

Help build decent society

MURADNAGAR (Comilla). Mar 21: Works Minister Barister Rafiqul Islam Miah on Thursday called upon the people in general and the political leaders and workers in particular to extend their all-out support to the government in implementing massive development programmes as well as institutionalising hard earned democracy, reports BSS.

Addressing a public meeting at Saliakandi union of Muradnagar, Barister Rafiq, who is also the Joint Secretary General of the BNP, said that the present government under the able leadership of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia had engaged itself in gigantic development activities throughout the country in a bid to fight out hunger, poverty, illiteracy and ignorance from the society.

He said each and every conscious citizen, particularly the political leaders and workers, had a responsible role in building a decent society.

Listing the achievements of the BNP government during the last three years, Barister Rafiq said the present government had presented the nation with a rule of law. There is not a single person kept behind bars due to political reasons, he added.

He said brisk development activities like construction and reconstruction of roads, bridges, culverts, building of new schools, colleges and other rural infrastructures were the common scene all over the country today.

Kushtia Sugar Mills closed down, Tk 3cr bills remain outstanding

KUSHTIA, Mar 21: The crushing of sugarcane at Kushtia Sugar Mills at Jagati was closed last week, officials said, reports UNB.

About 13,071 metric tons of sugar were produced by crushing about 1.60 lakh metric tons of sugarcane in the current season which began in November last year and continued upto March 16.

The target for crushing of sugarcane was 1,67,650 metric tons and production of sugar was 14,250 metric tons which could not be achieved due to shortage of sugarcane, officials added.

Mentionable that Indian sugar has flooded the markets of the northern region of the country which is causing serious setback to sugar mills.

Tk 17.43 crore road, bridge uplift work in progress

JAMALPUR, Mar 21: The work on 12 roads and 43 bridges under Rural Development Project-13 at a cost of Tk 17.43 crore in the district is progressing fast, says UNB.

Financed by Asian Development Bank (ADB) the project is being implemented jointly by the Local Government Engineering Department and Roads and Highways Department.

The roads include Bakshiganj-Sanandabari road, Dewabganj-Rajibpur road, Jamalpur-Chechua road, Matarganj-Sarishabari road and Tarakandi-Bhupur road.

The work is expected to be completed by December next. After the completion of the project, communication problem of five lakh people of the area will be solved to a great extent.

Ferry services disrupted for two hours

KHULNA, Mar 21: Ferry services remained suspended for two hours at Rupsha ghat following a blockade by Khulna Unnayan Sangram Prishad (KUSP) demanding implementation of its 18-point demand, says UNB.

The demand includes, construction of Rupsha bridge as well as airport and Export Processing Zone (EPZ) at Khulna.

During the blockade from 10 am to 12 noon, movement of all modes of vehicles was disrupted creating serious traffic jam at the Rupsha ferry ghat.

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman, on way from Khulna to Bagerhat, had to discontinue his journey for about an hour from 11 am at the ferry ghat due to the blockade. He was accompanied by Khulna City Mayor Sheikh Tayebur Rahman.

Briefly addressing the gathering of blockade organisers and supporters, the foreign minister and the Mayor expressed their solidarity with the KUSP demands.

The KUSP convener Abu Mohammad Yusuf also spoke on the occasion.



JHENIDAH: A truck carrying fire wood (pieces of plants) for use in brickfields.

— Star photo

Chhatak Paper Mills

Problem in bamboo transportation likely to stop production

From Our Correspondent

MAULVIBAZAR, Mar 21: The production of Chhatak Paper Mills is likely to be stopped for problems in transportation of raw material, bamboos from Sonarichera and Champarichera forests, it is reported.

Bamboos extracted from the forests under Kamalganj thana of the district are supplied to the paper mills for use as raw material.

The river Dholai is used for transportation of bamboos which runs through both, Bangladesh and Indian territories.

It is learnt that some portion of the western bank of the river near boarder demarcation pillars 1908, 1909 and 1910 was eroded during the last rainy season.

As a result, a bend of about 400 to 500 yards has been created for which the problem has arisen.

Claiming the Indian territory,

the Indian Boarder Security Force (BSF) has stopped the transportation of bamboos resulting in the stoppage of production of the paper mills.

The BDR and forest department sources informed that bamboos worth over Taka two crore are ready for supply to the mill.

This transportation problem has seriously affected the Chhatak Paper Mills in Sunamganj which depends on supply of bamboos from the forests.

The forests were leased to local contractors by the government and as per the contract, about 50 lakh pieces of bamboos must reach the Chhatak factory by end of March this year or paper production may have to be shut down.

The detained bamboo bundles (locally known as chali) are awaiting instruction to be

moved to other places. But according to experts, the bundles must reach the factory within a specific time following its extraction or the bamboos may not be fit for use, meaning loss of crores of taka.

In the meantime, thousands of bamboo bundles are being prepared for shipment which also ultimately have to face similar condition. About seven lakh of such bamboos are waiting for shipment from Champarichera forest.

On the other hand, if bamboos are not cut on time, growth of new shooting of bamboos will be delayed, ultimately hampering supply.

Until transportation problem is solved, production of paper at Chhatak factory might be stopped.

Office bearers

The election of Maulvibazar district Association of Advocate Bar was held recently at Bar

TB patients on rise

From Our Correspondent

KURIGRAM, Mar 21: The number of TB patients is increasing alarmingly in Kurigram district.

The only TB Hospital in the district is beset with enormous problems causing much sufferings to the increasing number of patients.

The hospital was established in 1965. Normally 8 to 10 patients came to the hospital every day. About 1000 to 1500 new TB patients were detected who are getting only outdoor treatment at the TB hospital.

The overall environment of the TB hospital is not at all hygienic. Toilets and urinals remain dirty as they are not cleared regularly.

Another report says: Mosquito menace has assumed an alarming proportion causing untold sufferings to the town dwellers and exposing health hazards.

The mosquitoes bite even in day time and the poor people who have no means to pur-

chase mosquito-nets pass sleepless nights. It has become impossible to work smoothly because of the biting of these tiny insects. Normal work in offices, business establishments and hospitals are also being hampered. They mosquito menace has altogether paralysed the civic life of the people.

The pourashava authorities, however, seem to have turned a deaf ear to the public demand for launching anti-mosquito menace. During the last few years the population of Kurigram pourashava area has increased considerably but the arrangement for eradication of mosquitoes did not show any improvement.

The ponds with luxuriant growth of water hyacinth, kutcha drains, marshy places, service latrines, water-logging around the tubewells, jungles and garbages stockpiled on road side areas are acting as fertile breeding centres of mosquitoes. Silted drains with stagnant water in the town areas are yet to be renovated and as such breeding of mosquitoes continue in an alarming proportion.

It may be mentioned here that Kurigram pourashava lacks proper drainage system.

Meanwhile, the annual sports competition of Kurigram Government Girls' High School was held recently at the school ground with much enthusiasm.

The competition was formally inaugurated by Muhammad Abdul Haque, Deputy Commissioner, Kurigram in presence of a large gathering. About 100 competitors took part in the sports competition in three groups.

The annual athletic meet and annual cultural competition of Kurigram Shishu Niketon ended recently with much enthusiasm.

It was formally opened by Muhammad Abdul Haque, Deputy Commissioner, Kurigram, in presence of a large number of guardians, students, teachers and elite of the locality.

After the competition, Muhammad Abdul Haque, DC, Kurigram, gave away prizes to the winners as chief guest. The prize giving ceremony was presided over by Shalendra Nath Roy, Principal, Shishu Niketon.

Scarcity of fish prevailing for last two months

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, Mar 21: Acute scarcity of fish has been prevailing throughout the district for the last two months.

The pisciculture in the district has been badly affected due to massive siltation of the rivers Meghna, Dhanu, Ghoraultra, Narasunda, Brahmaputra, Kali and different beels and canals.

The unplanned use of chemical fertilizers and insecticides in crop fields has affected the growth of different kinds of fish creating scarcity due to fall in production.

Hundreds of fishermen in the district have been facing numerous problems including shortage of funds and price hike of fishing materials.

Different kinds of fish were available in abundance in ponds, beels and rivers of the district but now the situation has become quite opposite due to indiscriminate fishing by non-professionals.

The existence of the professional fishermen is at stake and as a result, some of them have left their profession and other migrated to other places for their survival.

Meanwhile, the price of meat has shot up due to scarcity of fish in the markets.

House rent up

House rent has increased manifold at Kishoreganj town due to acute shortage of accommodation over the last few years.

The middle class people as

well as the small traders are being affected badly because of house rent rise.

At present a single unite of residential quarter is being let out at a monthly rent of Taka 1200. In many cases the house-owners realise advance rent from the tenants. As a result, many tenants especially the fixed income groups find it difficult to manage their accommodation here.

Due to accommodation crisis, a large number of professionals both in private and public organisations are to live in this town leaving behind their families at village homes. Consequently their children are being deprived of proper care and educational facilities.

The crisis of accommodation both for residential and commercial purposes.

Youths using rectified spirit freely

Rectified spirit is being freely consumed as alcohol by the youths in the district town causing moral degradation.

Residents complained that addicted young people buy the spirit from homeopathic doctors and take it as alcohol by mixing water.

It is alleged that some dishonest homeopathic doctors inspite of having licences to practise and manufacturers are selling the spirit to the addicts at exorbitant prices.

As per government rule, licences for rectified spirit are only issued to the bonafide

homeopath practitioners and homeo-medicine manufacturers.

It may be mentioned that there is no liquor shop in the district but it is openly sold in the town.

Meanwhile, drug addiction among the youth has increased here causing concern among the parents and guardians, school and college students make the largest groups of addicts, it is learnt.

Raw skin processing creating problems

The processing of the raw skins of animals in the residential areas of the pourashava has been causing health hazard and sufferings to the people of the areas and the pedestrians.

It creates a bad smell when the raw skins are salted in open space adjacent to residential houses and public roads. Bad smell emits all along the areas causing health hazard to the people of the town.

The situation turns worst every year after Eid-ul-Azha when the unscrupulous skin dealers become active in the collection of raw skins from different areas and preserve here and there in the town.

The shops keepers and traders pay enhanced tax to the government and local *jaradars* without any return. The hats and bazars have not been expanded although the population increased manifold.

The shops-keepers and vendors occupy much space hampering movement of buyers and sellers.

In the absence of drainage system the hats and bazars of the district go under knee-deep water following down-pour. The revenue collected from the hats and bazars has not been spent to improve the condition of the markets.

Most of the hats and bazars have no sheds exposing the buyers and sellers to scorching heat of sun and shower during monsoon. Tolls are collected at a high rate than the fixed one. The *jaradars* collect tolls at their own will.

Absence of tubewells in some hats and bazars increased sufferings of the people.

The people of this thickly populated town urged upon the concerned authorities to take appropriate steps to stop the activities of the unscrupulous skin dealers for the sake of public health and sanitation.

Hats, bazars in bad condition

All hats and bazars in 13 thanas of Kishoreganj district are now in a deplorable condition causing inconvenience to the sellers and buyers.

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ple. Filths and garbages are piled up hither and thither creating bad odour which threatens public health.

Indian pesticides flood markets

Indian spurious pesticides are being sold in different markets of Mymensingh, Netrakona and Kishoreganj district violating the government ban.

The farmers said, they are using pesticides namely, thiodin, Thinol, DDT and XN50 herbish in their land due to its lower prices. But they said they do not get the expected results.

Local leaders alleged that the spurious pesticides are being sold in different markets openly with the connivance of the concerned officials. Knowing fully well that these are affecting the crops and land fertility badly. The concerned authorities so far took no action against the smugglers and its sellers, they added.

According to agri-scientists, extensive use of spurious smuggled pesticides decreases the production capacity of the land. Besides, use of these pesticides also affects the health of the farmers as well, they added.

Local pesticide producers urged the authorities to take action against those who are responsible for marketing Indian sub-standard and spurious pesticides.

District roundup

TANGAIL

Tiger caught, killed

Mar 21: People of Shinhargul under Elasin union of Delduar thana caught a tiger on Sunday night, reports BSS.

The tiger, about five feet long came to drink water in a pond of the village. The villagers caught it and gave it a sound beating. The injured tiger expired the next morning.

Hundreds of people gathered there to see the tiger. Forest department took the skin of the tiger.

A few months back another tiger was caught and killed at Baminhata under Bhuapur thana.

FARIDPUR

'Grow quality jute to regain int'l market'

Mar 21: Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal ibne Yusuf stressed the need for producing quality jute in order to regain the international market, reports BSS.

The minister was addressing a big rally of jute farmers at Bhanga thana headquarter Saturday.

The rally organised by Jute Directorate in connection with integrated jute production and marketing programme was attended by over one thousand farmers of Comilla, Brahmanbaria, Shariatpur, Gopalganj, Madaripur, Rajbari and Faridpur districts.

Underlining the importance of the programme the minister said that this project has been taken up by the jute directorate at an estimated cost of Taka four crore to boost jute production in the country and also to create marketing facilities.

He further said that the present cost is determined to improve the lot of the jute farmers. The government is encouraging the farmers to grow jute by providing them with training, free inputs and other necessary support.

The rally was addressed among others by Director General of Jute Directorate Badre Alam Khan, Deputy Commissioner of Faridpur KM Nurul Huda, jute growers' representatives and Dr Kazi Abu Yusuf MP. The rally was presided over by Director of Jute Md Kamaluddin.

According to an official source the project would continue for twenty months. The European Economic Community is providing assistance for the project.

PATUAKHALI

Tk 16.5 crore for road development works

Mar 21: Roads and Highways Department has taken up a plan to repair three roads in the region at a cost of about Taka 16.50 crore in the current fiscal year, reports UNB.

According to officials, necessary steps are being taken to issue work-order for the repair and renovation of Pirojpur-Nazirpur road, Matibhanga-Patgati road and Gopalganj-Mollaharhat road.

Meanwhile, Barisal-Beltali and Charmonai-Mehendigonj roads will also be developed at a cost of Taka 13,29,980 in the current fiscal.

With the completion of the works, road communication in the areas will be developed to a great extent.

C'NABAGANJ

Cattle diseases break out

Mar 21: Cattle diseases locally known as 'khura' and 'golafala' have broken out in an alarming proportion in five thanas causing grave concern among the farmers, says UNB.

About 500 cattlehead died of the diseases and 15,000 others have been affected in sadar, Shibganj, Nachol, Bholahat and Gomostapur thanas in the last few months, local people said.

The diseases affect the throat and mouth of the cattle. Milch cows and calves are worst victims of the diseases.

Shortage of necessary medicines in the local markets for the treatment of cattlehead aggravated the situation, local people said.

Poor farmers are the worst sufferers as they can not purchase cattlehead to plough their lands.

Local people urged the concerned authority to take proper steps to check the outbreak of the cattle diseases and come forward with short term loan for the affected farmers to enable them to purchase cattlehead on emergency basis.

CHITTAGONG

3-day-long centenary programme begins

Mar 21: The three-day centenary celebration of Masterda Surya Sen begins here on Saturday, reports BSS.

An elaborate programme was chalked out in this connection which includes, a visit to Masterda's ancestral village Noapara, Rauza, discussion on the life and activities of Masterda, reception to close associates of Masterda who have come from Calcutta, cultural functions, grameen melas etc.

Functions will be held in the city and at Noapara, the birth place of Masterda.

The close associates of Masterda who are already in Chittagong will attend the three-day birth centenary functions in the city.

Member-Secretary of Masterda Surya Sen 'Janma-Shata Barshiki Ujjasan Parishad' and city Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury has called upon all sections of people to attend the function.

KHULNA

Metric system violators fined

Mar 21: Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institution (BSTI), Khulna launched raids in hats and bazars under Khulna and Barisal Divisions to detect violation of metric system of weighing and measurements by businessmen, reports BSS.

The raids were conducted in Khulna Kotwali and Sonadanga police stations, Jhikargacha and Bagarpara police stations, and Meherpur sadar and Gangaj police stations under Khulna Division and Jhalakathi sadar and Kathalia police stations under Barisal Division in cooperation with local administration.

The mobile courts detected 95 case of violation of metric system and realised Taka twentyone thousand five hundred as fines on the spot and instituted formal cases against 39 persons.

JAMALPUR

Tk 6.75 crore to construct 73 pry schools

Mar 21: Construction and reconstruction of 73 primary schools in 12 thanas of Jamalpur and Sherpur districts have been started under the education for all programme, reports UNB.

According to official sources, Taka 6.75 crore have been allocated for the implementation of the project.

The project is being implemented under the supervision of Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) and is expected to be completed during June next.

After the completion of the project, about 30,000 children will get education facilities.

Meanwhile, local people urged the government to extend the food for education programme in these two districts to encourage the poor families to send their children to schools.

BARISAL

2 Sharbahara Party members held, arms recovered

Mar 21: Banaripara thana police arrested two members of outlawed Sharbahara Party and recovered fire-arms and explosives from their possessions on Tuesday last, a police press release said, reports BSS.

The arrested persons are: Mozammel Hossain 28 and A Mannan 25. Police recovered one shutter gun, one country made pipe gun and four rounds of rifle bullets.

SATKHIRA

Six commit suicide

Mar 21: Six people including three housewives in two thanas of the district allegedly committed suicide by taking endrine in the last three days, police said on Thursday, reports UNB.

Family feud is learnt to be the main cause of their suicide.

The deceased are Majibur Rahman (30) of Kaliganj, Ayesha (22), wife of Mosharrat of Khatunganj, Jalal (40) of Ghana, Shandhyarani, wife of Santosh of Bharna, Rehana (18), wife of Quader of Bharkhali and Kawsar, a mini-bus driver of Sonadanga.



GOPALGANJ: The students of Bashbaria Government Primary School attend classes under open sky. The roof of the institution was blown away by the storm in 1988.

— Star photo

Minister opens flood control project

BAGERHAT, Mar 21: Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman, on Sunday said that uplift programmes were being implemented by the government to ensure balanced development of all areas and attain national prosperity, reports BSS.

He was speaking as the chief guest at a huge public meeting organised by the beneficiaries of the Jekhali Embankment Sub-Project at Bhattabaliahat Government Primary School maidan under Bagerhat sadar thana.

The government, he said, was ceaselessly working to create jobs and provide the facilities to improve the condition of the people throughout the country.

The Foreign Minister said

that people in the project areas however, would have to take initiatives to avail facilities like irrigation that would quickly help change their living conditions.

Earlier, the Foreign Minister visited the project area and formally inaugurated the sub project by unveiling a plaque.

The 37-kilometre long Jekhali Embankment Sub-project for flood control, water drainage and irrigation on completion, by June next year, will protect about 14,500 hectares of cultivable land of Bagerhat sadar, Fakirhat and Rampal thanas from saline intrusion.

Benefitting from the irrigation facilities the same area, farmer will also be enabled to produce an additional 20,000 tons of foodgrains.