

Property worth Tk 1.25 lakh gutted

COMILLA, Feb 16: Ten kutcha houses including a hotel were completely gutted in a devastating fire that broke out in Comilla Station Road at the early hours of Saturday, reports UNB.

According to an estimate, valuables worth about Taka 1.25 lakh were destroyed. The fire brigade personnel on information rushed to the spot and extinguished the fire.

The Chairman of Comilla pourashava visited the affected area and distributed warm clothes including blankets among the affected people.

The cause of fire could not be known immediately.

Another report adds: Police seized 965 bottles of phensidyl syrup worth Taka 50,000 and arrested four people from a micro bus at Shahdualpur on Comilla-Brahmanbaria road.

Acting on a secret information, police stopped the micro bus and recovered the contraband item on Feb 9. They also seized the vehicle.

A case has been registered with the police.

Meanwhile, one motor cycle was stolen from in front of Sonali Bank branch at Monoharpur on February 8.

Dacoits loot valuable worth Tk 50,000

PIROJPUR, Feb 16: A daring dacoity was committed at a house at Zamua village in Nesarbad thana, reports UNB.

According to the house-owners Khirud Behari, the dacoits numbering 10-12 entered the house at dead of night on February 9 by breaking door open. They started looting the valuables, identifying themselves as the members of outlawed Sharbahara Party.

Later, they decamped with cash and valuables worth Taka 50,000 threatening him not to file any case against them.

Out of the fear of his life he did not dare to file a case in this connection, it is learnt.

According to another message, six people were sentenced to ten years rigorous imprisonment each for committing dacoity and murder.

The court also fined the convicts, Chan Mia, Aferuddin, Sattar, Qaiyum, Bikram Sheikh and Hanif Sheikh Taka 5,000 each, in default, to suffer one year more.



Best teacher

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Feb 16: Amena Begum, Headmistress, Satkhira Government Girls' High School, has been adjudged the best teacher of the country.

The National Selection Board has chosen Amena Begum for her outstanding performances during the National Education Week-94.

The best teacher will receive gold medal from the Prime Minister on February 15 at a ceremonial function.

Amena has also been selected the best teacher in district and divisional level.

She is the wife of Abdul Mottalib, Editor, the Daily Kafeia, Correspondent, Bangladesh Observer and member of the managing board of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society and President of Satkhira Press Club.

Newsmen Kalyan Forum formed

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, Feb 16: Kishoreganj Sangbadik Kalyan Forum has been formed in a meeting held in the office of the weekly Kishoreganj Parikrama premises under the chairmanship of Subir Basak recently.

The meeting formed an executive committee of the organisation for a period of one year (1994) with the following office bearers: President-Subir Basak, Vice-president Bidyut Prasad Roy, Secretary-Saiful Haque Mollah Dhulu, Joint Secretary-Ahmed Farid and Md Sayeduzzaman.

The meeting also decided to publish a magazine on the occasion of the Independence Day.



RAJSHAHI: Prof M Anisur Rahman, VC of Rajshahi University formally inaugurating the 'Rag Day' programme of the students on February 9.

Prices of daily necessities gone up for Ramadan

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Feb 16: Prices of essential commodities have registered a sharp rise with the beginning of holy month of Ramadan in the district affecting the low income group of people.

The price of rice is comparatively lower but the price is going up in the markets gradually.

A kilogram of course rice is being sold between Taka 9 and Taka 10 which was sold at Taka 8.25 a week ago and the fine variety of rice is being sold at Taka 12 per kg as against Taka 11 a few days ago.

Prices of all types of pulses have shot up during the period. Masur is being sold at Taka 26 per kg as against Taka 24 per kg while chhola is being sold at Taka 22 per kg as against Taka 18, khisari is being sold at Taka 18 per kg as against Taka 16.

Prices of onion, garlic and other spices have also registered as marked rise. Onion is being sold at Taka 16 per kg as against Taka 12 and garlic at Taka 40 as against Taka 32 per kg.

Powder milk in polythene bags is being sold at Taka 160 per kg as against Taka 140 a few days back. Price of condensed milk also has increased and per pot of milk is being sold between Taka 30 and Taka 40.

Local people informed that a section of traders created artificial crises in the market to earn maximum profit with the advent of Ramadan. Denying the allegation the traders said that short supply of goods was the reason behind the price hike.

High school needs teachers, fund

Shortage of teachers, classrooms and other necessities hampers education in Palashpore High School of the district for a long time.

At least 10 students pass SSC examination in first division every year from the school despite several problems.

The existing 15 teachers are unable to teach the large number of students properly.

Some posts of assistant teachers have been lying vacant for a long time.

The classrooms are too small to accommodate the increasing number of students. About 70 students are to sit in a class where 40 students can be comfortably accommodated.

There are some books but the students can not read those for want of a library.

Due to shortage of laboratory facilities, the students can not do practical classes which put the students in problem during examinations.

Cracks have developed on the roof and walls of the school. In rainy season, water leaks through the cracks. The dilapidated school building may collapse at any time.

The students of the school are suffering much in the absence of sanitary latrine.

The guardians have urged the concerned authority to take necessary steps to extend better education facilities for the students of the school.

Another report says: About 2 lakh 50 thousand hectares

of land in 10 districts of Khulna division were brought under 'boro' cultivation during the current season.

About 2.25 hectares were brought under high yielding varieties and the rest under local varieties, according to the Agriculture Extension Department sources.

The district-wise break-up is as follows: 50000 hectares will be brought under boro cultivation in Satkhira; 10000 hectares in Bagerhat; 81000 hectares in Jessore; 34000 hectare in Jhenidah; 20000 hectares in Magura; 14000 hectares in Narail and the rest in Kushtia, Chuadanga and Meherpur districts.

According to the source, 5 lakh 85 thousand metric tons of boro paddy worth about Taka 300 crore may be produced in these districts during the season.

The Agriculture Extension Department set up 240 demonstration plots in these areas. Seeds, fertilizers and pesticides have been provided to the farmers.

Price hike at Jamalpur

JAMALPUR, Feb 16: Prices of essentials have shot up at the very beginning of the holy month of Ramadan causing immense suffering to the low-income group of people, reports UNB.

According to market sources, price of rice has increased on an average Taka one per kilogram while in case of meat it increased by Taka 10 per kg. The prices of fish have shot up manifold according to size and variety.

Rice is being sold at Taka 13 as against Taka 12 before the start of Ramadan, mutton at Taka 90 as against Taka 80 while beef at Taka 60 as against Taka 50. A kg of fish which was sold at Taka 60 before the Ramadan is now being sold at Taka 200.

Prices of green vegetables have also increased.

Consumers said although the supply is sufficient in the market, the traders are creat-

ing artificial crisis to earn maximum profit.

Various organisations and political leaders urged the traders not to increase the price of the essentials during the holy month. They also called upon the concerned authorities to routine check up in the markets.

A three-day 'Krishi Mela' under the auspices of District Agriculture Extension Department was concluded at Khamarbari of the town with much enthusiasm on Thursday.

In the exhibition, several stalls were set up with notable exhibits on agri products, pisciculture, handicrafts, horticulture, livestock and modern agri-equipment.

The exhibition was formally inaugurated by Regional Director of Agriculture Department Poresh Chandra Das.



JHENIDAH: Al-haj Mashur Rahman MP speaking as chief guest at a function arranged on the occasion of the opening of the new office of Jhenidah Zila Sahitya Ashar at the town recently.

Long route journey now risky

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Feb 16: Bus journeys to and from the district have become quite risky lately due to over loading and reckless driving.

The drivers hardly follow traffic rules on these routes and resort to high speed. They use to compete for overtaking each other endangering the security of the passengers. Sometimes, they take passengers on the roof as well as on the back bumper.

Beside, the drivers stop their vehicles here and there to collect passengers. As a result passengers can not reach their destinations on time.

It is informed that in the absence of any fare charts bus conductors realise excess fare from the passengers thereby causing frequent altercation with the passengers. Moreover, roads in some places on these routes are said to be in poor shape and have developed numerous potholes for want of proper maintenance.

Hats and bazars in different parts of the district are in deplorable condition causing inconvenience to the cus-

tomers and traders.

The shopkeepers pay taxes to the government but are not getting basic amenities, it is alleged.

The drainage system in most of the hats and bazars are inoperative and as a result, situation worsens during the rainy season when the whole area go under knee-deep water.

Want of space, fixed places for selling different commodities and collection of tolls by the lease holders at a higher rate than the rate set by the government have multiplied their sufferings.

Most of the hats and bazars have no sufficient shades and during the summer and rainy seasons it turns difficult to continue their business, some traders said.

There is no system for the supply of pure water in the markets and the customers and the traders are to use impure pond water in times of need.

In the absence of sanitary latrines and urinals in the hats and bazar areas people

are to defecate on road sides causing health hazards.

Garbages pile up here and there emitting bad odour causing environmental pollution.

Local leaders have urged the authorities to take immediate measures to improve the condition of the markets.

Kushtia Court Railway Station and its surrounding areas have been beset with anti-social activities for quite some time. A group of people who indulge themselves in these types of activities do not bother about the inconvenience of railway passengers as well as people living in and around the railway station.

The station is located just in front of Kushtia police station having common boundary but the police are reportedly ignoring the matter.

The anti-social elements are reportedly making the surrounding atmosphere vicious. Large number of passengers from various parts of the country travel to and from Kushtia Court Railway Station every day.

UP Chairman, members face corruption charge

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, Feb 16: District Anti-Corruption Bureau has filed a case against the chairman and two members of Austagram union in Austagram thana on charge of misappropriation of wheat meant for a project under Food for Works Programme.

According to the Bureau office, during the financial year 1992-93, 51.97 metric tons of wheat were sanctioned for the reconstruction of the road running from DC Road to Mahishertila and a 7-member project committee was formed with Syed A Nayeem, Chairman, Austagram union, as its chairman.

The project chairman lifted 39 metric tons in three instalments and later submitted muster-roll to the TNO with the signature of four persons out of seven of the project committee.

The signatories to the muster-roll were project chairman Syed A Nayeem, project secretary and UP member Younus Ali, project and UP member Zobeid Ali and project member Syed Habibur Rahman. Later, 13.19 metric tons of wheat were found shortage during the measurement of earth.

District Anti-Corruption Bureau investigated the matter and filed a case against four persons for defalcation of wheat worth about Taka 99,044 on January 30 last.

VDP officer faces corruption charge

Another report says: The District Anti-corruption Bureau filed a case against three persons including the ex-Thana Ansar and VDP Officer of Tarail on charge of misappropriation of money and CI sheets sanctioned for a co-operative society recently.

According to the Bureau office, in between 20.11.89 and 20.7.92 Kallimullah, Tarail Thana Ansar and VDP Officer (now posted at Thansree, Bandarban) in collusion with Md Shamsuddin and Anwarul Hakim, president and secretary of Kazla Gram Unnayan Bahumukhi Samabay Samity, misappropriated Taka 19,200 sanctioned as training allowance for 64 members of the society. 3.8 bundles of CI sheets sanctioned for the construction of the office of the society and Taka 6,011 deposited as sharemoney by the members.

1500 ponds in 2 dists lying uncultivated

From Our Correspondent

MADARIPUR, Feb 16: About 1500 ponds in ten thanas of Madaripur and Shariatpur districts have been lying uncultivated for the dispute over the ownership.

A source said that if these ponds were re-excavated and brought under pisciculture fish worth about Taka three crore might be produced per year.

About 50 per cent of the disputed ponds have become silted and dried up due to lack of maintenance. On the other hand, a large number of ponds are covered with water-hyacinth.

Fish cultivation in these ponds is not possible unless comprehensive schemes are taken for proper utilisation of the same.

Fish experts suggested that the authority should come forward in motivating the shareholders of the ponds in fish cultivation.

Meanwhile, catching of fish fry is going on unabated in 10 thanas of Madaripur and

Shariatpur districts shattering the prospect of fish production. Current nets are used for this purpose and nets are selling openly in the hats and bazars of the districts at a cheaper rate despite government ban.

Huge quantities of these fish fry are brought to the markets every day. These fry are not more than four inches in length. This correspondent visited some areas of the two districts and found selling of huge quantities of fish fry.

According to experts, fish scarcity will intensify in the near future due to rampant catching of fish fry. The law enforcing agency is yet to take positive measures against the illegal catching of fish fry.

It may be mentioned here that the government has strictly prohibited catching of fish fry below nine inches in size.

Another report says: Money lending business at high interest rate has been going on all over the district.

One gets life-term for dacoity, murder

From Our Correspondent

GOPALGANJ, Feb 16: A K M Fazlur Rahman, District and Sessions Judge, awarded Abdul Awal Biswas, of village Dolakhola, Montu Khondokar of village Banikhola, Zafar Hossain Talukdar of village Birubala, Manindra Chandra Bhowmik of village Bathandanga, Kalyan Mitra of village Garakhola, Abdul Mannan Chowdhury of village Bishwanathpur, Abdul Razzak of village Bhani under Kasiani thana and Siraj Shaikh of Boalmari thana.

The prosecution story of the case in brief is that a group of armed dacoits numbering about 10/12 entered into the residence of one Bijay Kumar Bhowmik and looted valuable goods including Taka 18,000 cash.

When the villagers resisted the dacoits, they stabbed Bimal Kumar Bhowmik (38), son of Bijay Kumar Bhowmik, and Bimal died on the spot.

A case was filed with Kasiani PS by the father of Bijay Kumar Bhowmik on 14.6.91.

Kasiani thana police investigated the case and submitted charge sheet against Akbar Khan of village Beshpur, Akbar

Sheikh (Aku) of village Baukhola, Kumaresh Mitra of village Garakhola, Abdul Awal Biswas of village Dolakhola, Montu Khondokar of village Banikhola, Zafar Hossain Talukdar of village Birubala, Manindra Chandra Bhowmik of village Bathandanga, Kalyan Mitra of village Garakhola, Abdul Mannan Chowdhury of village Bishwanathpur, Abdul Razzak of village Bhani under Kasiani thana and Siraj Shaikh of Boalmari thana.

A K M Fazlur Rahman, District and Sessions Judge, Gopalganj, examined witnesses and found Abdul Awal Biswas guilty and awarded life term.

The accused was also fined Taka 5 thousand in default to suffer six months' RI more. The other 10 accused persons were acquitted of the charge.

Kamrul Hassan, PP, conducted case in favour of the government.

VC of BAU for suitable syllabus, curricula

From Our Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, Feb 16: Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr Shah Muhammad Farouk stressed the need for changing syllabus and curricula of the university suitable for time to build Bangladesh Agricultural University as a centre for academic excellence in the world.

Speaking as chief patron at the inaugural function of a two-day-long silver jubilee of the Fisheries Faculty of the University, the Vice-Chancellor expressed his hope that Fisheries graduates would contribute more and more in the nation building activities in the socio-economic context of the country so that they can build up the image of the University.

Held at the BAU Zainul Abedin Auditorium, the function was presided over by Professor Dr Md Shahidul Haque, Dean, Faculty of Fisheries.

Earlier, Abdullah Al Noman, Minister for Fisheries and Live Stock formally inaugurated a two-day-long silver jubilee of the Faculty of Fisheries as chief guest. Among others spoke on the occasion were, Professor Dr A K M Aminul Haque, former Vice-Chancellor of Agricultural University, A K M Fazlul Haque MP A K M Ataur Rahman, Professor Dr Md Anwarul Islam and Professor Dr Md Aminul Islam.

Minister for Fisheries and Live Stock Abdullah Al-Noman presented a crest to the founder of the Faculty of Fisheries and former Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr A K M Aminul Haque as a mark of respect.

A colourful rally was also brought out by the teachers, former and present students of the Faculty of Fisheries on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee and went round the campus.

District roundup

NATORE

Best teachers, institutions

From Our Correspondent

Feb 16: Natore Rani Vabani Women's Government College, Kalam High School of Shingra thana and Baliteeta Islampur Dakhilli Madrassa of Lalpur thana have been selected as the best college, school and madrassa respectively of the district in 1993.

Professor Sultana Samiha Begum, Principal of Abdulpur Govt College, Sarful Islam, a school teacher of Damdama Pilot High School and Md Lokhman Hossain, a madrassa teacher, were selected as the best college teacher, school teacher and madrassa teacher of the district.

Azir Uddin, DC, Natore distributed prizes among the best teachers and institutions at a discussion meeting on "Education for work" at the district council auditorium recently.

Md Kyddus Khan, ADC (General) Natore presided over the meeting while Sarifa Kabir, District Education Officer, Natore attended the meeting as special guests.

PABNA

Outbreak of malaria worries residents

Feb 16: Malaria has broken out in an alarming proportion in four thanas of the district claiming 23 lives in the last two months, unofficial sources said, reports UNB.

Another 400 people were attacked by the disease during the same period. Official sources, however, confirmed four deaths and about 200 attacked.

Villagers said, malaria is spreading fast in villages of Handial, Hashpur, Matin Khanpur and Jamukdia of Chatmohar thana, Fojlana, Khanmorich, Setupara, Daudgram and Matichhara of Bhangur thana, Sonahara, Banwarinagar, Demra and Bhaupur of Faridpur thana and Hapania, Matijheelpara, Lakkhikuda, Tarapasha and Chandvagram of Agharia thana.

Most of the dead were the members of the poor families who could not afford to buy mosquito curtain, it is learnt.

The villagers alleged that no attempt has yet been taken to spray insecticides to eliminate the mosquitoes.

TANGAIL

Book fair inaugurated

Feb 16: A week long book fair sponsored by Tangail public library started at public library campus on Sunday, reports BSS.

A total of fifteen book stalls are exhibiting and selling their books. Azizur Rahman, Additional District Magistrate, Tangail inaugurated the fair. Mahmud Kamal, Secretary of public library was among those who spoke on the occasion. Speakers recalled significance of the Amor Ekushe.

MAGURA

Tk 1.5 crore sanctioned for construction of two roads

Feb 15: The Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) has sanctioned Taka 1.5 crore for construction of two roads during the current fiscal year under Annual Development Programme, (ADP), reports UNB.

According to the Executive Engineer, LGED, of the total amount, Taka 75 lakh has been sanctioned for the construction of Magura-Bunagati road and the rest for Sreepur-Sabdulpur road.

The construction work has been started and is expected to be completed within June next. With the completion of these roads rural road communication system will be improved to a great extent.

CHUADANGA

Tk 6cr smuggled goods seized, 85 people held

Feb 16: Bangladesh Rifles seized smuggled goods worth about Taka 6 crore and arrested 85 people in different drives in bordering areas of three districts in the last year, reports UNB.

The districts where the anti-smuggling drives were conducted are Chuadanga, Jhenidah and Meherpur.

The contraband goods include sugar, salt, cycle, cow and buffalo, spices, pulses, salt, fertiliser, cosmetics, spares and utensils. Meanwhile, 1,705 cases of smuggling were filed with different police stations.