

Tk 41.47 crore credit scheme for rural women

LOHAGARAH (Nartl), Apr 16: The government has undertaken a massive credit programme for employment generation of rural women involving Tk 41 crore 47 lakh, reports BSS.

This was stated by the State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Sarwar Rahman at a women's gathering at Dighalia High School premises at Lohagarah Tuesday.

She said, under the programme 36 thousand poor and destitute women of 12 thanas of the country would be organised to make them self-reliant through employment generation.

The state minister said a massive awareness programme for women has also been taken by women affairs department. An epoch making step for prevention of oppression on women has been taken by the present government, she added.

Rahman said the government has amended the laws relating to prevention of child marriage and Muslim marriage registration.

She urged all concerned to make illiterate and backward women conscious about laws of rights to prevent oppression on women and resist so-called 'fatawas'.

The State Minister disbursed employment generation loans amongst 12 women in favour of Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) as token.

Two awarded life-term for murder

SATKHIRA, Apr 16: Two people were awarded life term imprisonment and another one was given two years RI on Monday for killing a fisherman of village Kalikapur in Kaliganj thana of the district, reports UNB.

The convicted Aziz Sheikh and Jalil Sheikh of Kalikapur were given life term while Siddique Sheikh of the same village was awarded two years RI.

The court also fined Aziz and Jalil Tk 5,000 each and in default, to suffer another one year imprisonment more.

According to the prosecution story, while going to fishing at a canal near Wortal beel, Razak Shikh found Aziz, Jalil and Siddique who were harvesting paddy from the beel illegally. When he asked them why they were cutting paddy they became furious and beat him to death on April 11.

After examining 12 prosecution witnesses and records the Additional District and Sessions Judge NS Bashullah delivered the judgement amid the crowded court.

One gets 7 yrs' RI for hijacking

CHITTAGONG, Apr 16: Second Sessions and Anti-Terrorism Tribunal Judge Syed Enayet Ullah today sentenced one M Masud Alamgir alias Masud to seven years rigorous imprisonment (RI) and fined him Taka one thousand in default to suffer three months more RI on charge of terrorism, reports BSS.

The judge acquitted another accused Abdul Mannan.

The prosecution story is that on July 29, 1993, complainant Geeti Kona Roy and her sister Tripti Kona Roy were going to Mimi Super Market near Probratak Sanga by a rickshaw. Two hijackers suddenly blocked their way at daggerpoint and snatched away two gold chains from them. Hearing their hue and cry, some patrol police caught Masud. A case was filed with Panchalaish Police.

Mass hunger strike plan

SYLHET, Apr 16: The Greater Sylhet Ganadabi Parishad (H-S) will observe a 'mass hunger strike' in all the four district headquarters of Sylhet region on April 18 to press the demand for immediate formation of a new administrative division.

The six-hour hunger strike would begin at 10:00 am on April 18 in the office premises of the Deputy Commissioners of Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Habiganj and Sunamganj.

One missing in Ctg boat capsized

CHITTAGONG, Apr 16: A man was missing as a mechanised boat with 13 people aboard capsized in the Karnaphuli river here on Thursday, reports UNB.

Police said the boat carrying the passengers from Firingbazar of Kotwali thana was going to the other bank of the river when it overturned in the mid river at about 4 pm.

Twelve people swam ashore but one could not be traced. The missing man was identified as Muktipada Bose of Teribazar of the city.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia went to the house of Emazuddin Mondol, a carpenter of village Shaltipara in Mithapukur thana and enquired about the well-being of his family members during her visit here on April 12. —PID photo

Scarcity of fish acute

CHANDPUR, Apr 16: Acute scarcity of fish has been prevailing throughout the district for a long time.

Leading fish traders informed this correspondent that pisciculture in the district has been badly affected by the massive siltation of the rivers, Meghna, Padma, Dakatia, and Dhanagoda.

Besides, pisciculture is being hampered due to unplanned use of chemical fertilizers in the crop fields.

On the other hand thousands of fishermen in the district have been facing various problems including shortage of fund, price hike fishing materials. About one lakh fishermen earn their livelihood by fishing in the rivers, canals and ponds.

The fishermen complained that due to shortage of fund they are forced to borrow money from local money lenders at a very high rate of interest to buy necessary inputs. They allege that due to complex procedure they are not getting bank loans in time.

They also complained that non professional fishermen are getting the bank and other fa-

From Our Correspondent

cilities due to the reasons not known.

As a result, government funds allotted for the fishermen are being used in the name of fishermen's co-operative societies.

It is further reported that in most of the cases genuine fishermen cannot catch fish after getting lease of the water bodies as the non professionals are engaged in catching fish by force. So, the existence of professional fishermen is at a stake. As a result, some of them have left their profession. Some others have migrated to other places for better earning and survival.

Meanwhile, prices of meat have gone up due to the scarcity of fish in the market. So, the prices of fish have increased causing inconvenience to the low-income and middle class groups.

Another report says: A two-day-long training programme on 'Toxicity of pesticides on fish and aquatic pollution' was held recently at Fisheries Research Institute, Riverine Station, Chandpur.

Reputed scientists and

Director of Fisheries Research Institute, Dr M A Mazid attended the training programme as a chief guest. He distributed certificates among the trainees. About fifty trainees from seven thanas of the district participated in the training.

Dr M A Mazid stressed on the use of pesticides to save crops from the pest invasion.

A meeting was held in the institute on the occasion. Dr D C Halder, Chief Scientific Officer presided over the meeting. The meeting was addressed by Prof. Dr Somen Dewan of Agriculture University, Mymensingh, Ali Akbar, Principal, Fisheries Training Institute Md Hamidur Rahman, Deputy Director, Agriculture and Prof. Mohammad Hossain Khan.

The speakers stressed the introduction of rice-cum-fish farming with using proper pesticides to boost up production. They advised to follow the integrated pest management method to control insecticides in crop fields, so that fish and paddy can equally be produced.

Bus journey on most routes costly, troublesome

CHUADANGA, Apr 16: Bus journey on Chuadanga-Kaliganj via Jibannagar, Chuadanga-Jhenidah and Chuadanga-Meherpur routes has become troublesome.

The conductors often realise excess fare and misbehave with the passengers it is alleged.

The drivers do not maintain time-table. It takes much time to reach Jhenidah, Kaliganj and Meherpur from Chuadanga.

It is alleged that many of the drivers do not have valid driving licence.

The condition of most of the buses is bad and the journey has become unsafe for the passengers. The buses run overloaded for most of the time. Accidents are also frequent on these routes.

On the other hand, reckless driving by the coaster drivers on Chuadanga-Jhenidah-Jessore-Khulna routes and Chuadanga-Jibannagar-Kaliganj-Jessore-Khulna route has also abnormally increased as a result the passengers are to travel in panic.

From Our Correspondent

Steps are needed to stop this practice by the drivers.

Housing problem acute

Another report says: Residential accommodation problem has become acute at the town.

The problem started with the upgradation of the town as a district one. Several non-government and semi-government organisations have set up offices at district headquarters but no residential quarters has been constructed either by the government or by the members of the public.

In the meantime most of the district level offices have been set up at Chuadanga and as a result many staff and officers have been posted here. They are facing accommodation problem, the government has failed to provide them with the residential quarters.

There are only three buildings for the district level officers. But there is no residential facilities for the other staff. As a result, the low paid em-

ployees are the worst sufferers.

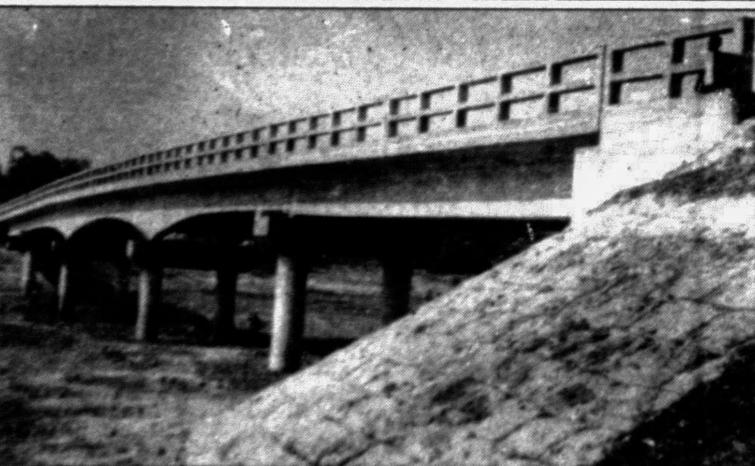
The rent of quarters in Chuadanga is too high.

Moreover a very few residential quarters have been constructed for sharp rise in the prices of building materials.

The price of land at Chuadanga town is also too high. One katha of land costs here Taka 30 to 50 thousand. Construction of housing estate is immediately required to ease the problem in Chuadanga town.

Another report adds: The greater Kushtia district was once famous for wildlife which now is facing extinction. Pressure of increasing population on land, indiscriminate felling of trees, clearing of jungles and bushes causing ecological imbalance are the main causes.

According to experts, a large number of animals were found in different jungles, bushes, beels, ponds, dighis, rivers. But at present these are not found. Many of them are rarely found. Some of them have completely disappeared.



JHENIDAH: The newly-built Jamaitala Bridge. It has been constructed at a cost of Tk 1.10 crore. —Star photo

5 hurt as JCD factions clash in Sylhet

From Our Correspondent
SYLHET, Apr 16: Five persons, including three activists of the JCD, were injured in a clash between two factions of the Sylhet unit of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal over the possession of the party office Thursday night.

Several blank shots were heard and some crackers exploded during the clash.

The rivalry surfaced since the dissolution of the Sylhet district unit and expulsion of three activists from the party on April 10 by the central committee.

Meanwhile, ex-president and coordinator of the Sylhet JCD today, at a press conference, said that the three leaders were expelled on charge of their involvement 'anti-party activities'.

Meherpur

UNB adds: Ten people were injured, one of them seriously, in a clash between two factions of the ruling party in Meherpur today.

District JCD president Ismail was admitted to the Sadar Hospital with serious injury.

Witnesses said the clash occurred when the two factions arranged separate meetings near the Shaheed Shamsuddoha Park at the same time.

'Resist violence, anarchy for welfare of masses'

CHITTAGONG, Apr 16: Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Abdullah-Al-Noman on Tuesday urged all democracy loving people and patriotic forces to build up strong resistance against politics of dead body, violence, and anarchy, reports BSS.

Addressing a big student rally at the Laidighi Maidan here Noman said the defeated forces were now out to destabilise the democratic process by giving threat to make the parliament inactive.

Held on protest against the killings of student leader Milon and Paran recently, the student rally was presided over by Convenor of City Chapter of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) Abu Sufian and addressed among others by Organising Secretary of BNP Haris Chowdhury, Family Planning Secretary Begum Rozi Kabir MP, Secretary Economic

Affairs Golam Akbar Khandaker, City Convenor of BNP and former Mayor Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin and labour leader Nazimuddin.

The Fisheries Minister said present democratic and popular government of Begum Khaleda Zia was the government for the people, by the people and as such it was striving hard to bring about the changes in the lot of the masses.

The defeated forces 'Awami League and Jatiyo Party' indulged in destroying the country economically and politically.

'But the peace-loving people no more wish to see the politics of dead body,' the minister said.

Terming the people as all sources of power Noman called for protecting democracy for the welfare of the masses.



CHANDPUR: Dr M A Mazid, Director, Fisheries Research Institute distributing certificate to one of the participants of a training programme held here recently. —Star photo

Tk 69 cr rural uplift plan under implementation

DAUDKANDI (Comilla), Apr 16: Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) is implementing a project at a cost of Taka 69 crore for developing physical infrastructure of two remote thanas in Comilla district, reports UNB.

The programme, Model Rural Development Project (MRDP), began in July 1992 in Daudkandi and Homna thanas with the financial assistance of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The programme is likely to be completed in June next year.

A meeting with Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharrat Hossain on Tuesday here reviewed the progress of implementation of

the programme.

Takayoshi Fujimura, Editor of Japan Economic Journal, Minobu Horie, a JICA expert, Hideo Morikawa, Deputy Resident Representative in Dhaka, Shafiqul Islam, Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong and Syed Kamal Uddin, Director of BRDB were present at the meeting.

The meeting was informed that construction of two training centres, two food godowns, four schools, five bridges and 50 kilometres of roads have already been completed under the programme.

The Energy Minister expressed his satisfaction over the progress of the programme and thanked the JICA.

Emphasis given on modern communication system

BODA (Panchagarh), Apr 16: Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz on Tuesday laid foundation stone of Ghoramara Bridge over Korotoa River, reports BSS.

At a public meeting on this occasion Law Minister said the present government had given emphasis on modern communication system all over the country.

Referring to Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge, a long cherished dream of the people of North Bengal, he said Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia laid the foundation stone of Jamuna Bridge. The economic disparity between eastern and western zones would not continue further after completion of the Jamuna Bridge.

District roundup

DINAJPUR
Huge quantity of smuggled goods seized

Apr 16: Bangladesh Rifles seized a huge quantity of Indian smuggled goods worth about Taka one crore from the border areas of the district during January-March this year and arrested 11 alleged smugglers, reports UNB.

The arrested smugglers were handed over to the local police and six cases were filed.

The BDR personnel including officers, JCOs and jawans of the 5th Rifle Battalion led by its Commanding Officer Maj Murtaza Al-Mahmood seized the smuggled goods conducting a total of 1,451 raids during the period.

Last month, the BDR seized Indian smuggled goods worth over Taka 33.57 lakh and filed five cases with the police.

The smuggled goods, including sugar, salt, saree, steel products, bicycle, motor spare parts, cow, buffalo, raw skins, and heroin were handed over to the customs officials.

TANGAIL

Norwegian diplomat visits newly-built school

Apr 16: Hoolteen, a diplomat of the Norwegian Embassy in Bangladesh, recently paid a visit to the newly constructed Marthalingstorm-Noorhajan Girls' High School in village Dapnazar under Basal thana, says BSS.

Hoolteen was accompanied during his trip by his wife. He expressed his satisfaction over the development of programme for female education in Bangladesh. 'It is happy sign that girls in flocks have been going to school to earn knowledge,' Hoolteen said.

He also planted a sapling in the school compound. The school has been built by Carl Frederic Lingstrom, a Norwegian citizen and Abdul Hamid of village Dapnazar. It has been named after the names of their mothers.

KUSHTIA

Ammunition, arms recovered, one held

Apr 16: Police recovered one pipegun with two live cartridges from a house at village Atigram of Chatianoram union under Mirpur thana on Thursday night, reports BSS.

None was arrested. Another message says that police recovered an Indian-made revolver and two cartridges from a house in Mirpur union recently.

One person has been arrested.

Another reports adds: World Health Day was observed Thursday in a befitting manner. A rally was brought out from civil surgeon's office premises and paraded the town. A Baby show was held at medical school training centre on the occasion. A discussion on meeting was also held at the premises of the training centre.

Abdul Khalek Chonto spoke on the occasion as chief guest and Anwar Ali, Chairman, Kushtia Pourashava was special guest. Prizes were awarded among the winners in the baby show.

SATKHIRA

4 commit suicide

Apr 16: Four people including two women and a child in the district allegedly committed suicide by taking poison on Wednesday, reports UNB.

The dead were identified as Nila Ghosh, 20, wife of Shyamapada of Natla, Sabur Ali Gazi 22 of Kushtia, Sagarika, 17, wife of Abdul Majid of Mukunda Madhushudanpur and Abdus Sabur, 3, son of Abdus Samad of Ghuna in Kaliganj thana of the district.

Nila, Sabur Ali and Sagarika committed suicide by taking poison following family feud. The baby, Sabur took the same mistakenly as foodstuff, family sources said.

COX'S BAZAR

2 minor girls drowned

Apr 16: Two minor girls drowned in a pond Tuesday at village Srikul in Ramu thana.

The bodies of Amari Rakhain, 12, and Machhela Rakhain, 11, were recovered and brought to Ramu for post-mortem.

The two friends of neighbouring Haitoupi village went for a dip in the pond in absence of bathing facility in their own village.

FARIDPUR
Training course on non-formal education

Apr 16: A ten-day training course for the teachers of non-formal adult education under sadar thana has started at the thana parishad auditorium reports UNB.

Arranged under the Integrated Non-Formal Education Expansion Programme, the inaugural function was attended by Deputy Commissioner K M Nurul Huda as chief guest on April 6.

Chaired by sadar TNO, Ahmedur Rahim, it was also addressed by ADC (General) Ali Akbar Chowdhury and District Coordinator of the programme.

Teachers of 40 non-formal schools and three supervisors from sadar thana are attending the training course to be concluded on April 15.

KHULNA

Preparations to conduct SSC exams peacefully

Apr 16: A meeting to conduct the coming SSC examination in a peaceful manner was held at the conference room of the deputy commissioner recently, says BSS.

The Deputy Commissioner Kazi Reazul Huq presided over the meeting. It was attended among others by the district level officers, heads of educational institutions in the city and other concerned persons.

The deputy commissioner urged all the concerned persons to perform their respective duties honestly and sincerely during the examination so that it is held peacefully.

For smooth holding of the examination the city has been subdivided into three areas and separate committees have been constituted for the purpose.

PATUAKHALI

Tk 4.7 lakh for road reconstruction work

Apr 16: Some portions of Rahmatpur-Mehendiganj road under Barisal Roads and Highways Department will be reconstructed during the current fiscal year, reports UNB.

Official sources said, Taka 4.70 lakh has been sanctioned for implementation of the programme. Mentionable that the road developed cracks and potholes at several points causing problems to movement of pedestrians and vehicles.

Another report adds: Gourmadi-Agaljhar-Gopalganj road under Gopalganj Roads and Highways Department will also be reconstructed during the same period.

According to official sources, Taka 8.49 lakh has been sanctioned for the development of the road.

SIRAJGANJ

4 arrested on charge of killing BNP leader

Apr 16: Police on Wednesday arrested four people on charge of killing of a local BNP leader in Kamarkhand thana, police said here Friday, reports UNB.

The arrested were identified as Abdul Matin 45, of Pachbaria village, Helal Uddin, 35, Abul Momim, 22 and Abdu, 30, of Nandina Modhu village in Kamarkhand thana.

The accused allegedly killed Jamat Ali, 42, Kamarkhand thana BNP President, at Nandina Modhu village in the thana on Tuesday night.

Meanwhile, the district BNP has called a half-day hartal in the thana Saturday to register their protest against the killing.

COMILLA

Opposition's frequent hartal calls criticised

Apr 16: Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia Thursday said, 'third force' would be benefited if the country's democratic process hampered due to frequent hartals, says UNB.

'Democracy will ultimately be at stake if the opposition political parties frequently call hartal' the State Minister said, while addressing a public meeting at Bishnowpur in Muradnagar thana Thursday afternoon.

He urged the opposition parties to cooperate with the government to give democracy an institutional shape. The opposition is also a part of democratic government, he added.