

6,000 suffer from goitre in Jessore

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Aug 29: About some 6,000 people particularly children and women have been badly affected by iodine deficiency disorder causing goitre and reducing IQs.

According to reports, people of Chowgachha, Sharsa, Navaron, Kesabpur, Manirampur, Jhikargachha, Mohammaddpur, Sripur, Salikha and sadar thana of Jessore district, Lohagara, Kalia and sadar thana of Narail district, Saikupa, Harinakundu, Kaligonj, Kotchandpur, Mohespur and sadar thana of Jhenidah district have been affected by iodine deficiency.

Reports say, the soil and ground water of these areas contain very little quantity of iodine as it is required for human bodies. As a result, the agricultural products, particularly vegetables contain very little iodine. The drinking wa-

ter also contains very little iodine.

A good number of people have been affected by goitre — the swelling of the thyroid gland. Absence of iodine in food and water hampers formation of thyroid hormone in the body.

A good member of pregnant women who have been suffering from iodine deficiency disorder (IDD), gave birth to dead baby. Those who survived became crippled, deaf and dumb, mentally retarded.

A renowned physician told that only 20 per cent people of rural areas use iodised salt and the rest 80 per cent does not use iodised salt which is creating problems for decades.

Local people alleged that health department is not keenly to test iodised salt in the market.



Bamboos are being carried through the river Dhaleshwari from the north Bengal region destined for Dhaka. Thousands of bamboos are brought to the capital in this way. — Star photo by Enamul Haq

'Govt firm to ensure health for all by year 2000'

NOWABGANJ, Aug 29: State Minister for Finance Mujibur Rahman said health is the pre-condition for all happiness and present government is determined to ensure health for all by the year 2000, reports UNB.

He was speaking as chief guest at a public meeting at Nowabganj Abdul Wasek auditorium on the occasion of Mother and Child Health Fortnight-94 on Sunday. State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Abdul Mannan also spoke.

He said education is the pre-requisite for all development programmes and to achieve this goal the government has attached top priority in the country's education sector by allocating highest bud-

get about Tk 4,000 crore. He also said government has taken various steps to remove the curse of illiteracy from the society.

Stressing the need for female education he said an educated mother can easily convert a family into an educated one. He said government has taken measures for imparting education to our vast number of female population. In this regard he listed the various steps of government like free female education etc.

Earlier, the State Minister led a rally from Nowabganj Thana Health Complex to thana headquarters. He also released fish fry in the pond of thana parishad as part of Fish Fortnight-94.



SYLHET: Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman releasing fish fry in a pond at the Rural Development Training Institute here while inaugurating a seminar on "Fisheries Development" recently. — Star photo

Take united efforts to make BTMC run mills viable: Mannan

FENI, Aug 29: State Minister for Textiles Major (Rtd) Abdul Mannan called upon all concerned to take united efforts to make BTMC run textile mills economically viable by increasing production and reducing wastage, reports BSS.

He was addressing the workers and employees of Dost Textile Mills at New Ramir in Feni district.

He said that the present democratic government was determined to change to lots of workers and employees working in various mills and factories. Present government had already taken various steps in this regard, the State Minister added.

State Minister said, the

BNP government believes in the politics of peace, progress and development and not in the politics of hartal, strike and anarchy. He said hartal and strike can never bring any welfare for the common people, rather it increases sufferings.

He called upon all to remain alert against these heinous activities of some vested quarters.

Earlier, the State Minister released some fish fry into a pond inside the Dost Textile Mills as a part of the Fish Fortnight '94.

Later, he went round various production units of the mills and stressed the need for improving the quality of produced cloths.

Mushroom growth of hotels threatens public health

NETRAKONA, Aug 29: Mushroom growth of hotels and restaurants in the district and thana headquarters in unhygienic way has been threatening the public health for a long time, reports UNB.

Most of the hotels and restaurants have also grown up by the sides of lanes and by-lanes. These are dirty and not cleaned regularly. Foodstuffs are being prepared and stored in most unhygienic manner in these hotels and restaurants which are injurious to public health.

There is none to look after the harmful activities and even the district administration is

also reluctant to take action against the dishonest owners of these hotels and restaurants due to mysterious reason, local people alleged.

Besides, absence of standard hotels and restaurants specially at Netrakona town has been causing much sufferings to the people. People who come to the district town have no other choice but to take meals in these hotels and restaurants.

Meanwhile, adulteration of foodstuff along with other goods has become rampant in the district threatening the public health.

BJMC incurs loss of Tk 15 cr

Jute production from Khulna zone declining every year

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, Aug 29: Production in all the twelve nationalised jute mills of Khulna zone, is progressively declining following lack of initiatives by management to repair looms for quite long time causing financial losses worth Tk fifteen crore a year from the sector, it is learnt.

According to sources, one-sixth of the looms remain inoperative round the year for want of repair and servicing while the total number of looms are 5165 including the hessians, CVC and sackings.

Recently, production in the mills has been recorded 60 metric tons less than the production capacity per day. It is learnt, lack of decision from authority to purchase spare parts for the looms has been the main cause of the financial

losses. It is also learnt that over one hundred looms are lying out of order in the mills for years together due to lack of care of the authority.

The nationalised jute mills are run by Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC).

Reports received from different circles, say that deliberate negligence of the management to procure spares in time, has ruined the life of the looms.

Reports also say that many of the looms have lost utility power due to shortage of manpower.

According to another source, 587 loans in the mills remained unused in fiscal 1992-93 for mechanical trouble.

A loom retains the capacity

to produce hessians worth 3.1 kg, sackings worth 8.4 kgs and CVC worth 6.5 kgs every hour.

Surprisingly, no steps from management was taken to keep all the looms working in any season to get maximum output of production capacity. Role of BJMC, in this respect has been criticised several time earlier.

It is high time for the management to step-up measures to repair all looms lying unused and put them into operation immediately in a bid to get over the recurring financial losses, said a source.

It is also reported that market price of raw jute is declining due to fewer number of buyers in local hats and bazars.

The BJMC is in the field to buy raw jute from growers in current season at a reasonable

price. The BJMC plans to open 140 jute purchasing centres across the country. Jute growers are reportedly staying off the market under pressure from professional touts and brokers who are, in fact, taking advantages. The growers are in the meantime being deprived of the actual rate announced by the BJMC. It is alleged the growers are being forced to sell out the goods at a nominal price not exceeding Tk 200 per maund while the rate offered by BJMC is between Tk 300 and 350 per maund.

If this situation continues in the jute purchasing centres any longer, the poor jute growers will be discouraged and may decide to give up cultivation from next season.

Economic emancipation goal of BNP govt: Salam

NARAYANGANJ, Aug 29: Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives-Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar said here yesterday that the goal of the present BNP government was to achieve economic and social development of the country, reports BSS.

"Unless economic emancipation is achieved the prevailing ills of the society could not be removed" he said.

He was addressing as chief guest a public meeting at Bandar Kadam Rasul Play Ground organised by Narayanganj city BNP in connection with the inauguration of the new Kadam Rasul Pourashava office building at Bandar in the evening.

The Kadam Rasul Pourashava on the east bank of the river Shitalakha covering an area of 15 square mile with five wards was created in July last year slicing Narayanganj pourashava.

The government has sanctioned Taka 56 lakh for the implementation of 22 projects of the pourashava. The population of the pourashava is about one lakh, with this, the Narayanganj district has now two pourashavas.

Presided over by Advocate Abul Kalam, MP, the meeting was addressed by Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Rezaul Karim, MP, Sirajul Islam, MP and Atahar Hossen Shamsu, vice-president of Juba Dal central committee.

Talukdar, who is also the secretary general of BNP, said that Awami League was opposing all the development activities of BNP government only to

slice their past misdeeds. People still remember their sufferings of famine, hunger and poverty of 1974 and the killing of 22,000 progressive democratic workers by Rakhi Bahini during the misrule of Awami League, he said.

Speaking on the occasion Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury said the present government of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia had passed a budget of 11,000 crore taka for the development of the country.

Later the two ministers released fish fries to a nearby pond.

'Govt keen to strengthen test relief programme'

PATUAKHALI, Aug 29: Minister for Religious Affairs Muhammad Keramat Ali yesterday said that the government was keen to strengthen the test relief programme to create job facilities for the poor people of the villages in the lean period, reports BSS.

He was addressing a review meeting on food for work, test relief and canal digging programme of the government here.

The minister said, the present democratic government has been working ceaselessly for the welfare of the people. He said, as such, all-out efforts are being made to develop the 68 thousand villages of the country.

Notes From Majidee Court

From Our Correspondent

MAJIDEE COURT (Noakhali), Aug 29: Electricity bills amounting to Taka five crore twenty four lakh have been lying unrealised in greater Noakhali district. Major portion of the amount has been lying with the Noakhali Municipality, government offices and staff quarters and private commercial and industrial consumers.

It is gathered that power bills amounting to Taka 5 crore and 24 lakh has been unrealised in 14 thanas of Feni, Lakshmipur and Noakhali district in greater Noakhali. Among the list of defaulters Noakhali Municipality Taka 1 crore 36 lakh, Lakshmipur and Chomuhani Municipality Taka 16 lakh, government offices and staff quarters Taka 82 lakh and private domestic, commercial and industrial consumers Taka 2 crore and 90 lakh have been lying unrealised.

Viral fever
Hundreds of people in the rural and urban areas of the district are suffering from viral fever. It has now broken out in an epidemic form.

Physicians said, this fever takes one or two weeks to be cured making the patients physically weak. Patients from Sudharam, Begunang, Senbag, Companiganj and Chatkhil thanas are coming to the hospitals for treatment. People of different ages including women and children have been suffering from viral fever.

There is no curative medicine for the fever. The doctors advise complete rest. But people are taking Paracetamol and Anti-histamin drugs to combat the disease.

District roundup

PATUAKHALI

Seasonal children competition

Aug 29: The moushumi children competition sponsored by the district unit of Bangladesh Shishu Academy was held recently, reports UNB.

A good number of boys and girls from different schools and cultural organisations in Sadar thana participated in the competition.

The competition included, extempore speech, patriotic folk song and general knowledge.

Ferdous Ahmed and his group stood first in the extempore speech while Saidur Rahman and his group did the same in general knowledge competition. Monwar Hossain and his group stood first in patriotic folk song competition.

Sadar thana TNO Humayun Kabir distributed the prizes among the winners at a simple ceremony.

The first prize winners will compete in the district level of the competition, it is learnt.

KHULNA

Reduce output cost in jute mills: Hannan

Aug 29: Jute Minister ASM Hannan Shah directed the local jute mills management to reduce the production cost in their respective jute mills. The jute minister was addressing the seven jute mill managers of Khulna and Jessore area Tuesday at the local Peoples Jute Mill Board room at Khalishpur, reports BSS.

The minister while reviewing the working of the mills also stressed the need for maintaining gradation of production through increasing efficiency. He said that the production in the mills should be maintained in an atmosphere of cooperation and competition.

The minister directed the concerned quarters to purchase jute in time. The minister during his day long tour to different industrial belts, of Daulatpur and Khalishpur, also visited the Khulna regional office of Bangladesh Jute Association and discussed various matters relating to jute production and export of jute and jute goods and the problems faced by the association.

The meeting was addressed among others by president of Bangladesh Jute Association and members of parliament Prof Rezaul Karim MA Mohammad Mansur Ali, and Syeda Nargis Ali MP.

PABNA

15,000 join BNP

Aug 29: Some 15,000 members of Oikya Parishad of the district traders and business community Sunday joined the Bangladesh Nationalist Party at a simple ceremony, reports UNB.

Presided over by Abdus Satter Biswas, the function was held at Bilalpur in the town.

Among others, BNP district convenor Advocate Mirza Azizur Rahman, former district BNP president Abdur Rouf Abed and president of Chhatra Dal Sheikh Tuhin spoke on the occasion.

The speakers called upon the new entrants to strengthen the hands of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia by taking part in nation-building activities to change the lot of common people.

SIRAJGANJ

Rheumatic fever takes alarming turn

Aug 29: Rheumatic fever has taken an alarming turn in almost all the nine thanas of the district in the recent days, says a local survey of the social welfare workers, reports UNB.

Some 20,000 school-going children have been suffering from the disease, the survey added.

About 35 students out of 57 of class six of Saleha Haque Government High School in the town have been affected by the rheumatic fever, the survey said.

The worst affected areas are: Sadar, Ullapara, Tarash and Shahjadpur thanas of the district.

Local physicians said dam weather, insufficient light and air in the students' bedroom and malnutrition are the main causes for the spread of the disease.

The disease starts with pain from the feet and ultimately attacks the heart of the patients which takes a long time for cure, they added.

MOULVIBAZAR

Lightning kills two

From Our Correspondent

Aug 29: Two people were killed by lightning in Sadar thana of the district recently.

The dead were identified as Ershad Ullah, 55, of the village Mostafapur and Kadir Miah, 65, of the village Ekaton.

Eyewitnesses said, Ershad Ullah met the tragic end of his life while he was working in a field and was struck by the thunderbolt.

In the second case, lightning suddenly struck Kadir Miah, when he was returning home from a market.

Two separate UD cases have been filed with the police in this regard.

RANGPUR

One to die for murdering wife

Aug 29: A man was awarded death penalty in absentia on Sunday for murdering his wife, court sources here said, reports UNB.

The case, in brief, was that Rajib Hossain Khan alias Payel on May 3, 1990 stabbed his former wife Nasima Begum Renu when she went to Fuji Colour Lab at Station Road here to purchase an album. She was rushed to the Rangpur Medical College Hospital where she died next day.

Police after investigation, submitted charge sheet against Rajib. The Additional District and Sessions Judge after examining the evidences and records awarded the punishment.

Assistant Public Prosecutor Advocate Abdus Sattar conducted the case on behalf of the state while Advocate Kamruzzaman and Advocate Abu Ferdous moved for the accused.

NETRAKONA

Welding workshop cause health hazards

Aug 29: Mushroom growth of welding workshops in different roadsides has been causing health hazards in the town, reports UNB.

The welding works are supposed to perform within the high walls but the workshop owners violating the rules run their business openly.

Town-dwellers and pedestrians complained that the sparks directly hit the eyesights while moving alongside the workshops causing untold suffering to them.

The school children are the worst sufferers. They are to face the sparks everyday while going to their schools.

Patients of ophthalmic and skin diseases are increasing day by day due to flashouts from gas welding workshops.

MYMENSINGH

Siratunnabi programme concludes

Aug 29: The four-day programme of holy Siratunnabi organised by the Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, Mymensingh branch concluded here recently, reports BSS.

State Minister for Science and Technology Professor M A Mannan was the chief guest at the concluding day.

Presided over by A F M Matur Rahman, Deputy Commissioner and chairman, the concluding function was addressed among others by Alhaj Amanullah Chowdhury MP, Daud Islam Chowdhury, Professor Abul Kashem and Nazimud-Doula.

The state minister called upon the Muslim ummah to follow the ideals of the holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SM) and also asked them to build up the future generation with Islamic education.

Later, the chief guest distributed prizes and certificates among the winners of literary and Islamic cultural competition held during the four day programme.

SATKHIRA

One killed, 20 injured in road mishap

Aug 29: A man was killed and 20 others were injured, six seriously, in a road accident at Chogharia in Jessore-Satkhira highway on Friday, police said, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the accident occurred when the driver of Satkhira-bound passenger bus coming from Jessore lost control and rammed against a road side tree.

Later, Bablu (20), a critically injured passenger, succumbed at Satkhira Hospital.



SYLHET: A colourful procession was brought out in the city on the first day of 'Mother and Child Health Fortnight'. — Star photo