

National

Demand to resume works on highway

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Aug 17: The execution of the proposed Dhaka-Sylhet Highway via Auskhandi and Mirpur will reduce the distance between Sylhet and the capital by 55 kilometres from the existing road communication.

It was stated by the leaders of the Dhaka-Sylhet Highway Implementation Committee at a Press Conference held at a local hotel recently.

Kazi Kamal Ahmed, President of the organisation said that, the then government planned for the scheme to construct the proposed road in 1965. Some earthworks were also done following approval of the scheme. But, due to unknown reasons, the project

was suspended. Two years ago, the government considering the importance of the road link, started construction of a bridge over the river Bijnar.

After completion of a considerable part of the road, works had again been stopped. The leaders of the organisation demanded for immediate completion of the bridge. They also demanded for taking early steps for completion of the whole project which would open a new era in the road communication of the greater Sylhet and Comilla region, they added.

The conference was also addressed by Maniruddin Chowdhury, Secretary of the organisation.

BNP govt fulfilling its election pledges: Anwar

COMILLA, Aug 17: Shipping Minister M K Anwar yesterday said, the BNP government is fulfilling its election pledges in phases by implementing comprehensive development programme throughout the country, reports BSS.

He was addressing a public meeting at Jagatpur Sadhan High School ground, a remote area under Daudkandi thana of the district.

The shipping minister said when the present democratically elected government is working hard for the total benefit of the masses, opposition parties are hatching conspiracy to go to power in the name of one-point movement. A caretaker government cannot be the substitute for a democratic government he said, adding that the issue of caretaker government is not at all the demand of the general

3,120 tonnes of wheat allotted for distressed women of Noakhali

MAJDEE COURT Aug 17: A total of 3,120 metric tons of wheat have been allotted for VGD programme to provide food for distressed women of six thanas during 1994-96, reports UNB.

According to official sources, the two years programme will be implemented in 83 unions of six thanas of the district where each distressed woman will get 31.25 kg of wheat.

Jewellery shops looted in Jhenidah

JHENIDAH, Aug 17: Two jewellery shops in Barabazar were looted Sunday night by a group of dacoits, reports UNB.

Earlier, the armed dacoits numbering about 40 crashed the gate of Sonali Bank at the bazar at about midnight. They tied the hands and legs of the night guard of the bank but failed to break open its vault, police said.

A case has been registered with Kaliganj thana.

Govt attaches topmost priority to edn: Mosharraf

DAUDKANDI (Comilla), Aug 17: Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain yesterday said the present government had attached topmost priority to education sector to alleviate poverty and develop human resources, reports BSS.

"Education is the main tool to achieve the target of poverty alleviation and human resources development and overall socio-economic development of the country," the energy minister said while paying a visit to different educational institutions in the localities.

The minister was accompanied by the Canadian High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Jon J Scott. He briefed the Canadian envoy the method of teaching, infrastructural position and education policy of Bangladesh.

Lightning kills two

KUSHITIA, Aug 17: Lightning struck and killed two brothers and injured three other people at a remote village in Daulatpur thana last week, according to delayed message received Tuesday reports UNB.

The dead are: Seraj, 36 and Nasir, 27, sons of Kheru Mondal of village Farakpur in the thana.



SYLHET: Professor Kazi Kamal Ahmed, President of the Dhaka-Sylhet Highway Implementation Committee speaking at a press conference held here recently. — Star photo

Agricultural development projects in Jamalpur face setback

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, Aug 17: Agricultural development projects in various areas of the district have been facing setback.

It is learnt that the projects were taken to develop the agricultural sector, particularly in Jamalpur sadar, Islampur, Melandah, Madarganj, Bakshiganj, Sarishabari and Dewanganj thanas.

About Taka seven crore was allocated for development works, including educational tours, agricultural exhibitions and trainings. Initially at least 100 demonstration plots were scheduled to be set up. Under the agricultural development projects in the district partial

knowledge and trainings to farmers, pest management control facility, proper use of fertilizers, irrigation, water supply and upgrading tree plantation, sugar production, betel leaf production, potato and other vegetables production would be provided in phases.

It is learnt that the farmers of this area are neither getting any facility in the seed sector from the appropriate authority to increase their agricultural output nor are they being patronised by supply of modern agricultural equipment. It is alleged that the commercial banks are harassing the farmers

in providing agricultural loans. Livestock, poultry, dairy farms owners alleged that they have been also deprived of adequate help from the concerned authorities.

Farmers also expressed that implementation of various agricultural development projects will not be satisfactory due to alleged mismanagement, lack of coordination, want of good policy and plans.

According to the sources, some of the agricultural projects were taken up under the supervision of the Grameen Bank but due to absence of technical experts and consul-

tants some of the projects have failed. The programmes started on the commercial basis which include about 240 IRRI-boro projects which also failed eventually due to lack of proper care, initiative and modern farming methods.

Besides, natural calamities like flood, inadequate rainfall, drought, erosion, storms and use of adulterated pesticides on crops have also affected the overall production in agricultural sector.

According to the sources, due to the above reasons no scheme has been taken up in this season under agricultural development project.



GAIBANDHA: Zinc Oxy-sulphate fertilizer imported from the United States of America in 1993 was distributed at the BADC godown for distribution among the local farmers. After about 10 months it was detected that the fertilizer contained high radio activity. Soon, the BADC office in the district, was ordered to re-collect the fertilizer bags given to the farmers earlier. Meanwhile, some of the fertilizer bags were however, used. The remaining fertilizer bags stored in the godown as stock were returned. The photo shows a truck is being loaded with the bags of the fertilizer for shipment to the port city of Chittagong. — Star photo

Significant progress in development works in Gopalganj district

By Naimul Haq back from Gopalganj

Aug 17: There have been significant progress in development works in Gopalganj district over the past three years.

The development works were specially visible in the highway road approaches to and from Gopalganj district.

The Takerhat-Gopalganj road, about 14 feet wide, 74 kilometre long, now facilitates movement of more traffic than every before.

The road come-embankment along the river Madhumati could hardly accommodate two-way traffic before it was widened and metalled only a few years ago. Traffic movement was quite dangerous as there was little room for two medium size vehicles to pass through.

The construction of the Takerhat bridge was a major step forward for road communication in the district.

The Canadian High Commissioner lauded the educational programmes of the government and assured all-out help to implement human resources programmes.

He said Canada had so far provided two billion US dollars since 1971 for the socio-economic development of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is the highest recipient of Canadian aid which is being provided about 50 million US dollars every year.

The minister and the envoy also planted some saplings at the educational premises. The visit includes Daudkandi High School, Daudkandi Girls High School, Shahidnagar Primary Schools, Baropara Girls High School, Gouripur Subai Aftab Primary School, Daudkandi Primary School and Edgah Primary School.

Later, the minister attended multijoddab naval conference at Gouripur and witnessed a football match

Farijpur. Trucks carrying jute mostly from Khulna jute mills will start using the route this season as most of the quality jute from Faridpur and Madaripur are being readied for transportation", said a truck driver heading for Khulna.

This road has dual purposes as it serves as flood protection embankment and of course, as a road. A vast area of crop land is said to be protected from Madhumati river flooding every year since it was built.

A number of about seven sluice gates have been constructed on the road to control flow of water for irrigation during dry seasons. The road has been well covered by row of trees on both sides, strengthening the foundation of the embankment and preventing formation of any breaches.

The other major road from Gopalganj to the southern districts of Khulna, Bagerhat, Satkhira and Jessor also shows similar appreciation. The well built road can also lead one to Tungipara, home of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. This road has been specially used for short distance journeys to Khulna and Bagerhat. Parjatak, a passenger service coach has been operating Dhaka-Khulna passenger services through Gopalganj using the road. Many other local transportation have been set up for passenger services to and from Gopalganj.

The roads in the town area

are however, in poor shape except few. There have been no major road development works in the town area. The roads in Bankpara are worse. A road, next to the only stadium, has remained broken for quite some time, disrupting plying of rickshaws and rickshaw vans. Roads in the bazar area are also in poor shape. The roads become narrower allowing fewer traffic for movement.

The district zila parishad, in the meantime, has undertaken development projects worth about Taka 1.42 crore for overall development of the town. This also includes road improvement plan, as well as road construction projects.

During the past three years, a number of office buildings and staff quarters were constructed. The Public Works Department (PWD) office building is one of them. A new court building is being added to the existing ones to ease the rush of works. The deputy commissioner has a new two storied residential building facing the Madhumati river.

The police line has been planned to be shifted to its new location just on the outskirts of the main town. Two new four storied buildings already stand there which can accommodate more than 350 police men.

Development in other sectors specially in fisheries projects were significantly no

PDB's alleged irregularities protested

JAMALPUR, Aug 17: A group of unemployed young men marched the street of the town on Monday to protest alleged irregularities in filling some vacancies in the Power Development Board, reports UNB.

They told the local journalist that PDB had invited application for filling 85 posts of helpers and accordingly they had called for interviews nearly one year ago. But the authorities delayed in giving the appointments.

The aggrieved applicants brought the charges of irregularities, saying that the selection for the appointment was being made according to the list of an influential PDB trade union.

About 20,000 applicants appeared in the oral tests for the post.

District roundup

PATUAKHALI

Erratic power supply

Aug 17: A revenue budget of Taka four crore and fourteen lakh was approved for Netrakona Pourashava for the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to Pourashava sources, the budget was approved in a meeting held with the Pourashava Chairman Matur Rahman in the chair.

Of the total budget, Taka two crore would be utilised for execution of different development oriented programmes, the sources said.

SATKHIRA

Indian pistol recovered, two arrested

Aug 17: The Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel recovered one Indian pistol and arrested two people, including a woman in this connection Saturday, reports UNB.

The arrested are: Khokon Ojah of Kamargati village under Dighalha thana and one Usha Rani of Kola village under Terokhada thana of Khulna district.

According to police, BDR jawans of Satkhira headquarters challenged Khokon and Usha when they were going to Khulna by a bus, found an Indian pistol inside a bag possessed by them and handed them over to Satkhira police.

A case was lodged with Satkhira police.

SIRAJGANJ

50 injured in rival groups clash

Aug 17: Some 50 people were injured, four seriously, in a clash between two rival groups of people at Ramakanthapur village in Tarash thana following a dispute over an arable land Sunday, reports UNB.

Police said the clash between the rival groups erupted when the supporters of Rahim Box attacked Sukur Ali while he was ploughing in the disputed land in the village.

Of the injured, four were admitted to Tarash Health Complex. A case was filed with Tarash thana.

MAGURA

Fisheries Fortnight opens

Aug 17: Agriculture and Irrigation Minister Major General (retd) M Majedul Huq formally inaugurated the "fisheries fortnight" of Magura and Narail districts by releasing fish fry in the Magura High School and Narail Sadar Hospital ponds, reports BSS.

The minister also addressed two separate rallies one at Magura and the other at Narail to motivate the people. He said the present government was attaching importance to fish cultivation for generating employment opportunities and meeting protein needs of the rural masses.

The minister stressed the need for expansion of fish cultivation in all available water bodies. In this context, he referred to the development programmes undertaken by the present government.

MAJDEE

Tree plantation fair opens

Aug 17: State Minister for Textile Abdul Mannan inaugurated a three-day tree plantation fair as part of the country-wide tree plantation drive '94 organised by Noakhali district administration and the forest department at Noakhali Court Building premises, reports BSS.

Speaking on the occasion the state minister described how trees played a significant role in the national economy side by side maintaining the ecological balance.

He called upon the people to plant at least two saplings at their house premises to make the national tree plantation programme a success. A total of 30 stalls took part in the fair.

This year, a total 14 lakh sapling will be planted in the Noakhali district out of which 7 lakh have already been planted by the government and private institutions, an official handout said.

The function was addressed, among others, by Barkatullah Bhulu MP, Salahuddin Kamran MP and Md Shahjahan MP.