school to fulfil the long five decades desire of the local people. Meanwhile, special Facility Department of the Ministry of Education has chosen the school with its over 400 students for development.

Available records said, the school had scored appreciable

7.3 crore during the last fiscal year.

Meanwhile, the defaulter loanees said due to various natural calamities and low prices of paddy in the market they could not repay the loans.

They urged the authorities to extend time on humanitarian ground to enable them to repay the loans.

The State Minister said the present government is very keen to see the flourishing of the folk culture which are now on the verge of extinction.

He said, this while visiting the week-long folk festival and crafts exhibition organised by Bangladesh Folk Art and Crafts Foundation at the foundations premises at Sonargaon.

According to fisherman, the miscreants raided the trawlers one after another and beat the fishermen mercilessly injuring at least ten of them.

Fishing Trawler Association sources said, pirates looted away fish, fishing nets, spare parts and cash money worth about Taka 6 lakh.

Leaders of the association informed that a gang of armed pirates stormed the trawlers at dead of night. Pirates also tried to throw some fishermen into the Bay but when resisted they left the spot with the booty.

Two of the five ransacked trawlers are F B Champa and F B Bashir.

A group of people numbering about 10 to 15 have gouged out both the eyes of an activist of outlawed Sarbahara Party Tuesday night at Bilwabari High School ground in Kotwali thana.

According to police, Manik (35) of Bilwabari village in Kashipur Union Parisad of the district was taken out of his

National



TANGAIL: The members of Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury National Memorial Council offering munajat at the mazar of the late President recently.

Flourishment of folk culture stressed

SONARGAON (Narayanganj), Jan 24: State Minister for Relief Harun-Al-Rashid on Sunday said, Bangladesh has a rich cultural heritage dating back to thousand of years, reports BSS.

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Pirates loot 5 fishing trawlers in deep sea

BARISAL, Jan 24: Five fishing trawlers were attacked by some armed pirates on Tuesday night in the Bay of Bengal, about 30 kilometres south of Mahipur of Patuakhali district, official sources here said, reports BSS.

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According to police, Manik (35) of Bilwabari village in Kashipur Union Parisad of the district was taken out of his

house forcibly and taken to the school ground.

On information from the local people, Kotwali police recovered the victim on Wednesday morning and sent to Barisal Medical College Hospital for treatment.

Police said, Manik was the active member of the outlawed Sarbahara Party.

Dacoits swoop on fishermen, injure 10 in Barisal

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Jan 24: Ten fishermen were injured, three of them seriously, when a gang of armed dacoits attacked two fishing trawlers last night in Baleswar river near Tushkhali of Perojpur district.

The dacoits, numbering 10 to 15, suddenly stormed the trawlers — Bhai Bhai 1 and 2 — and indiscriminately stabbed the fishermen on board with sharp weapons.

Seriously injured Harun, 27, Humayun, 34, and Sattar, 30, were later admitted to Morrelganj Hospital of Bagerhat district.

Fishermen need fund for buying boats, nets

SAVAR, Jan 24: Fishermen of Manikganj have been difficult due to want of funds, the scarcity of fishing material, a price-hike on inputs and pressure from the non-professional fishermen, reports BSS.

The fishermen of the area

said, pisciculture in the thanas have been affected because some of the water bodies have dried up, and the fishermen are unable to buy boats and fishing nets due to funds shortage.

Some fishermen also alleged that they could not get bank loans for making the necessary purchases and are now borrowing money from the local Mahajans who are demanding high interest rates on the loans.

Pressure from the non-professional fishermen are also mounting. The non-professionals are catching fish using force against the local fishermen and are also taking away the nets and the other fishing equipment, they alleged. They cannot catch fish even after taking lease.

They also accused that government funds allocated for local fishermen are being used by the non-professional fishermen's cooperative society.

On the other hand, treatment of poultry birds is being hampered in absence BCRD vaccines at Savar.

District roundup

SYLHET

Mannan opens motel

Jan 24: State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Abdul Mannan formally inaugurated a motel of Bangladesh Parjaton Corporation (BPC) here on Sunday, reports BSS.

The 'Sylhet Motel' built at a cost of Taka 1.5 crore from the corporation's own resource is located in between Sylhet town and Osmanli Airport on a hillock, about 100 feet above the plain land.

It is expected to attract the tourists especially the transit passengers of Bangladesh Biman. The Sylhet Motel has twenty-six air-conditioned and non-air-conditioned rooms and a 60-seater restaurant for the guests to dine, a PID handout said.

Speaking on the occasion the state minister said BPC has undertaken various steps to attract the tourists aimed at helping to boost the national economy. He said, Osmanli Airport will soon be made to operate the mid-haul aircraft.

Barisal Medical College Hospital has undertaken a project to expand the airport's runway. Ground support equipment at a cost of Taka 15 crore has been imported.

Later, the state minister unveiled the plaque of the Sylhet Motel and planted a sapling within the motel area.

Acting Chairman of BPC Abul Bashir Mia, Chairman, Bangladesh Civil Aviation Authority Air Commodore Shamsher Ali, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism Aminur Rahman were among others who spoke on the occasion.

RAJSHAHI

Conference, seminar to be held at RU

Jan 24: The first General Conference of Institute of Bangladesh Studies Alumni Association of Rajshahi University and a seminar on "Need of Studies in Higher Education" will be held on Tuesday at the seminar room of IBS, says BSS.

Prof M Anisur Raman, Vice-Chancellor of RU and Prof Muhmmud Shahid Quarashi, Director of IBS will also attend the functions as special guests.

Prof M Amiruzzaman Khan will preside over the function.

SAVAR

Poultry diseases break out

Jan 24: Various diseases have broken out in an epidemic form in all the poultry farms of the thana causing concern among the farm owners, reports BSS.

According to a report, a middle-aged woman of Lauchnghat area is the main pimp of these floating girls and doing the immoral business in the town for a long time. She is allegedly collecting the poor girls from the villages on the assurance of giving good jobs and later compel them to resort to immoral activities for earning money.

The elite of the town urged the authorities to check the growing menace and take immediate steps to rehabilitate the girls so that they can lead a decent life.

MANIKGANJ

2 drowned while boarding ferry

Jan 24: A driver and a helper of a truck drowned Saturday morning when their loaded vehicle plunged into the river Jamuna, says BSS.

Police and witnesses said, the truck from Dhaka loaded with fertiliser while boarding the Shah Ali ferry at ghat number 3 at Aricha suddenly plunged into the river at 7am.

The helper was driving the truck as the truck driver was deep asleep in the vehicle, the sources said.

The victims were identified as Mojibur Rahman (45), the driver and Julhan (25), the helper.

A case was filed with the Shibalay police.

SATKHIRA

Valuables looted

Jan 24: Dacoits in disguise of friends looted three houses in Satkhira Sadar and Kalaroa thana and fled with booties worth Taka nearly 1.5 lakh in the last four days, says BSS.

The robbers introducing themselves as friend, entered the houses of Nirode Ghosh in Sadar and Rampal of Murarikati in Kalaroa thana. They also broke into the house of Ashraf Molla of Ghar Chala in Sadar thana during the same period and looted valuables.

Separate cases have been filed with the local police but none has been arrested so far. Police investigation is going on.