

JCD, Shibir clash in Sylhet: 15 hurt

MOULVIBAZAR, Oct 10: At least 15 people were injured, three of them seriously, in a clash between two rival student groups in the Kulaura Degree College here today, reports UNB.

The clash between activists of the JCD and Chhatra Shibir erupted following dispute over admission of freshers in the college and their joining of the two groups.

The injured Muhibur Rahman, 22, Faisal, 23, a JCD leader and Monsur Ahmed, 21, of the Islami Chhatra Shibir were admitted to the Sylhet Medical College Hospital with serious wounds.

Condition of Monsur, who received head injury was stated to be critical.

The rivals armed with lethal weapons including dao, hockey sticks and Chinese axes fought for nearly an hour in the campus. Police rushed to the campus and brought the situation under control.

Witnesses said the attack was first launched by the Shibir workers against their rivals. Both the parties, however, blamed each other for the incident.

Later in the evening, the JSD backed BCL and pro Awami League BCL brought out procession to protest the incident.

JCD leader kidnapped

KUSHTIA, Oct 10: A JCD leader of Daulatpur thana unit was kidnapped by a gang of armed miscreants last Friday, police and family sources here said, reports UNB.

Salam, 20, was kidnapped by an unidentified armed group when he was guarding his leasehold on the Teeldinga Beel at Daulatpur on Friday night.

The kidnappers also demanded a ransom of Tk two lakh for Salam's release. However, he could not be rescued till late night Sunday.

DC's office gheraoed in Rangpur

RANGPUR, Oct 10: The Left Democratic Front demonstrated in front of the Deputy Commissioner's Office to press for different demands of the district last Saturday, reports UNB.

The demands included, ensuring food and work for the distressed and drought-hit people and to declare Rangpur as distressed area.

Later on, the demonstrators brought out a procession in the town, paraded the main thoroughfares, and held a rally at Jahaj Company Square.

Chaired by the local unit president of JSD (Inu) Mosaddeque Hossain Bablu, the rally was addressed, among others, by central leaders Shirin Akhter and Haider Akbar Khan Rono.

The rally called upon the government to sanction more relief goods for the drought affected people and gear up open sale of grain, and supply of agriculture inputs.

Gold smugglers arrested from Satkhira border

SATKHIRA, Oct 10: Police rounded up three gold smugglers from border area of the district, and recovered ten tolas of gold, and Tk one lakh from their possession on Sunday, reports UNB.

The arrested were identified as: Nazim Uddin and Nawab Ali of Manikganj and Mosharrar of Satkhira.

On Sunday morning, police challenged these people on their way towards Indian border and recovered the smuggled gold and Bangladesh currency from them.

Two separate cases were lodged with police. Later on, police deposited the seized gold and the soft currency to Satkhira treasury.

Teesta erosion Huge arable land engulfed

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Oct 10: The devastating erosion of the river Teesta is continuing in Gangachara thana leaving at least one hundred families homeless during past two weeks, according to the information received here.

The river also eroded 13 acres and huge cultivable land and gradually approaching towards a guide bundh (dam).

Nohali union in Gangachara thana is described to be worst affected by the erosion where about seventy families were rendered homeless by the calamity temporarily sheltered on the embankment and passing days amidst untold miseries in absence of food, medical aids and other necessities since they have lost all belongings including cultivable lands.



Agricultural University, Mymensingh: Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr Shah Muhammad Faruk speaking as chief guest at the inaugural function of a training course on 'cultivation of vegetable, during Winter season,' for school and madrasah students organised by the Extension Centre of Bangladesh Agricultural University. —BAU photo

In northern region, Khulna Div

Lack of fund, teachers seriously affect primary edn programmes

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Oct 10: The state of primary education all over the northern region is in a bad shape due to the absence of required number of teaching staff and other necessary equipment. The government's target to ensure education for all by 2,000 will not be achieved for the prevailing problems, it is apprehended.

According to a survey, there are at least 1525 posts of assistant teachers in the primary schools lying vacant for long. Hundreds of primary schools are in dilapidated condition for want of required furniture and necessary educational equipment.

Of the total 41 lakh school going boys and girls between six and 10 years of age, just over 35 lakh were admitted so far in the primary schools, but at the end of the current academic year about 30 per cent boys and girls have dropped out from the schools.

Under the food for education programme, the government had spent one crore 21 lakh metric tons of wheat upto June in the 16 northern districts. In a bid to attract the children to the schools, but it is yet to achieve success since a large number of primary schools are kept out of the programme.

Another report from Kushtia says: The Universal Primary Education Programme in 4320 primary schools in 10

districts of Khulna Division has been facing a serious draw backs.

According to official sources, there are 17,86,955 students of age group between six and 10 years and the number of teachers engaged for teaching is 14,070. The ratio of teachers and students in 124 : 1. The district wise posts lying vacant stands like this: Khulna 45, Bagerhat 82, Satkhira 58, Jessore 84, Jhenaidah 25, Magura 32, Kushtia 26, Chuadanga 27, Narail 34, and Meherpur 13.

It is reported that the condition of most of the schools are dilapidated. Inadequate furniture and shortage of teachers are the main causes hampering the primary education. High prices of papers and other educational equipment, financial crisis and social problems are also hindering the progress.

Moreover, the schools damaged by floods, storm and cyclones over the last few years have not yet been repaired. The shortage of teachers and accommodation problem have further aggravated the situation.

Cracks have developed on the roof of the most of the school buildings for which the students cannot attend classes during rainy season. Very often classes are taken under open sky it was alleged.

Most of the schools have no

tube wells and the students are to take water from the nearby ponds and canals.

Our Correspondent from Gaibandha says: About 15 lakh children in northern districts remain deprived of primary education for want of adequate number of schools in remote village areas.

According to an official source, out of total 23,414 villages in northern districts, 11,366 villages do not have any primary schools. As a result, about 15 lakh school going children in these villages can not get benefit of compulsory education. The number of school going children in these villages stood at 42,31,000, of them, 19,72,000 are girl students.

In the last academic year a total of 33,67,000 children took admission in different primary schools of northern districts. Of them, about 25 per cent children left schools due to acute poverty, hardship and carelessness of concerned guardians.

According to a survey conducted by local NGOs mostly poverty stricken families lost interest in encouraging education. They engaged the children in different petty works like maid-servant, labourer, ferrying ground-nuts and rickshawpulling. Even many of these kids, were found supporting families with their little earning.

Due to communication gap remote villages remained isolated from the rest of the country as well as the world.

In Gaibandha district implementation of Compulsory Primary Education is facing difficulties due to gradual fall in the attendance of students in different primary schools. In the month of August this year attendance of students in primary institutes under Gaibandha sadar thana stood at 59 per cent.

On the contrary, respective thana education officers filed the attendance report at 65 per cent. All such report proved contradictory and false after the inspection conducted by a task force. It was also exposed that in many schools teachers maintained admission register with fake students showing their regular attendance. According to Fulchari thana task force, it was found only 40 per cent attendance in different schools of Fulchari thana.

District administration in formed union, thana and district level task force to ascertain the exact position of compulsory education programme in the district.

Besides, a large number of posts including district education office, thana education officer, headmaster and other teachers, lying vacant in different areas of northern districts as a result proper education is facing setback.

Commander of Chokh Bandha Party held

SAVAR, Oct 10: A commander of so-called Chokh Bandha Party was arrested from a place near Sonali Bank at Kalampur in Dharmat thana on Monday, reports UNB.

The arrested person was identified as Abdur Razzak, 35, of Amshimurpur village in Dhamrai thana. He was in charge of his party's network which links six districts.

Acting on a tip, a contingent of police led by Inspector A F I Samad rushed towards the Sonali Bank and caught Razzak red-handed about 10 in the morning.

Razzak was awarded lifetime rigorous imprisonment for killing a co-villager three years ago, police said. Since then he was wanted by the police. Besides, 13 other separate cases were lodged against him.

Krishi Unnayan Bank's special loan programme

GAIBANDHA, Oct 10: Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank has taken up a special loan distribution programme to disburse Tk 22.28 lakh among the drought-hit farmers of five northern districts, official sources said here on Monday, reports UNB.

The districts are Rangpur, Gaibandha, Nilphamari, Kurigram and Lalmonirhat.

Break-up of the loan: Tk 16.31 lakh will be distributed for boro cultivation, Tk 1.49 lakh for wheat cultivation and Tk 4.48 lakh for potato cultivation.

Farmers who have failed to repay their pending agricultural loan, will also be eligible to avail the special loan, officials of the bank said.

Meanwhile, the bank authorities have also extended the time for repayment of the agri-loan considering present economic condition of the farmers.

Dacoits-villagers clash: Six injured in Brahmanbaria

BRAHMANBARIA, Oct 10: Six people were wounded when a gang of dacoits clashed with some local people at village Manadarpur under Kashaba thana last week, police said, reports UNB.

Eyewitnesses said, a group of dacoits numbering six to seven, launched an attack at the house of Wahab Ali at the village and looted some gold ornament, and cash worth about Tk 12,000 from the residence.

Immediately after the attack, villagers rushed to the house after hearing the warning shout of the inmates, prevented the dacoits from leaving the spot and managed to round up one of the dacoits.

However, the rest of the robbers managed to flee the spot with the booty after hurting six villagers.

Introduction of ferry services in Tetulia river urged

PATUAKHALI, Oct 10: A ferry-service in the river Tetulia can ease the movement of passengers who travel by water vessels from Bhola to Barisal and Patuakhali, reports UNB.

At present, these passengers are to avail country boat to travel through the cross-channel and such a journey takes much time.

Bhola, the largest island of the country, is isolated from the neighbouring districts by the river Tetulia which flows through a channel touching Kalaya in Bauphal thana of Patuakhali and Nazipur of Lalmahun thana of Bhola.

Introduction of a ferry service in the route linking the island with the mainland, would help ease the troubles of the passengers, observers believe. Moreover, the route could be useful to the residents of Laxmipur, they added.

Meanwhile, local people of Bhola have urged the concerned authorities to introduce a ferry service in the river Tetulia considering the present situation.

Young girl commits suicide

KUSHTIA, Oct 10: A teenage girl committed suicide by taking poison at a village in sadar thana of the district on Friday last, police said, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Sawpna, 16, of village Dakhla. However, reasons behind her suicide could not be known immediately.

A case of unnatural death (UD) was filed with the sadar police.

Navigation in Jamalpur seriously affected

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, Oct 10: Rapid fall in the water level of all the rivers in the northern districts and emergence of char have seriously affected the navigation to and from the areas.

Chars have emerged in many places in the Jamuna, Brahmaputra, Kangsha, Jheani, Jinjiram, Ganga, Luhjang, due to heavy siltation.

An official source informed that an additional sum of over Tk one lakh is required for keeping the rivers free of silt.

According to the Water Development Board sources, water level recorded in the Brahmaputra at Dewanganj in the Jumuna at Jagannath Janga ghat, Jheal near Jamalpur, Kangsha at Sheerpur, Ganga at Rajshahi, Luhjang at Sarishabari are lower than the normal requirement.

The WDB sources said, 15 feet layer of silt have been carried along in the Brahmaputra at Bahadurabad and 14 feet layer of silt in the Jamuna at Jagannathganj ghat.

It is expected that in coming lean period, the ground and surface water levels will go down further seriously affecting the ecological balance and causing crisis in availability of water for both, drinking and irrigation purposes.

Now the water transport including ferries and country-made boats plying between Jagannathganj ghat-Sirajganj ghat, Bahadurabad ghat-Shanandabari ghat, Bahadurabad-Chilmari ghat, Madarganj-Sharalakandi ghat, Bahadurabad to Teestamukh ghat have to cover additional distance of four to five miles to reach destinations.

Besides, movement of water vessels through the narrow passage near Kufuler char, Fulfuler char, Bulbuler char, three miles up streams from Bahadurabad ghat is about to be abandoned.

It is learnt that BIWTA has undertaken plan for dredging of the rivers.

The Bahadurabad ferry terminal at Kulkadi has been shifted downstream in Jamuna due to siltation. Dredging is necessary at some places along the 32km long Bahadurabad railway ferry ghat to Teestamukh railway ferry ghat route to keep it navigable.

Chilmari route may be disrupted and ultimately the distribution of essential merchandise including fertilizer and fuel to the northern districts will be stopped.

Meanwhile, country-made mechanized boats have become the main river line transport for carrying passengers and merchandise. At present over one thousand such engine boats have been plying on different routes of the districts. But journey by these country boats is very risky. Accidents occur frequently. Dacoities are also being committed on these routes. It is informed that the dacoits on these routes use high powered engine boats.

Due to insufficient rainfall during this rainy season, water level failed to rise at requisite level.

Over 600 charlands are still visible throughout 150 miles long river route which are hindering the movement of IwTA ferries and railway ferries.

Bank loan over Tk 2 cr unrealised in Sirajganj

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Oct 10: Bank loans amounting to more than Taka two crore remain unrealised for years due to complex process of management between the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) and concerned banks.

It is learnt from the BSCIC and concerned commercial banks that under the schemes of BSCIC Taka 15 lakh was disbursed among seven printing and packaging industries, Taka 40,22,000 for 27 bakery and food industries, Taka 5,82,000 for audio, video and colour laboratories, Taka 5,99,000 for two mechanical workshops, Taka 8,01,000 for three plastic and polythene industries, Taka 64,22,000 for 163 textile and twisting mills, Taka 2,40,000 for two soap factories and Taka 16,81,000 for 31 aluminium, oil mills and saw mills.

The banks have lodged 60 certificate cases against the defaulting loanees.

It is further learnt from a source, that 21 small entrepreneurs could not be traced out. They were paid Tk 65 lakh as loan. The banks and BSCIC cannot take any action against them who had shown false papers to receive the loans. The officials of the banks said, special measures are being prepared in co-operation with the BSCIC, NASIB and chamber authorities to realise the money.

According to the district BSCIC source, about 200 out of

238 small industries remain closed. Only eight out of 136 textile and twisting mills are in operation now.

A source of NASIB alleged that required running capital is not available from the banks. When an entrepreneur starts a mill after taking loan, production can not be continued due to crisis of running capital. On the other hand, following on satisfactory turn over loan repayment, the banks are not interested to pay new loans. Following the situation, the genuine entrepreneurs are being discouraged who have bright prospects of industrialisation in Sirajganj.

Body formed for Santosh Varsity Trustee Board

TANGAIL, Oct 10: A nine member committee headed by Azizul Haque has been formed for Santosh Islamic University Trustee Board recently, reports BSS.

Engineer Sekandar Hayat Khan Yusufzai has been elected vice-president and Syed Irfanul Bari secretary.

The executive members are Alhaj Alem Khanatun Bhasani, chief of the planning cell of Education Ministry, director general technical education directorate, director general primary education, deputy commissioner Tangail and advocate Abdul Kuddus.

More foreign trawlers fishing in Bay illegally

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, Oct 10: Fre-

quency infiltration by Foreign trawlers to catch fish from Bangladesh water area in Bay of Bengal is on increase following advent of Winter causing extensive damage to national aquatic wealth.

According to a source BN (Bangladesh Navy) arrested 157 foreign fishermen from Hiron Point while they were engaged in fishing and seize 13 trawlers registered in India in September.

Huge quantities of fish was also recovered from their possession during the raids, sources added.

A detailed information said that 121 fishermen were Indian and rest were from Thailand and Myanmar.

Out of the total 157 trawlers seized 10 belonged to India, two to Thailand and rest one to Myanmar.

All fishermen together with their trawlers were handed over to Mongla thana in Bagerhat.

It was also learnt that in a separate operation, a Thai fisherman Sukhen was shot dead and two others were seriously injured in the firing by BN Coast Guards while the fishermen tried to escape Bangladesh water territory near the Hiron Point on September 27.

In another operation, a total of 50 Indian fishermen on five trawlers were arrested by the

Storm sweeps Jhenidah: 200 houses damaged

JHENIDAH, Oct 10: About 200 dwelling houses were damaged and 20 people injured when a storm accompanied by heavy downpour swept over Sadar and Kaliganj thanas of the district on Sunday evening, reports UNB.

The strong wind affected the plantations of betel leaf and banana and badly damaged 40-50 kutcha and tin shed houses in Kaliganj TNO of Kaliganj said.

The worst affected areas are Hajipur, Bujurmunda, Khoddor, villages of Raigram union, Kullapara and Enayampur of Rakhai union and some villages of Nimatpur union of the thana.

Also in sadar, a good number of banana trees were uprooted and some houses were damaged in Bijoypur, Porahati,



CHANDPUR: Many business centres were eroded by the river Dakatia here this season. This picture was taken near Rally Brothers Ghat at Purana Bazar of the district recently. —Star photo

Postal Day observed in Khulna

KHULNA, Oct 10: World Postal Day was observed in Khulna as elsewhere in the country Sunday, reports BSS.