

One killed, 10 injured in Jhenidah road mishaps

JHENIDAH, Oct 1: One person was killed and ten others were wounded in two road mishaps here on Friday, police and hospital sources said, reports UNB.

Shakhlain Hossain, 25, former AGS of Matlab Uddin Degree College, died instantly when a truck run over him near Arappur in Sadar Friday afternoon. He was crossing the road.

Friday another mishap took place Nagorbachhan in sadar on the Chuadanga-Jhenidah highway Friday afternoon when a Jhenidah-bound bus lost its control and fell into a wayside ditch, leaving 10 passengers injured.

All the wounded passengers were admitted to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital.

Two cases were filed with the sadar police.

Clashes in Kushtia: 35 injured

KUSHTIA, Oct 1: At least 15 people were injured, four seriously, when a group of people attacked the rival group on Wednesday in Kushtia Sugar Mills area, reports UNB.

According to witnesses, the group attacked and damaged the houses of one Latif and Algar and set ablaze one power tiller machine. They also took away Latif's four cattle.

Of the injured, Shahidul, 35, Anis, 18, Algar, 30, and Hafizur, 20, who received bullet injuries were admitted to Kushtia General Hospital.

A case has been lodged with the police.

Another report says: At least 20 people were wounded, four seriously, when two rival groups clashed over harvesting of paddy in Bedniagar village in Khoksha thana on the same day. One house was also ransacked during the clash.

Injured Shaheb Ali, 25, Abdul Aziz, 20, Rabiul Islam, 18, and Aslam were admitted to Khoksha Thana Health Complex.

Of them, Shaheb Ali was later removed to Kushtia General Hospital on Thursday. His condition was stated to be critical.

College-boy kidnapped in Jamalpur

JAMALPUR, Oct 1: A college-boy was kidnapped by a gang of armed miscreants in the town on Sunday, police said on Friday, reports UNB.

Mizanur Rahman Suman, 18, was abducted on his way home from his teacher's house after the sun-set.

Suman appeared at the HSC examinations and did not belong to any political organisation. He was kidnapped for ransom, family sources said.

A case was filed with the Sadar thana.

Another HSC examinee was also kidnapped from Bagabaid-Rashidpur area in the town some days ago.

Diarrhoea claims 25 in Gaibandha

GAIBANDHA, Oct 1: Diarrhoea took a serious turn and claimed 25 lives in different areas of the district in the last few days, official said on Friday, reports UNB.

Unofficial sources, however, put the death figure 44 and claimed that over 200 others were attacked by the water-borne disease during the period.

According to sources Gobindaganj thana is the worst affected area where most of the deaths occurred.

Health Department sources said paucity of drinking water and oral saline are the main causes of spreading the deadly disease.

Local people urged the authorities concerned to send oral saline and water purification tablets in the affected areas on emergency basis to check the out break of the disease.

Clinic damaged in Sylhet

SYLHET, Oct 1: Agitated demonstrators damaged a clinic in the town Wednesday protesting the indefinite strike called by the doctors across the country, reports UNB.

Witnesses said, a group of people in a procession swooped on the Computer Diagnosis Centre, a pathological clinic at Zindabazar and damaged its doors and window panes at 12 noon.

Laboratory in-charge Abdur Rashid Talukder and technician Kazi Kanti Bardhan were injured in the attack.

The demonstrators also attacked the chamber of Dr. Mousadque at Zindabazar and damaged his chamber.

Owner of the clinic filed a case with the local police.

Taka 16cr uplift projects implemented in Chuadanga

From Our Correspondent

CHUADANGA, Oct 1: The Public Works Department has implemented a number of development projects in Chuadanga district headquarters during the last 10 years since the inception of Chuadanga district in 1984. The total cost of the projects is Tk 16.47 crore.

The schemes implemented are construction of two-storied district and session judge's court building at a cost of Tk 2.47 crore, construction of police super's office building costing Tk 56.30,000, construction of civil surgeon's office at a cost of Tk 39.81,000, construction of the office building of the executive engineer, PWD, at a cost of Tk 38.34,000, construction of the residence of the deputy com-

missioner at a cost of Tk 27.16,000, construction of the residence of the district and sessions judge at a cost of Tk 17.10,000, construction of the residence of the police super at a cost of Tk 18.05,000, construction of the residence of the civil surgeon at a cost of Tk 14.16,000, construction of the residence of the executive engineer, PWD at a cost of Tk 13.57,000, construction of the officers quarter at a cost of Tk 99.09,000, land purchasing for the above development works for Tk 4.64,000, construction of district police line at a cost of Tk 6.17,86,000, Tk 41,20,000 for land development cost for the construction of police line and construction of Nurse staff quarter at the premises of Chuadanga sadar hospital at a cost, of Tk

51,00,000.

The construction works of the new district collectorate building is now going on in full swing and is expected to be completed by the next two months.

Meanwhile construction of the three-storied main building of the collectorate building has been completed.

The new collectorate building for Chuadanga district headquarters is being constructed at a total cost of Tk 3.61 crore.

Most of the offices have been shifted to this new building from the old one.

The construction work of the staff quarters for the 4th class employees of Chuadanga sadar hospital has also been completed.



SYLHET: Committee for Upholding the Interest of Patients brought out a procession in the town recently protesting the ongoing countrywide doctors' strike. —Star photo

2.38 lakh acres of arable land unutilised in Sylhet region

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Oct 1: Some hundred thousand acres of arable land have been lying unutilised for years together in different districts of the greater Sylhet region. Taking advantage of the situation, a number of influential quarters have been engaged in grabbing the valuable government land. Lack of proper planning for bringing the land under cultivation, the country is being deprived of crops worth about Taka 105 crore each year.

According to a survey, a total of about two lakh 38 thousand acres of arable land re-

mained uncultivated in this north-eastern region of the country. It includes, one lakh 19 thousand acres in 11 thanas under Sumangaj, 62 thousand acres in 11 thanas under Sylhet, 34 thousand acres in eight thanas under Habiganj district and 23 thousand acres in six thanas under Moulvibazar district.

An official of the department of agriculture extension told this correspondent that, different crops like, IRRI-boro paddy, wheat, jute, sugarcane, tobacco, betelnut, mustard and others could easily be produced on these land. The total yield would be about three lakh metric tons, he said. The total value of the crops would be about Taka one hundred and fifty crore, he added. Besides, of the total acreage, some considerable area could be used for afforestation purposes, he expressed.

It is alleged that, due to absence of proper planning to utilise these land some interested quarters have been trying to occupy the government-owned land in cooperation with a section of government employees in different thanas.

Both of them received burn injuries and admitted to thana health complex in critical condition where Shah Alam succumbed to his injuries. Later Selim was rushed to Bholai Sadar Hospital.

Another report adds: A minor girl drowned in a pond at a village in Sadar thana of the district last Friday.

The dead identified as Rupban, 3, daughter of Moslem Mia of Ilish union, drowned in a nearby pond of their house while her mother was busy with household works.

52 arrested for illegally entering into Bangladesh

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Oct 1: Fifty-two people, including 13 children and 29 women, who crossed into Bangladesh from India through Bangabari border, were arrested here Friday, reports UNB.

BDR sources said they rounded up those people for illegally entering into Bangladesh territory. BDR handed over 24 people to Gomostapur thana while 28 others were kept at Bangabari Union Parishad.

Claiming themselves as citizens of Bangladesh they told the BDR men that they had gone to India in search of jobs a few years ago and fled the Indian city of Bombay because of the outbreak of plague there.

They said they hailed from the districts of Jessore, Khulna, Narail, Feni, Noakhali and Sariapur.

Plague-phobia in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Oct 1: The sale of shaving blades, bangles, sarees, beef, salt, onion, oil and spices in the markets of 9 thanas of the district has almost come to a dead stop due to plague panic, reports UNB.

The customers want to know whether the items are Indian or Bangladeshi. They remain unconvinced even if they are told that the items are local.

Even drug addicts are giving up taking Phensidyl for fear of plague.

Gas-stove blast: One killed in Bhola

BHOLA, Oct 1: A young man was killed and another one seriously injured when a gas-stove blasted at a house in Char Fashion thana of the district last week, said a delayed message on Friday, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the gas-stove blasted while Shah Alam, 25, and Selim, 30, were engaged in cooking.

Both of them received burn injuries and admitted to thana health complex in critical condition where Shah Alam succumbed to his injuries. Later Selim was rushed to Bholai Sadar Hospital.

Another report adds: A minor girl drowned in a pond at a village in Sadar thana of the district last Friday.

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Flash floods in Patuakhali damage aus crops

PATUAKHALI, Oct 1: Aus crops on 11,000 hectares of land in four thanas of the district have been damaged due to flash flood and salinity, reports UNB.

Sources said, about 22,500 hectares of land were brought under aus cultivation programme in the current season.

Of the total land, 7,500 hectares were brought under High Yielding Variety (HYV) and the rest under local variety.

The production target of aus crops was estimated about 30,000 metric tons but outstanding aus paddy over 50 per cent of land has been badly affected due to salinity and heavy rainfall in the first part of Ashar month.

Local agriculture department said a kind of virus has also affected the growth of aus crops in Naichiti and Jhalakathi thanas of the district.

Price of urea fertilizer increases

BARISAL, Sept 28: Urea fertilizer is being sold at exorbitant price in different southern districts under Barisal Division despite the government's decision to reduce price during the current fiscal, reports UNB.

Farmers alleged that some unscrupulous businessmen are increasing the price by hoarding it in their godowns and creating artificial crisis in the market.

The government had re-fixed the price of fertilizer from July 1, this year. But in the markets fertilizer dealers and traders are selling the fertilizer between Tk 210 and 215 per bag instead of the new price of Tk 186.25 per bag.

The farmers said though the fertilizer is being sold at a high price in the markets no steps are being taken against the sellers.

They urged the government to take immediate steps to ensure fair supply of fertilizer so that they can get the same at the fixed price.

New syllabus at IU

Students, teachers protest inclusion of Islamic Studies

From IU Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Oct 1: The Islamic University (IU) here was close sine die on September 12 in apprehension of violence on the campus following an emergency syndicate meeting with Vice-Chancellor Prof MA Hamid in the chair.

Earlier, eight students' organisation of the IU, including JCD and BCL, under the banner of the Syllabus Resistance Committee (SRC) — except the Jamaat-e-Islami student wing — demanded exclusion of Islamic studies from syllabus of the new academic session.

According to the authority, the syllabus was made with the help of the Malaysian Islamic University.

A four-member Islamic University Inter-nationalising Committee (IUNC) had already been formed headed by the Dean of Humanities and Social Science (now register) Dr Ashraf Ali and formally informed Prime Minister and Chancellor of IU Begum Khaleida Zia on the 2nd Feb. 94.

The syllabus is divided into

four topics: 900 marks for major courses (departmental), 500 marks for minor courses (supplementary and complementary), 200 marks for viva-voce and tutorial, 100 marks for Islamic studies, 50 marks for Bangladesh studies and 50 marks Bengali or Arabic language are newly included in the syllabus as a compulsory 'university courses' (as part of complementary course).

The controversy began mainly over the inclusion of 100 marks for the Islamic studies part-1 and part-2.

The SRC protesting the syllabus, called a three-day strike on September 5, 6, and 7. They also observed a half-day hartal in Kushtia and Jhenidah on Sept 9. On September 10 when they were observing the Kushtia-Jhenidah highway blockade programme, a serious clash between police and students occurred injuries at least 50 students. The agitated students broke glasses, furniture, and many offices of the administrative and academic building.

The rampage cost a loss of Tk 20 lakh, official sources said. The SRC brought out processions, held meeting and also demanded removal of VC Prof MA Hamid.

According to the Syllabus Resistance Committee, Islamic Studies is an unrelated subject to the social-science faculties. If it is included, the madrasah students will be benefited. They wanted modern subject as a 'university course' like computer science instead of fundamental Islamic Studies. They protested that by the inclusion of the subject the total marks of the honours course would be decreased and the improvement of education will be hampered.

Replying to a question, Pekul Rahman, a leader of the committee, said that the subject has been included in the current academic year 93-94, but in their prospectus there was no mention of subject as compulsory.

Some of the teachers of the IU also protested the new syllabus.

Alarming rise in anti-social activities in Sirajganj

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Oct 1: Law and order situation in Sirajganj district has deteriorated recently.

Official sources said during last eight months this year, 30 persons including 12 women were killed in different incidents. On trivial issues, at least 500 persons were injured in about 97 clashes during the period.

Local political leaders said, that shortage of police personnel and negligence in enforcing law and delay in taking steps contributed much to deteriorating situation.

On the other hand, the meeting of District Law and Order Committee have claimed that the situation of law and order in the district is satisfactory.

It is learnt that anti-social activities have increased alarmingly in the district. Open shows of obscene films on videos have been rampant in the thana areas. Law enforcing agencies keep mysterious silence about the matter. Visiting some areas of Sirajganj sadar and Belkuchi thanas, it was found that nude posters were on display at various points of Mirpur, Malshapur, Hossainpur, Bhangabari and Dhargara in sadar and Khamagram, Gopalpur, Mukundaganj, Chala and Shomeshpur in Belkuchi thana. At least eight video shows are going on round the clock at Belkuchi thana sadar within half a kilometre area from Belkuchi police station. Besides, country made liquors,

in disguise of ayurvedik medicine, and intoxicating drugs are widely sold in different markets of the district.

The worst situation prevails in the charlands of Kazipur, Sirajganj sadar, Belkuchi and Chowhali thanas. Police from the mainland fails to reach any spots of incident in the remote charlands in absence of mechanised boats. The remote areas of Chalan Beel, Tarash thana are also deprived of prompt presence of law enforcing agencies for shortage of necessary vehicles. Activists of different outlawed groups are also active here.

When contacted the police of Sirajganj said that steps are being taken to improve the law and order situation by intensifying patrol in the areas.

Make uplift programmes a success: Aminul

RAJSHAHI, Oct 1: State Minister for Establishment Barrister Aminul Haque on Friday said the present government had given top priority on compulsory primary and mass education including women's education with a view to turning the country into a modern and developed country, reports BSS.

He said this while laying the foundation stone of a new building to be constructed at Vatopara Girls High School and inaugurating a newly-constructed extension building of Vatopara Government Primary School under Godagari thana of the district.

The state minister said the BNP government was determined to ensure the basic needs including political rights of the people. The present democratically elected government has been endeavouring hard for socio-economic development of the country, he added.

Barrister Haque urged all to come forward spontaneously to make the development programmes of the government a success.

An amount of about Taka eight lakh has been allocated for construction of a new building of Vatopara Girls High School and Taka about 2.50 lakh had been spent to construct the new extension building of Vatopara Government Primary School.

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80 grams heroin seized from two dists

A total of 80 grams of heroin was seized in two different districts — Rajshahi and Sirajganj, report agencies.

A special squad of 20 Rifle Battalion seized 50 grams of heroin raiding a Nababganj-Rajshahi bound passenger bus at Balar north of the Rajshahi district on Thursday.

Two persons both resident of Pabna have been arrested in this connection. The arrested persons and seized heroin were handed over to Rajpara thana police and the Narcotics Control Department respectively.

Beside, the members of 20 Rifle Battalion also recovered Indian goods worth over Taka two lakh from the areas of Kashinathpur, Dargah Ghat and Durlaypur of the district on the same day.

The seized items include spare parts of watches, salt, sarees and eggs. These were deposited with the customs authorities.

A young man was arrested after the Narcotics Control personnel recovered 30 grams of heroin from the Sirajganj town on Friday.

A squad of the Narcotics Control Department recovered the heroin during an afternoon raid in the house of Menhaj at Soyagovinda in the town. His brother, Jelhaj, was arrested in this connection.

A case has been lodged with Sirajganj sadar police.

They are returning disappointed

RANGPUR, Oct 1: Eight thanas of Rangpur district are in grip of an acute food crisis despite Open Market Sale (OMS) operation of rice and oil, reports UNB.

The situation aggravated due to unemployment of the landless agricultural day labourers caused by prolonged drought. The low income group of people have already lost their buying capacity.

Continued drought has hampered cultivation of aman and other seasonal crops. Aman cultivation in the district achieved only 50 per cent of the target of over 1.53 lakh hectares of land this year.

Large number of people from rural areas are rushing to the district town for jobs but returning disappointed. Prices of foodgrains and other essential commodities have registered a sharp rise. Increasing

number of beggars have been polluting the civic life of the town for the last one month.

Every day, hundreds of people have been pouring into the town seeking jobs. Besides, young women are resorting to prostitution to maintain their livelihood.

According to local people, Abdul Qader, 50 of village Galpur in Mithapukur thana died of starvation. Local administration, however, denied the report and said he died of heart attack.

The agricultural and landless labourers of the rural areas have been passing hard days for want of jobs. The harvesting period is late. The day labourers of Rangpur sadar, Gangachara, Kaunia, Pirgachha, Badarganj, Mithapukur, Taraganj and Pirganj thanas depend fully on agricultural works.

The situation aggravated in village Bagdabara in Nohali union of Gangachara thana as at least 72 families were rendered homeless by the erosion of river Teesta. Besides, about 60 acres of land were washed away by the river. The homeless people have taken shelter on WDB embankment passing their days in great hardships.

District administration sanctioned 500 metric tons of wheat under Food for Works Programme and 100 tons of biscuit for distribution among the jobless people as relief which is too meagre to face the situation.

Local people urged the government to start massive test relief programmes to provide the jobless people of the rural areas for at least next three months till IRRI-boro season.