2 dacoits killed in Sylhet police firing

MOULVIBAZAR. Oct 12: Two alleged dacoits were killed and three policemen injured in a clash between police and dacoits in a village of Srimongal thana early, Tuesday, police said, reports

Acting on a tip off, police from Moulvibazar and Srimongal jointly raided a house in Chatalgaon village to arrest a gang of dacoits.

They said they opened fire in self defence when the miscreants attacked them with lethal weapons. Two of the miscreants, identified as Siraj. 35. and Noshib, 25. of Srimongal thana, died on the spot while the rest fled away. Injured Sub-Inspectors

Shahjahan and Mizan, and constable Jalii were given first aid at sadar hospital.

Police recovered some dao. krts and iron rods from the



SYLHET: Bilkis Jaigirdar, President, Sylhet district unit of Jatiya Mahila Sangstha inaugurating the week-long tree plantation campaign at the Sylhet Government Pilot Girls High School recently. - Star photo

Housewife killed, another commits suicide

KUSHTIA, Oct 12: A housewife was found hanging with the ceiling of her room, at Dakhinpara village in sadar thana on Sunday night, reports UNB.

Neighbours said, Saleha Khatun, 18, was occasionally beaten up by her husband, Monirul Islam over dowry. On the day she had a quarrel with her husband and was found dead in the morning.

As Monirul was absconding since the incident, the villagers suspected that he might have killed her wife and hanged her.

The body was sent to sadar hospital for autopsy. A case was filed with the sadar police.

Another report adds: anfother, housewife allegedly committed suicide by taking poison on Tuesday in Daulatpur thana of the district.

Police said. Faima Khatun, 22, wife of Mohsin Ali of Piarpur union in Daulatpur thana committed suicide over family feud.

Chittagong General Hospital to have 200 beds soon

CHITTAGONG, Oct 12 Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Abdullah al-Noman Tuesday said that modernisation works of a full-fledged Chittagong general hospital would be completed soon, reports BSS.

The minister said this at a meeting with officials concerned in the conference room of the hospital.

The meeting was attended. among others, by local MP Serajul Islam: Director General of Health Services Prof. Mohammad Naurn-Nabi Principal of Chittagong Medical College Hospital Prof Sayeda Nurzahan Bhuiyan, Civil Surgeon A S M Humyoon Khan and Deputy Commissioner A H M Abul Kashem, a PID handout

Noman said that the hospi tal which began its journey with 80 beds about 5 years ago now failed to meet the present requirement. It is the personal initiative of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia to turn it into 200 beds, he said adding that Tk one crore and five lakh has already been sanctioned in

was regard He directed the officials concerned to complete the

work within a month The Minister went round different sections of the hospital. Later he visited the Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

BIWTA, R&H experts recommend

Demand for shifting of Nagorebari ferry ghat

From Our Correspondent PABNA, Oct 12: The ferry through separate teams of exghat from Nagorebari to Natibpur requires shifting for

the greater interest of main-

taining regularity of ferry-ser-

vices and also of road transport

services between the eastern

and northern, parts of

Roads and Highways

Department and Bangladesh

Inland Water Transport

Authority (BIWTA) said shifting

Nagorebari to Natibpur, six

miles downstream would

benefit in many ways. The fact,

that Nagorebari ghat was expe-

riencing heavy siltation every

year and hence heavy and

regular dredging was needed

with an abnormally high

expenditure. Moreover, due to

heavy erosion in the river

Jamuna every year, shifting of

pontoons of the ferry ghat of

Nagorebari became a regular

affair. Lastly, because of the

Nagorebari and Aricha is too

much which makes ferry ser-

vices between the said two

ghats more costly and more

In view of the above rea-

sons, repeated demands were

made during the late-seventies

to remove the ferry ghat from

Nagorebari to a more conve-

nient place. The Government

then conducted surveys

NATORE Oct 12: Crops

worth about Taka 15 crore has

been damaged in six thanas of

precedented drought this year.

According to Agriculture

Natore district due to the un-

a knowledgeable source said.

Extension Department (AED)

about 20,792 hectares of land

in this district had been

brought under aman paddy cul-

tivation, and over 50 per cent

aman crops were damaged due

to continued drought and lack

the district almost dried up.

Most of the water bodies in

The source added that a

small portion of the arable land

could be protected from

drought by ensuring irrigation

The production target had

been fixed at 22 520 metric

of moisture

effect of drought

between the

Continued drought

Crops worth Tk 15 crore

damaged in Natore

From Our Correspondent

from

of the ferry ghat

The experts, both from the

Bangladesh.

distance

time consuming.

perts, one appointed by the Inland Water Transport Authority and the other by the Roads and Highways Department - and both these teams, after conducting survevs on two or three occasions separately, recommended for abandoning the Nagorebari ghat and be shifted to Natibpur.

According to findings by the experts, Nagorebari ferry ghat was being badly eroded every year and siltation of the river Jamuna was also acute at Nagorebari and as such, round the year, pontoons need shifting 8 to 10 times a year and this causes serious inconveniences. During the lean period water-level of Jamuna falls very low at Nagorebari ghat. Minimum water-level required for running the ferries cannot be maintained without frequent and heavy dredging, Hence, the entire process is extremely costly and also very much time-consuming-

The Natibpur ghat, according to findings said water-level throughout the year remained maximum while there was no reports of erosion at all and hence, according to the experts, shifting of the ferry ghat from Nagorebari to Natibpur was technically and economi-

tons of paddy, but it may not

agricultural experts.

start cultivation

be achieved, according to local

have been living in miserable

condition. The cultivators have

to face complication to receive

agri-loan. For these complica-

tions some farmers can not

The local unit of National

Cultivators Association (NCA)

has demanded to disburse in-

terest free agri-loan - among

the drought affected poor

not taken any initiative for re

habilitating the poor growers.

rural areas is now spreading

day-labourers of agri fields

have turned jobless.

The AED authority here has

As a result, food scarcity in

The ill-fated cultivators

Moreover, they observed that distance between Aricha and Nagorebari ghat was ten miles while it was only three and a half miles distance between Aricha and Natibpur and thus, ferries would be able to cross the river within half an hour as against two or more hours in case of Aricha to Nagarbari. Thus, shifting of ferry ghat would naturally reduce fuel consumption of ferries and could also reduce the fares changed by the ferries.

The then government of late President Ziaur Rahman accepted the recommendation and started construction of alternative ferry ghat at Natibpur. Road-link between Kashinathpur and Natibpur was also constructed but following the sudden killing of President Ziaur Rahman, the implementation of the scheme was suspended.

During Ershad regime, no headway could be made although the necessity of shifting was not denied nor the work of the scheme in papers was ever withdrawn.

Meanwhile, the condition of Nagorebari ferry ghat has aggravated further.

All sections of people of Northern districts using this route demand that the abandoned scheme be revived soon and its implementation be taken up.

They deserve it!

SHLHET, Oct 12: Students and teachers of Shahjalal University of Science and

The institution is proud to be able to keep the campus free from all kinds of terror ism and session jam during the last three years.

The day-long function began through oath taking by the outgoing students. Vice-Chancellor-in-charge and Treasure Principal, Golam Rasul conducted the oath. The mangural function was also at tended by Professor Habibur Rahman, Varsity Registrar Professor Abdul Aziz, Professor Strajul Haque Miah, and Dr Sved Shamsul Alam

From Staff Correspondent

Technology department held a day long ceremony. Saturday to celebrate successful completion of the first batch's academic session free from session jam and terrorism. The students who took admission in the first year honours in 1991 are about to complete graduation courses this year.

Law, order situation deteriorates in Kushtia district

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA Oct 12 Law and Order situation in six thanas of the district has allegedly detenorated

Peace loving people remain worried and are passing their hours in fear of untoward incidents free movement of ter rorists with fire arms murder in broad day light and subse quent release of the accused on bail from pressure from higher authorities stabbing rapes hijacking burglaries toll collection, violence highway bus darontes kidnappings and campus violence have be come common feature in the

district Illegal sale of wine and its wide scale use nultivation and sale of quity, and other immorai activities are also on rise. Campi. - violetice in educational institutions and its retaliatory measure have led to several incidents of offence including to order lashes te

tween rival underground par lies have utilated the atmosphere it is observed

After complaints police conducted several raids to curb crimes but the law enforcing agencies failed to theck the crimes it is alleged During raids police reportedly tortured on innocent people

Unofficial sources informed that over 200 cattle were stolen from villages of the diserror this year. It is also in formed that some organised gang of miscreants demand ransom to tree the cattle

Armed clashes occurred at different places where the ac-"vists used all kinds of fire atme but police failed to rerover any arms so far from the anderground party activists it a also reported

In September this year 77 asks were recorded in all six than as it the district which THE SECTION OF STREET STREET lifting. Of them, murder of one Latif an electrician of housing estate, who died in Dhaka Medical College Hospital after remaining in comma for about one month is mentionable [1] persons have been charge sheeted in Latif murder case of them three have been taken

arms cases, and two cattle

into custody. Due to frequent violence Islamic University was closed for indefinite period. The uni versity authority also ordered the students to vacate their dermitories. During closure some miscreants went to campus and demanded Taka one lakh as subscription from contractor's representatives who

after failing to pay the amount were assaulted by them and this again led to unrest in the

These intacreants were later identified as those who had taken admission on special quota from pressure by party

Similar is the condition of Kushtia Government College campus where Chhatra Sangsad election is scheduled to be held. All the students organisations have embarked upon election platform and the situation is tense

In August this year 90 cases were recorded in all six thanas of the district which include six murder five arms cases, three cattle liftings three da coities two robberies and one kidnapping case

In last July, 71 cases were recorded which include four murders, one dacoity, three robberies

In June 90 cases were recorded in all six thanas of the district which include five murder six arms cases, six burglanes, three cattle lifting. five smuggling and two kid napping

Credits, trainings transformed their lives beyond expectations

'I never knew there was good money in growing nursery until the Technical Resource Team and the Rural Development Academy at Bogra gave me the know-how and guided me to investing in it my first loan of Tk 2,000 in 1992. That led to a solid profit of Tk 20,000. Can you believe that? I gained in self-confidence and soon went for a second loan of Tk 5,000 and took more land on lease to grow plants. The nationwide campaign for growing more trees came as a boon. In 1993 I made a profit of Tk 38,000 by selling saplings of fruit and timber trees. I went for a third loan of Tk 5,000, took some more land and by investing Tk 35,000 made a profit of Tk 2,50,000 in 1993-94. Now I am negotiating to buy the leased land. That will put me on a more solid footing."

Nurjahan Begum, in her late thirties, dark complexioned Nurjahan, known for her admirable journey from a very poor existence to a solvent life in no more than a couple of years narrate how her initiation into MBSS, credit and training transformed her life beyond her own belief.

. She said, "I never knew there was good money in growing nursery until the Technical Resource Team and the Rural Development Academy at Bogra gave me the know-how and guided me to investing in it my first loan of Tk 2,000 in 1992. That led to a solid profit of Tk 20,000. Can you believe that? I gained in self-confidence and soon went for a second loan of Tk 5,000 and took more land on lease to grow plants. The nationwide campaign for growing more trees came as a boon. In 1993 I made a profit of Tk 38,000 by selling saplings of fruit and timber trees. I went for a third loan of Tk 5,000, took some more land and by investing Tk 35,000 made a profit of Tk 2.50,000 in 1993-94. Now I am negotiating to buy the leased land. That will put me on a more solid footing."

As she spoke, she glanced again and again at the beaming face of young Field Organiser and added. "she never failed to stand by my side". Nurjahan then gave us a tour of her nursery. She said she had about 100,000 mature plants ready for sale and expected to get good profit after covering her investment of Tk 40,000.

Her nursery occupied about four bighas of land. As the mature saplings are sold away she prepares the soil for plantation so the nursery is never empty But then you have to have the know-how to take care of the soil's nutrition and look after the health of the young plants.

As Nurjahan moved through the narrow lanes of her nursery she exuded an abundance of self-confidence: umlike most

The loan recovery rate of Mahipur Jamtala MBSS is 100 per cent. All the 32 members of the society are now literate. use tubewell water for drinking and send their grown-up children to school. Thirty of them have installed sanitary latrines in their homes and all the 24 fertile couples practice family planning. The society,

includes the selection of the right breed of calf at the right age, freeing it of worms, vaccinating it at regular intervals. and then feeding it the right kind of fodder mixed with nutrients and urea and regulating its movements. She took a loan of Tk 3,000 and bought a calf for Tk 2,800 in September last year. Nine months later, the



Nurjahan jet-black big bull was very

led by its successful manager and guided by BRDB's field staff, keep the activities and performance of the members under sharp scrutiny. Their weekly meetings are a clearing house of ideas and actions. There the 32 pragmatic women find their hands full with the hard realities of life. By now they know a breakthrough in the poverty syndrome of rural Bangladesh does not come easily.

Paratechs acting as catalysts

Md Rezaunnabi Akanda. Thana Rural Development

healthy and menacingly alert. The animal, like its caring owner, looked proud as it was receiving offers around Tk 10,000 for sale. China will surely be happy to have the money but looking at the way the animal responded to her caressing, one wondered if she would be happy to lose it. Well that happens with most domestic animals. The attachment is not easy to sever.

China has no such immediate problem with her second animal - a milch cow - which she bought for Tk 2,500 this

income raising their social sta

Women seizing opportunities

The women members of the bittaheen societies have shown remarkable ability in seizing the opportunities provided by the RD-12 project and becoming self-reliant on their own. The stigma that they are a burden on the male members is no longer there This speaks eloquently of the quality of their leadership in guiding themselves and their societies to the path of self-reliance and higher social status They however never stop ac knowledging the pioneering role played by the RD-12 officials like Rezaunnabi Akanda Umme Sufia. Nur Akhter and of course, the Technical Resource Team of Bogra, especially its leader K M Hafizul Hug. They say the collective efforts of these dedicated people and many others have brought about the transforma tion in their life.

Aleya Begum, 30, a member of Madargani MBSS in Joypurhat sadar thana, is an exceptionally successful poul try breeder. The TRT people from Bogra helped her in making an incubator operational with local technology a a cost of only Tk 9,000. A imported one would cost a least Tk 400,000. The electric cally-run machine can alhatch 450 duck eggs at a thur By selling one-day and 28-day chicks to the eager poultry raisers of the locality she now earns about Tk 20,000 m oth. She has so far taken the loans amounting to a to tal of Tk 11,500

Meya's fame has spread and that brings curious and admir ing visitors from Bogra Joypurhat districts and out side. She makes modest claim of success. But her acknowledge edgement of the support provided by the TBCCA and the IRT was much more than modest By now Hafiz a TPT

The TRT people from Bogra helped her in making an incubator operational with local technology at a cost of only Tk 9,000. An imported one would cost at least Tk 400,000. The electrically-run machine can also hatch 450 duck eggs at a time. By selling one-day and 28-day chicks to the eager poultry raisers of the locality she now earns about Tk 20,000 a month. She has so far taken three loans amounting to a total of Tk 11,500.

other poor women of rural Bangladesh. She has already put her two daughters in school. Her little son was around. He is still too young to realise why words of his mother's success attract more and more visitors from far and near. Nurjahan herself is un ruffled by the impact of her fame. She is remarkably pragmatic and down-to-earth to be carried away by fame for she knows only too well mere fame cannot feed her family. Her policeman husband, who lives in Dinajpur, visits them occasionally. In fact, she is not alone to

claim such a success. Ten

other members of her society Champa, Monowara, Morsheda, Saleha, Sajeda, Rubi, Jhalmali, Beauty, Peara and Hasina - have achieved equally impressive successes in nursery business. The truth is that Saleha, the society manager, and Sajeda earned profits of Tk 800,000 and Tk 280,000 respectively during 1993-94. Champa, Monowafa and Morsheda earned profits of Tk 120,000, Tk 108,000 and Tk 140,000 respectively during the year. Rubi earned Tk 70,000. Other members of the society are also showing noteworthy successes by making good use of their loans in rice husking and beef fattening although their profits are not as high as in nursery. Zaida earned a profit of Tk 30,000 in rice husking while Mariam Bhanu, Hazera and Halima earned Tk 7,000-9,000 in beef fattening in 1993-94.

Officer of Sherpur, takes pride in the posormance of Mahipur Jamtala MBSS as he and his team of 16 RD-12 officials take in the equally good performance of 139 other bittaheen societies of the thana. Nearly 4,000 of the BSS and MBSS members have since 1989 drawn credit worth Tk 14.66 lakh for fruitful income generation activities establishing a repayment tally of 100 per cent. Their own capital in the form of shares, savings and group fund has risen to a total of about Tk 2.4 lakh.

He says, a large number of

them have received know-how training from the Technical Resource Team of RD-12 and many of them are now working as paratechnicians for their localities setting in motion a snowballing effect for the illeducated poorer members of the rural society. A good performance by one member in income generation very quickly inspires others and soon the whole community becomes interested in the knowhow. This way the paratechs become catalysts and in the process earn a steady income in lieu of their services. With the spread of know-how the bittaheen members learn to make profitable use of the credit they receive through their societies. China Begum, 30, of

Mirzapur Purbapara MBSS received TRT training in the. technique of beef fattening. which, among other things.

year with her second loan of Tk 3,000. The cow yields a good quantity of milk and that brings daily cash for the family as well as for weekly repayment of the loan.

Montu Sarkar, 42, of Dublagari BSS is another suc cessful beef fattener and trained paratech. He has so far taken three loans amounting to a total of Tk 11,000 and has made substantial profit by fattening animals. He is now a solvent person. His two daughters and one son are happy school-going children. Montu is grateful to RD-12 and especially to TRT for all they have done to show him the way to lift himself up from the dark pit of abject poverty to a life of meaningful work and happiness. He is now a respected member of the village commu-

A heartening feature of RD-12's operations in Sherpur thana is the steady rise in the level of social consciousness of the members. Most of them have learnt to read and write, have immunised their children and sent them to school and most of the fertile couples have adopted family planning practices. A large number of the members have acquired some land for their homesteads and built modest shelters. They have also learnt the value of planting trees, for future income. Their expertise in nursery, poultry, dairy farming, pisciculture, vegetable gardening and animal fattening is bringing them comfortable

team leader has become used to such acknowledgements but, he says, "that nake us more conscious of our responsibility and the need for vigi lance in regard to the perfor mance of the bittaneens A poor performance is a dism centive and if not rectified in time will allow the members to slide back into the vicious cir. cle of poverty. This will also cast a demoralizing shadow on the RD-12 project itself. That's why success is so important for the members as well as for

Archana Biswas, 46, at

Chanjanpur Missionpara in Joypurhat town is happy with her success in dairy, beef fat tening and poultry and has at tracted many other MBSS and BSS members to similar ven tures. Her four cows give her an average of 16 kg milk daily which sells for Tk 160 Her 750 poultry birds yield her eggs worth Tk 80 a day. By seiling chicks she also earns a good profit. She achieved all this with the help of two initial loans worth Tk 6,000 from Sadar TBCCA. But now she needed more capital to expand her business. RD-12 rules did not permit a loan in excess of Tk 5,000 at a time and a sec ond or third loan allowed only if a member cleared the earlier loan in full, unlike some other credit agencies. For RD-12 does not allow the bittaheens to become indebted beyond a tolerable limit. That's why weekly instalments of loan repayment is compulsory along with a weekly deposit of sav

So Archana had to look elsewhere for a bigger loan. Sonali Bank was highly im pressed with her record of performance as an MBSS member and her creditwor thiness. They agreed to give her an initial loan of Tk 100,000 - Tk 75,000 for cows and bulls and Tk 25,000 for poultry A good record of repayment will make the loan revolve without restriction. This opens a great opportunity for Archana Biswas and many other Archanas with similar vision and drive, for she has proved that credit need not be a constraint for those bitta heens who 'graduate' and qualify for it Socially, Archana has gained

a respectable status. Her hus band is always around helping her. All her four daughters and two sons are educated and now married

Source: - Ideas and Actions a newsletter for RD-12 project



China Begum with the bull