

Seven face misappropriation charges

KHULNA, May 17: Anti-Corruption Bureau has charge-sheeted against seven people, including four officials of Bangladesh Shipping Corporation (BSC) on charge of misappropriation of Taka 2.85 lakh, police said Tuesday, reports UNB.

The case, in brief, was that the seven accused misappropriated the amount which was sanctioned to supply materials to BSC's MV Bhalrab ship from May 27 to July 13 in 1981 from the local Agrani Bank.

The accused are: former Manager of BSC Khulna Majhar Kamal, former Assistant Chief Accountant M A Mannan, former Accounts Officer M A Zakir, present Assistant Manager Mahabubul Haque, owner of Messers Zaman Brothers and shipping dealer Sheikh Wahedduzzaman, his partner AKM Mizanur Rahman and the owner of Messers Al-Amin Enterprise Anwaruzzama.

The case was filed with the Khulna police in 1981 and the charge-sheet was submitted on May 8.

Notes from Moulvibazar

From Our Correspondent

May 17: Bangladesh College Teachers' Association, Moulvibazar district branch held a press conference at Moulvibazar Women's College recently.

Leaders of the association at the press conference explained elaborately their 15 point demand and urged the government to implement them without further. They also demanded resignation of Education Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Sirker for his defamatory comments on teachers and his failure to fulfil the demand of the teachers community. College teachers in their press conference also demanded the withdrawal of false cases against leaders of the Central liaison committee and condemned the assent of the teachers at a rally in Dhaka.

They urged the guardians and people ingeneral to support their legitimate demand for better education of their wards.

District college teachers leaders also extended their full support to the programmes taken up by the Central Liaison Committee of six organisations of non-government school and college teachers.

Principal Kuresh Khan, Prof. Md Shahidullah, Prof. Jilaluddin Ahmed, Prof. Rajat Kanti Goswami and Prof. Abdul Khaleque spoke in the press conference.

School teacher electrocuted

A school teacher Mohibur Rahman (38) was electrocuted when he came in contact with a refrigerator.

According to family source, the victim was a head master of Shah Helal Government Primary School of Moulvibazar town. On the day of incident, on his return home from the school, one Abdul Basit, friend and neighbour of the victim who is also a primary school teacher requested the victim to repair his refrigerator.

On request, the victim came to the residence of his friend and while switching the refrigerator, suddenly got electrocuted and was rushed to Moulvibazar sadar hospital where he died.

JCD wins college union polls

Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) bagged 16 seats out of total 17 seats in the students union election of Moulvibazar government college.

Mizanur Rahman Mizan, Abdullah-Al-Mamun Pervez and Muazem Chowdhury Khokon were elected VP, GS and AGS respectively.

Assistant ladies common room secretary, the only seat was captured by Mukta Rani Goswami of pro-left front student organisation 'Gonotantik Chhatra Oikya'.

Bangladesh Chhatra League (M-I), Islami Chhatra Shibir and Islami Chhatra Sena also contested in the election. Principal of the college lauded the students for helping the authorities in holding the election free and fair.

Udichi Shilpi Goshthi conference

The conference of Udichi Shilpi Goshthi of Kulara thana branch was held at Kulara 'Janamilon Kendra' recently. The conference was presided over by Rajat Kanti Bhattacharjya Bhanu while central leader of Udichi Timir Nandi attended as chief guest.

A twenty-five member executive committee was also formed in the conference for Kulara thana branch of Udichi with Rajat Kanti Bhattacharjya as president and Abul Fatah Fazlu and secretary.

In the evening 'Maan Shudhu maan Chhuae Jay'—a cultural function was also staged by the Udichi artists.



MADARIPUR: This bus is about to board a ferry at Sheikpur. Only a few pieces of wooden plants help link the platform with the river bank. One little mistake here could be fatal. Hundreds of vehicles on Madaripur-Shibchar highway cross this ferry every day risking lives. —Star photo

Poor treatment facilities in Rangpur

408 posts of doctors lying vacant

RANGPUR, May 17: At least 408 posts of doctors lying vacant in different hospitals and health centres all the sixteen districts of the northern region for a long time.

Non-recruitment to these vacant posts, most of the hospitals and the health centres have been running almost without doctors for a long time.

The tendencies of the in-service doctors to go abroad in search of better jobs, create vacancies of such a large number of doctors.

Meanwhile, due to absence of the doctors in the hospitals and the health centres, large section of the people in the region have been deprived of health care and treatment.

The much talked-about loop-cuttings of the river Dharla and the construction of a closure dam to divert the flow of the river to save the Burimari land port and Bhutan-Bangladesh international highway from threat of erosion has been completed on recently despite resistance by the Indian BSF.

The scheme has been executed by the Water Development Board (WDB) against the allocation of three hundred and thirty nine metric tonnes of wheat under Food for Works Programme (FWP).

From Our Correspondent

It may be noted that the works of the scheme was stopped last month following resistance by the Indian BSF.

To bring an end to the impasse, the Bangladesh Rifles held flag meetings with the BSF thrice, without yielding any results.

The third and last flag meeting between BDR-BSF was held on April 27 of the zero-point of the Burimari border. On that day, Indian jet fighters hovered over Bangladesh Burimari and Patgram thana areas thrice creating a grave panic among the local people, who started to flee homes.

A large number of BSF armed with sophisticated weapons took positions along the zero point of Burimari border and they dug many trenches there.

However, the water development board authorities ignoring the India threat resumed the works of the scheme and engaged at least one thousand labourer daily and to completed it.

Meser Ali Khan, Chief Engineer of the Water Development Board said that the flow of the Dharla river now flowing through a new channel and Burimari land port and the road are now safe.

An international relief

agency CARE has launched a number of income-generating programmes in four unions under Kaunia thana of the district. There were aimed at making the poor farmers self reliant.

The programmes include, the cultivation of fishes in the paddy field, vegetables production and the effective utilisation of fellow spaces along the demarcation lines of the land putting it under various crop cultivation.

These unions are — Tepamadhupur, Balapara, Shahidbag and Kursha.

At least 600 farmers in twenty-four groups with 25 in each group have been brought under the programme.

During the last Aman season, the farmers had earned an additional amount to the tune of over taka 2 lakh by cultivating fishes in the Aman paddy field in the said unions.

In the current boro season, the farmers also started fish cultivation in the boro-paddy field in the area.

The combined paddy and fish cultivation named as inter fish programme has achieved a grand success and attracted the attention of the farmers of other areas giving them much incentive to follow it, according to the local people.

Drought destroying crops on 3 lakh acres of land

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, May 17: Due to persisting drought and excessive heat, aus, aman, jute, IRRI-boro paddy, sugarcane, vegetables etc on three lakh acres of land are withering away in Kalaroa, Tala, sadar Diphata, Kaligonj, Shyamnagar and Assasuni thana.

Scarcity of drinking has been prevailing in the area as most of the ponds, canals, beels and rivers have dried up. Cattle are suffering much for want of water. Mango sprouts that, appeared in plenty, have almost dried up for want of enough rainfall.

It is gathered that due to fall in water level about 70 per cent of the tubewells and swal-low tubewells have gone out of order effecting irrigation in the area.

As there is no agricultural work in the villagers, day labourers are moving from place to place in search of work.

4 commit suicide

Four persons, including two house wives, committed suicide in different villages under Tala and Kaligonj thanas of the district recently.

It is reported that Suboth Chandra Sarkar, 22 son of Binod Chandra Sarkar of village Nagar Ghata, Sabina Khatun, 22 wife to Shajahan of the same village and Aminur Rahman, 25 son of Jamal Sheikh of village Harish Chandra Kati all in Tala thana

Primary edn being hampered in Khulna

KHULNA, May 17: Primary education in the district is being hampered greatly due to shortage of teachers and other necessary appliances, reports UNB.

According to an official source, there are 610 government primary schools in the district and at least 36 posts of headmaster and 36 posts of assistant teacher remained vacant for a long time.

Moreover, 150 teachers are attending C-in-Ed course in different PTIs and six teachers are taking part in B Ed course in Teachers' Training College.

A good number of teachers are also absent due to their illness and in some schools only two teachers are to manage all the classes, the source added.

Besides, transfer of teachers from 1990 remained stopped as per the order of the then government and consequently excess teachers of some schools cannot be transferred to other schools.

Some teachers complained that many government primary schools lack necessary modern appliances including blackboard and dusters. With the rising number of students since 1991, shortage accommodation facilities has been hampering education badly, they added.

The local guardians have urged the concerned authorities to look into the matter and take immediate steps to ensure better education facilities for their children.

Farraka Day observed in Rajshahi

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, May 17: Farraka Day was observed here Monday in protest against unilateral withdrawal of the Ganges water at Farraka by India and in demand for due share of water of the mighty river.

Different political and cultural organisations arranged discussion meetings, gatherings and processions to observe the day.

The BNP city and district unit jointly held a discussion meeting at Loknath High School field in the afternoon with the district President Abdul Hye. The meeting was addressed among others by the city Mayor Mijanur Rahman Minu as the chief guest, Mainuddin Ahmed Manik, Dr Anwar Hussain, Saiful Islam Makhon and others.

Minu-blamed India for unilateral withdrawal of the Ganges water violating international conventions and urged all to be united to struggle to gain fair share of the Ganges water.

Later, BNP brought out a big procession led by the Mayor that paraded the main streets of the city chanting slogans demanding due share

of Ganges water and later held a street rally at Mani Chatter. Bangladesh Workers Party, local unit, also brought out a procession the same day and blamed India for withdrawal of water from Ganges. The procession ended at Shahed Bazar Square to hold a street rally.

Rajshahi City Press Club held a discussion meeting the same evening at its office premises to observe the day. Presided over by the Club President, Nayib Wadood, the meeting was also addressed by Rezaul Karim Razu, Saiful Islam Makhon, Sona Chowdhury, Sardar Abdul Rahman and others. The speakers urged the political leaders not to grasp the Farraka issue merely for political interests but untidely struggle for its solution.

Maulana Bhasani led a historic long march this day in 1976 from Rajshahi to Kancat border post near Farraka barrage to protest the unjust unilateral withdrawal of the Ganges water at Farraka by India and demand due share of water of the mighty river.

Since then the day is observed as Farraka Day.

Demand for more phone lines in C'nawabganj

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, May 17: The official and commercial activities in the district headquarters are being hampered to a great extent in absence of adequate telephone connections for quite a long time, reports UNB.

The existing 400-line telephone exchange is unable to meet the growing need of the town-dwellers. Hundreds of applications seeking for new connections have been lying with the authorities concerned for years together positive steps have not yet been taken to enhance the existing capacity, local people allege.

Government officials, professionals, business community and different commercial banks of the district are the worst sufferers due to non-availability of new telephone connections.

It may be mentioned that the importance of Chapainawabganj town has increased considerably after its upgradat-

ion into a district headquarters and consequently new telephone connections have become urgent necessity.

Local people urged the concerned authorities to look into the matter and take necessary steps to mitigate the sufferings of the people by installing more telephone connections on emergency basis.

Mushroom growth of hotels and restaurants in the district town has been creating hazards to the public health.

Local people said, most of these hotels and restaurants have grown up by the sides of lanes and by-lanes which are dirty and unclean. Foodstuff are being prepared and stored in most unhygienic manner.

Besides, adulteration of foodstuffs and edibles has become rampant in the town which threatens the health of the public.

Moreover, there is no good residential hotel and restaurant in the town.

District roundup

GAIBANDHA

40 injured in nor'wester

May 17: At least 40 people were injured in sadar and Sundarganj thanas in a nor'wester that hit the district on Sunday evening, reports UNB.

According to witnesses, some 1500 kutcha dwellings were razed to the ground and thousands of fruit bearing trees uprooted. Standing crops of vast acres of the land were also damaged by the storm.

The worst affected areas are Pourashava, adjacent unions and Sundarganj thana. Sadar, Gobindaganj and Palashbari thanas were also affected partially.

Hundreds of shelterless people have been passing their days in great distress. No relief materials have yet reached to the affected people.

The affected people urged the government to immediately despatch relief materials for their survival and grant relief for their early rehabilitation.

Another message from Dinajpur adds: A violent cyclonic storm lashed the Dinajpur and Thakurgaon districts Sunday in which at least 20 people were injured and hundreds of kutcha houses damaged.

The tempest swept over the Kotwali, Birol, Chirbandar, Birampur, Setabganj thanas of Dinajpur district.

Of the injured, Rahim Badsha (71) and Shayanthy Roy (40) of Chirbandar thana and Shapna (3) and Sham Roy (11) of Kotwali thanas received injuries when CI sheets and trees fell on them. The condition of Sham Roy is stated to be critical.

Extensive damage to property was also reported from Ulipur under Kotwali, Ranishankali, Haripur, Pirganj, Nekmard, Baliadangi thanas of the Thakurgaon district.

Standing crops of vast areas including litchi and mango were also damaged.

MANIKGANJ

Two pipeguns, bullets recovered

May 17: Police recovered two pipeguns and 70 bullets left behind by miscreants on flight at Andala village in Shibhalaya thana Saturday midnight, says UNB.

Police said, the bandits were preparing to commit dacoity at Grameen Bank at the village but fled when seen by patrol police.

HABIGANJ

One held for throwing acid

May 17: A young man was arrested from Chakkramuna village in sadar thana on Wednesday on charge of throwing acid on a girl, says UNB.

The arrested identified as Babul (22), son of Birgraj Miah of the same village threw acid on the body of Nilu Das, an SSC candidate on May 9 while she was studying in her home.

According to family sources, earlier Babul gave love proposal to her which she refused. But on the day Babul came again and after an altercation threw acid on Nilu.

She was rushed to the Sadar Hospital in a critical condition. Doctors said several portions of her body were burnt.

A case was filed and police raided Babul's house and arrested him.

NETRAKONA

Summer crop cultivation programme

May 17: Netrakona District Agricultural Extension Department has taken up a summer crop production programme in ten thanas of the district during the current season, reports BSS.

The Deputy Director of Agricultural Extension Department Netrakona Golam Mustafa said that under the programme a total of 50,300 hectares of land would be brought under aus cultivation and 8,200 hectares under aman cultivation and a total of 2000 hectares under seasonal vegetables cultivation.

Besides he said, 500 hectares would be brought under ground-nut cultivation, 150 hectares under banana cultivation, 200 hectares under capsicum cultivation, 300 hectares under turmeric cultivation and 150 hectares under ginger cultivation. For successful implementation of the programme, the department would supply adequate quantity of fertilizer, insecticides and agricultural equipment among the farmers, the Deputy Director said.

JHENIDAH

Price hike of essentials

May 17: Prices of essentials have shot up in all the markets of the district in the last fortnight causing immense sufferings to the consumers, says UNB.

Middle class and the low-income group of people are the worst sufferers as they cannot afford to buy the daily necessities to maintain their livelihood.

Prices of edible oil, sugar, salt, onion, garlic and vegetables have registered a sharp rise during the period. Soyabeen and palm-oil are being sold between Tk 55 and Tk 39 per kg as against Taka Taka 36, local people said.

Sugar is now being sold at Taka 30 per kg as against Taka 27. Salt price has also gone up. Onion and garlic prices gone up by Tk four and Tk two per kg respectively, they added.

Besides, the prices of construction materials, i.e. rod, angle, flat-bar, tin-sheet, bamboo have shot up adversely affecting the middle class people.

Taking advantage of the coming Eid-ul-Azha, one of the greatest religious festivals of Muslims, a section of dishonest businessmen are demanding higher prices creating artificial scarcity of the commodities, local people alleged.

PATUAKHALI

Seminar on cultural affairs held

May 17: A cultural seminar jointly organised by Kabita Parisad and Pathak Forum was held here for the first time in Bauphal thana of the district last week, says UNB.

Presided over by general secretary of Bauphal Press Club, prof Shahadat Hossain Khan, it was attended by TNO Sushil K Roy as chief guest.

Young poet and short story writer Abu Bakar Hasnat read out a paper on aspects and trend of our poems in the seminar.

Besides, Saifur Rahman, Sohel, Nasrin Sultana Ruma, Imrul Kabir Iman, Pulin Bihari Das and Nasrin Jahan Lina recited poems in the seminar.

BRAHMANBARIA

149 bottles of phensidyl recovered

May 17: Police recovered 149 bottles of phensidyl syrup from a Dhaka-bound launch at Ramchandrapur in Bancharampur thana last week, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip, police raided the launch and recovered the contraband. Meanwhile, Nabinagar police recovered a huge quantity of phensidyl worth Tk 1.50 lakh from the Titus river near Mohalla village in Nabinagar thana.

Separate cases were lodged in this connection with the police.

Another report adds: A fake BDR man was arrested by Nasirnagar police on May 8 from Kunda village in Nasirnagar thana.

According to police, arrested Sakil Reza, son of Kamruzzaman of Pakundia village in Kishoreganj district personified himself as C O of Bangladesh Rifles to the villagers and tried to realise money for a project.

SIRAJGANJ

Jamuna erosion renders 400 homeless

May 17: Some 400 people in Shajadpur thana of the district lost their homesteads due to erosion by the river Jamuna during the last 72 hours, says UNB.

The river water swelled due to heavy rainfall which has eroded away a vast track of water and at Thutuya, Monagacha, Shahebpura, Nawmakra, Gangarampur and two other villages in the thana during the period official sources said Sunday.

Witnesses said Gangarampur village and some one mile area of the old flood embankment have also been washed away by the mighty river.

Meanwhile, ferry services between Sirajganj and Bhuyapur were suspended from Saturday due to onslaught of the river erosion near Bhuyapur ghat.

A school girl allegedly committed suicide at a village in Shajadpur thana as a cousin refused to take her in marriage, police said Tuesday, reports UNB.

Fatema Khatun, 15, sprayed kerosene on her body at their house in Nagardala village and set herself on fire Saturday as her cousin Alam, 20 had rejected an offer of marriage.



CHANDPUR: Rotary Club members of the district organised a charitable medicine distribution centre, for the poor people on Friday. —Star photo



SYLHET: Piles of garbage left uncared for on the footpath of a busy thoroughfare near the head post office, of the town. —Star photo

Banana cultivators in Jhenidah to get loan

JHENIDAH, May 17: Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) will disburse Taka 21 lakh as loan among the farmers of the district for banana cultivation in the current fiscal year, reports UNB.

Of the total loan, Taka 5.5 lakh will be disbursed in sadar thana, Tk 1.5 lakh in Sallakupa thana, Tk eight lakh in Kaligonj thana, Tk five lakh in Kotchandpur thana and Tk one lakh in Moheshpur thana.

The disbursement of loan has already been started and will be completed by June next, officials said.

Mentionable that the district is famous for banana cultivation. The farmers were cultivating the crop through their own initiative and were facing problems due to lack of capital.

Most of the growers used to borrow money from the money lenders at a high rate of interest.

Some farmers said, they would be benefitted greatly with the sanctioning of the huge amount as loan by the Krishi Bank this year.

A total of 104 choked up tubewells are being reinstalled in Kaligonj thana of the district in the current fiscal year.

Public Health Engineering Department is implementing the programme with the financial assistance from United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) to ensure the supply of pure water in the thana.

About 10,000 rural people will get the facility of drinking water with the completion of the programme, the officials

Murderer surrenders to court

NARAYANGANJ, May 17: The main accused of BNP leader Khokon murder case surrendered to the first class magistrate court here Monday after nine months in hiding, reports UNB.

Lutfur Rahman Swapan, 28, is among nine others accused of killing Khokon, one of the leaders of Fatullah thana BNP. He was hacked to death in front of his party office near Fatullah Bazar on August 23 last year.