

## Heavy siltation: 50,000 acres now unfit for cultivation

From Our Correspondent  
GOPALGANJ, Feb 26: About five thousand acres of cultivable land have become unfit for farming due to heavy siltation in sadar, Kasiani and Tongipara thanas of the district.

Huge quantity of sand has been accumulated on the upper surface of these area after breaching the flood control embankments at different points. The deposited layer of sand will be one to three feet thick. As a result, fertile land have now become almost unfit for cultivation of crops. Consequently, a large number of marginal farmers have become destitute.

According to an assessment by the Agriculture Department experts, due to siltation the district is now unable to produce crops worth about Taka five hundred crore annually.

During the past years flood control embankments at various points along river Modhumati were washed away by the surging water.

The water mixed with sand from the river bed flooded the crop land through these breaches of embankments which ultimately were deposited and damaged the fertility of these arable crop land.

During the last season more areas went under the sand layer due to widespread erosion of the river Madhumati at Durgapur and Baital under sadar thana in which about 15-kilometre-long embankment areas were eroded away by the river.

Poor peasants who once survived on growing crops on this vast tracts of land have now been forced to beg on the streets.

## Honest businessmen!

CHITTAGONG, Feb 26: The businessmen of Biploni Bhan, population known as new market, set a good example here Saturday when they voluntarily handed 172 pieces of Indian sares to the anti-smuggling squad that came to conduct a raid there, reports BSS.

According to a Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) press release, some members of the Biploni Bhan Merchants Welfare Committee approached the anti-smuggling squad of CMP and let the squad know of their voluntarily surrendering contraband sares from different shops. The squad readily accepted the merchants proposal and handed 172 pieces of Indian sares worth Taka 51,600.

The Biploni Bhan merchants also assured the police squad that they would not sell Indian sares from any shops in future, the press release added.

## Letter writing competition

CHITTAGONG, Feb 26: In observance of February as world understanding and peace month, Rotary Club of Islamabad (R.I. dist 3280) invite letter writing in English in an around 200 Words from College, University students and youths within 25 years old addressing to all world leaders on the subject "We want peace in the world" for which club declare a prize of Taka 5000, says a press release.

The winners writing may be published in national dailies and Rotary International Magazine "The Rotarian". The write up should reach Rtn Shafiqul Alam Khan, Deputy Director/PR, Bangladesh Railway, Chittagong on or before March 31.

## Shahbazar gas exploration work in progress

BARISAL, Feb 26: The construction work of 4000-metre drilling well for gas exploration at Shahbazar in Borhanuddin thana is going on in full swing, reports BSS.

Over 1,200 metres of drilling work will be completed according to an official source.

Necessary equipment and materials worth Taka two crore were imported from the United States of America (USA) before starting the work, the source said.

Government sanctioned Taka 35 crore to meet the expenditures of this drilling work, the source added.

About eight to 10 trillion cubic feet of natural gas are likely to be available on 5,180 sq metres area at Shahbazar area under 1,900 metres to 3,000 metres depth.

Besides, it is expected that a large quantity of hydrocarbons will be available there, the source added.



MYMENSINGH: The teachers, students and staff of the BAU proceeding towards local central Shaheed Minar to pay respect to the martyrs of Language Movement.

## Power supply irregular, irrigation hampered

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Feb 26: The irrigation system of the district is being affected badly due to frequent power failure in the district for the last few months, reports UNB.

Production in mills and factories is also being hampered greatly and prices of industrial products are increasing day by day causing concern among the consumers.

The people of the district are getting electricity only 20 to 25 days a month, it is learnt. Local PDB sources said distribution of power is being hampered due to the constant load shedding which is out of their control.

According to local farmers, a large number of agricultural schemes have also been disrupted as most of the deep and deep shallow tubewells went inoperational due to frequent power failure.

They said the price of diesel has also gone up in these areas hampering the irrigation system of the district.

Another report says: The passengers including office staff and the student of different educational institutions have been facing a lot of trouble due to irregular train service on Amnura-Rajshahi and Amnura-Rohanpur railway routes.

The passengers said the train, running on these routes do not maintain any time table.

Due to inadequate number of compartment, most of the time the trains were overloaded and cannot take the normal speed.

Besides, the railway authority stopped running several local trains on these routes causing suffering to the passengers.

The passengers alleged that the authorities did not take any measure for maintaining the time table of the train despite repeated appeals.

The sitting arrangements are in deplorable condition and the train runs at night without light giving opportunity to the anti-social elements to carry out their nefarious activities.

It is also alleged that some corrupt railway employees are allowing ticketless passengers to travel by taking illegal gratification from them and thus depriving the railway of its revenue income.

Meanwhile, housing problem has become acute at the district headquarters.

Local people said, new houses could not be built to cope with the rising demand due to price hike of construction materials like cement, rod, tin and sand.

Many government, autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies have opened their offices in rented houses making the problem more

acute. Some officers and other employees are compelled to live in rented houses due to inadequate staff quarters.

Taking advantage of the situation, some houseowners are charging exorbitant rent, some bankers and government officers alleged. Local people have called upon the government to construct new buildings for its offices and employees to ease the sufferings of the concerned people.

Sale of note books in all the five thanas of the district is going on violating the government ban, says an UNB report.

It is alleged that some dishonest traders of Shibganj, Nachol, Bholahat, Gomostapur and sadar thanas are publishing note books with fake names and addresses which are full of errors and distortion of facts.

It may be mentioned here that government has imposed ban on publishing and selling of note books up to class VIII. Local guardians said, the students, mostly depend on note books without going through the text books.

It is also alleged that shopowners do not sell text books without note books and thus are doing brisk business.

Local elite have urged the government to take necessary measures.

## Stress on violence-free campus

MAULVIBAZAR, Feb 26: The biennial conference of Bangladesh Chhatra League, local unit, was held at Janomilan Kandra with much enthusiasm, reports UNB.

Presided over by Fazlur Rahman it was attended by Azizur Rahman MP as chief guest. The function held on February 10 was addressed, among others, by Abdus Shahid MP, Mahmudur Rahman, Sultan Monsur Ahmed, Jahangir Kabir Kamal and Abdul Wahid.

Mohammad Kamal Hussain and Mohammad Ahsan were elected as President and General Secretary respectively.

The chief guest urged the students to build themselves as the worthy citizens of the country to shoulder the future responsibility and leadership.

Stressing the need for violence free education he called upon them to devote themselves in studies side by side with nation building activities to help alleviate the suffering of common people.

## 4 killed in road mishap

Four people were killed and 15 others injured when a

Habiganj-bound bus collided with a truck near Mushi on Dhaka-Sylhet highway Wednesday.

The dead were identified as Rajob Ali (50), Bashir Miah (36), Tota Miah (38) and Gupesh Dev (40).

The injured were admitted to Sylhet Medical College

## Mysterious killings

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, Feb 26: A school student was stabbed to death by his cousin at village Shahasram under Katadi thana of the district recently.

According to the police, on the night of incident, Humayun suddenly entered the house of his uncle and stabbed his cousin Shaheen, 14, a student of class X of Hazi Shamsuddin High School. Shaheen died on the spot. The assailant fled away immediately after the incident.

The body of alleged killer Humayun 20 was found lying near Kishoreganj-Bairab Road at Piripur under Bajitpur thana on January 29 last. The body bore several injury marks.

Hospital. The truck driver managed to flee the scene with his vehicle.

A case has been filed with the Srimongal thana.

## Road construction plan taken up

A scheme has been undertaken to construct Balisera-Monu-Dolai circular road in the tea garden area during the current fiscal year.

Tea Garden Road Development Committee will construct the road at a cost of Taka 3.50 crore with the financial help from EEC fund.

According to the Committee sources, 14 tea estates of Srimongal and Kamalganj thanas will be benefited after completion of 32.50-km road.

The road was seriously damaged during the floods in 1991 and 1993. As a result transportation of tea and other materials in tea garden areas has been facing serious problems.

Apart from the tea garden, the people of the two thanas will also benefited from the construction of the circular road.



SYLHET Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda speaking at a workers meeting of the district BNP at the local office of the party recently

## 6 people face misappropriation charges

BRAHMANBARIA, Feb 26: District Anti-Corruption Bureau has filed a case against the president and general secretary of Kasba thana central Fishery Samabaya Samity for misappropriating Taka 71,000 of the samity, reports UNB.

It is alleged that President, Abdul Mannan and General Secretary, Elahi Miah in collaboration with each other drew Taka 71,000 and later misappropriated the amount.

The bureau investigated the matter and filed a case against them with the local police.

Meanwhile, District Anti-Corruption Bureau submitted chargesheet against four people, including the Project Chairman Abdur Rashid for misappropriating wheat, allotted for the reconstruction of Chartala-Malshar road.

It is alleged that 11.33 metric tons of wheat worth Taka 72,000, sanctioned for the reconstruction work of the road were misappropriated by the project chairman and three others.

The bureau inquired the matter and filed case with Ashuganj police on 31st May, 1991.

## Work on Tk 6.85cr town protection scheme in satisfactory progress

From Our Correspondent

MOULVIBAZAR, Feb 26: The work on Maulvibazar town protection scheme is on satisfactory progress and expected to be completed by April next.

The government sanctioned about Taka 6 crore 85 lakh for the scheme under "Secondary Town Integrated Flood Protection Project."

According to Maulvibazar circle source of the Water Development Board, (WDB) the scheme included reconstruction of 0.84 kilo-metre-long flood protection wall and core wall, boulder revetment in the both inner sides of 1.30 kilo-metre long existing earth embankment and reconstruction of 4.91 kilometre long protection embankment.

The existing town protection wall, which was constructed in 1984-85 financial year is now need reconstruction. Many cracks have developed in the wall within two years of the construction and it failed to protect the town from floods of the river Monu.

Local people alleged the construction work of that wall was improper. According to the new scheme, the proposed flood wall will be reconstructed in place of existing old wall.

The WDB has taken up another five schemes for the construction and reconstruction

of different flood protection embankments in Moulvibazar district under Food for Works Programme. A total of 4383 metric tons of wheat has already been sanctioned for these schemes.

According to WDB source, of the schemes, 2387 metric tons of wheat have been allocated for reconstruction of 22.50 kilo-metre-long flood protection embankment along the 'Monu River Irrigation Project', 300 metric tons of wheat for reconstruction of 3.29 kilometre-long embankment in 'Sharipur Flood Protection Project', 160 metric tons of wheat for 3 kilo-metre-long embankment in 'Shakha Borak Sub-project', 1350 metric tons of wheat for 10.44 kilo-metre-long 'Monu river FCD sub-project' and 186 metric tons of wheat for reconstruction of 6.50 kilometre-long flood control embankment in 'Hamamichhera sub-project'.

A UNB report says: Primary education is being hampered in the district as there are no primary schools in one third villages of all the six thanas. According to District Primary Education office, there are only 693 government primary schools in the district but the number of villages in the district is 2046.

## Toll collectors harass fertilizer dealers

JAMALPUR, Feb 26: The transportation of fertilizer from the Jamuna Fertilizer Factory in Tarakandi of Sharishabari thana is under threat due to the tyranny of a section of toll collectors, terrorists and political touts, says an UNB report.

The dealers said a section of extortionists and terrorists have illegally built eight jetty ghats in the river routes adjacent to the Jagannathganj ghat for collection of tolls. They force them to load the urea bags through their ghats and collect Taka 10 per bag.

The ghats are: Mama-Bhagina Jetty, Bhai Bhai Jetty, Jamuna Jetty Syndicate, Aperi Jetty, Sarker Jetty, Abhijato Shar Bopone, Talukder Jetty, Purbanchal Jetty and Panchchara Jetty.

The enlisted dealers of the factory use the river routes of Jamuna for transport of their fertilizer. About 50,000 bags of fertilizer are being despatched to 16 northern districts through the river routes daily.

The factory price of a 50-kg bag urea is Taka 203.75, but it stands at Taka 215.00 upto

loading on the boats at Sirajganj ghat after satisfying the mastans and brokers, the dealers said.

The Jamuna factory produces 1,700 metric tons of urea daily. Most of the urea are being supplied to the 16 northern districts of Rajshahi Division and in greater Mymensingh district.

The dealers from the distant areas finding no other way out silently handover the tolls to the jetty owners 'Mastans' just to avoid any harassment.

Due to this mal-practice the price of fertilizer in the northern districts has shot up unexpectedly during the boro season. A bag of urea is now being sold between Taka 275 and Taka 285 in the markets.

The dealers alleged that the law-enforcing agencies and the factory management so far took no action against the extortionists due to reasons best known to them.

They have urged to the government to form a committee to probe into the matter and take immediate steps in this regard.

## Tk 19cr sugar lying unsold

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Feb 26: Sugar worth Taka 19 crore is lying unsold in Kushtia Sugar Mills godown for influx of smuggled Indian sugar, according to sources.

Indian sugar, much cheaper than the local flooded the local markets affecting the sale of locally produced sugar as well as a large number of sugarcane growers.

It is noticed that dealers are more reluctant to purchase Indian sugar than the locally produced sugar due to, mainly price difference. According to the General Manager of Kushtia Sugar Mills, M A Aziz, the sugarcane crushing target for the current year was

1,67,650 metric tons to produce 14,250 metric tons of sugar with a recovery percentage of 8.5 whereas 1,27,880 metric tons of sugarcane was crushed producing 10,305 metric tons of sugar in 95 days with a recovery percentage of 8.22. The general manager also disclosed that only 2,758 metric tons of sugar have so far been sold in the local market and the rest of the 7,547 metric tons remained unsold in the mills godown.

Thousands of sugarcane growers who supplied sugarcane to the mills on credit have been passing hard days due to non-payment of their products.

## District roundup

PATUAKHALI

### Office-bearers

Feb 26: The election of Bangladesh Government High Schools Teachers Association, Patuakhali district unit was held at Patuakhali Government Girls High Schools teachers auditorium on Tuesday, reports BSS.

The newly elected office-bearers are president K M Sarwar Hossain, vice president Md Zainul Abedin Gazi, general secretary Shib Sankar Levnath, joint-general secretary Noorunnahar Begum, assistant general secretary — Dipok Haldar, treasurer — Goote Afroz and auditor Md Abdur Rahman.

Feroza Sultana, Head Mistress of Patuakhali Govt. Girls High School conducted the election.

MAGURA

### Demand for mid-term election

Feb 26: Jatiya Party leader Kazi Zafar Ahmed Saturday reiterated the demand for mid-term election under a neutral caretaker government, says UNB.

"Elections under the present government will not be free and fair. That's why all the opposition parties are demanding elections under a neutral caretaker government," he said at an election meeting here.

Criticising the government for failure to improve the lot of commonman, Kazi Zafar said, the country is heading towards a political change and 'the fall of BNP is just now a matter of time'.

Organised by local unit of Jatiya Party at Binodpur High School ground ahead of the by-election in Magura-2 constituency the meeting was presided over by local JP leader Nazrul Islam.

JP Secretary General Khaleedur Rahman Tito, party candidate for by-election in Magura-2 constituency Nilal Roy Chowdhury and party leaders Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Shah Mohammad Abu Zafar, Hasan Siraj Suja and Rezaul Kabir Chunnun also addressed the meeting.

They also addressed an election meeting at Shirgram High School ground in Mohammadpur thana.

NAOGAON

### 2.78 lakh pry books distributed

Feb 26: The Primary Education Department has distributed two lakh 78 thousand three hundred sets of book free of cost among the students of class-I to class-V throughout the district this year to ensure primary education for all, reports BSS.

Of the books, 74 thousand sets have been distributed to the students of class-I, while 63,700 sets to the students of class-II, 55,800 sets to the students of class-III, 46,900 sets to the students of class-IV and 37,900 sets of book have been distributed to the students of class-V.

Meanwhile, a total of 9,105 poor children studying in 105 government and non-government primary schools of the district have been brought under Food for Education Programme in the current fiscal year.

BARISAL

### PHED to sink 4,630 tubewells in S-dists

Feb 26: Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) has been sinking 4,630 tubewells in eleven southern districts at a cost of Taka 9.50, 46,000 under Barisal circle during the current fiscal year, says a BSS report.

The districts covered by this programme are Barisal, Jhalakati, Bholahat, Pirojpur, Patuakhali, Barguna, Faridpur, Rajbari, Gopalganj, Madaripur and Shariatpur.

According to an official source, of the total, 4,278 tubewells are being installed in cooperation with UNICEF and 352 tubewells with the financial assistance from Saudi Arabia.

Of the total 1,892 tubewells are deep and 2,738 tubewells are shallow. Meanwhile, the department has installed 392 deep tubewells and 714 shallow tubewells, the source added.

Some 808 deep and 1,255 shallow tubewells will be installed in four districts of Barisal, Jhalakati, Pirojpur and Bholahat under Barisal division and 884 deep tubewells in two districts of Patuakhali and Barguna under Patuakhali division and 200 deep and 1,483 shallow tubewells in five districts of Faridpur, Rajbari, Gopalganj, Madaripur and Shariatpur under Faridpur division.

MUNSHIGANJ

### BNP believes in politics of development

Feb 26: Commerce Minister M Shamsul Islam said the present democratic government believed in politics of development, says BSS.

He was addressing a spontaneous gathering while inaugurating the reexcavation of Dighirpar-Makuhati canal at Makuhati under Munshiganj district.

Deputy minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Abdul Hye also addressed the meeting.

Commerce Minister said, the government has attached priority to development of rural infrastructure for the betterment of commonmen.

Referring to different development programmes including canal digging, road and culvert construction the minister said, for a self sustained economy, it was a must to make such programmes successful. He called upon the people to come forward with concerted efforts to implement the on going development projects in the country.

Later, the minister formally inaugurated the reexcavation of the canal.

RANGPUR

### Steps taken for work-oriented edn system

Feb 26: Education Minister, Barrister Jamiruddin Siricar Saturday said the present democratic government has taken pragmatic steps for introducing a work-oriented and appropriate education system for materialising the hopes and aspirations of the people, reports BSS.

The education minister was addressing as the chief guest at the foundation laying ceremony of the science building of Pirgachha government college at Rangpur.

The function was also addressed by Deputy Commissioner Afzal Hossain, BNP leader Rahimuddin Barsha and Principal of the local college Shah Mohammad Ayub Hossain.

The education minister said, the BNP government has already taken programme for restoring academic atmosphere in the educational arena through holding examination on time and eradicating session jam. He said, Open University has been established to impart practical as well as higher education to the common masses.

He pointed out that the examinations had been computerised to stop malpractices and unfairness. He said that mass education and Compulsory Primary Education Programmes are being implemented to eradicate illiteracy from the country by the year 2000.

NARAIL

### Painting workshop held

Feb 26: A 10-day long painting workshop under the supervision of internationally reputed artist SM Sultan concluded in Narail Sunday, reports UNB.

Organised by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy the workshop, first ever of its kind held in the district, was participated by talented young artists. A total of 14 artists from four divisions of the country took part in the workshop.

Director General of the Academy Mobarak Hossain Khan attended the concluding ceremony and distributed certificates among the participants.

The workshop, organised at the residence of the artist SM Sultan, also included a painting show in which 30 works were displayed.

Artist Sultan in his speech said, "we have a glorious and distinctive tradition and culture". He emphasised the need for continuous and dedicated work to uphold the tradition.

Among others, Deputy Commissioner, Md Ali Hossain and Director of the fine Arts Department Subir Chowdhury spoke on the occasion.

JESSORE

### 7 injured in clashes

Feb 26: Seven persons were injured in a series of clashes between workers of rival political parties recently, reports BSS.

The clashes originated over submission of a tender at Public Works Department of office here said an informed source.

A tense situation is prevailing in the town. A case has been recorded with the Kotwali police.