



FISHERMAN'S LUCK: You can hardly find any fish here, but it is still worth trying. As they say, if your luck favours you may catch fish. Most of the fish swim out to rivers during the dry seasons as water flow starts to decline in the canals like this one in bordering village of Patgram in Lalmonirhat district. — Star photo

15 held on various charges

From Staff Correspondent
BARISAL, Feb 14: Barisal district police arrested 15 persons on various charges from the Agunghara thana area last night.
Of them, three persons were the members of the outlawed Sarbahara Party, one was an absconding warrantee and the 11 others were arrested on suspicion under the section 54 of the Bangladesh Penal Code.
With this, the number of total arrested persons during the last three days stood at 57.

Indian sugar worth Tk 6 lakh seized in Natore

RAJSHAHI, Feb 14: BDR personnel of 20 rifle battalion Sunday seized 190 bags of Indian sugar worth about Taka six lakh during an anti smuggling drive at Borgachha under Natore thana of Natore district, reports BSS.
Later, the seized contraband were deposited with Rajshahi customs office.

BDR filed a case with Natore thana in this connection against four absconding accused who were identified as Md Kunchu, Md Kaju Munshi, Mili Parvin and Md Mamataz Hossain of Natore district, BDR sources said.

Huge quantities of fish, net robbed

From Staff Correspondent
BARISAL, Feb 14: Pirates robbed fish, fishing nets and a trawler engine worth about Tk 10 lakh in a midnight piracy on Saturday in the Bay of Bengal, some 70 km away from the Patharghata port of Barguna district.
According to the patrolling naval forces, 15 to 20 pirates attacked three fishing trawlers—FB Patharghata, FB Khokon and FB Azimunnissa and snatched huge fish fishing nets and took away the engine of the trawler, FB Azimunnissa. The pirates also injured six fishermen.

Concern over construction of embankment

From Staff Correspondent
SYLHET, Feb 14: The Greater Sylhet Ganadabi Parishad at a meeting here has expressed concern over the construction of an embankment at the confluence of the rivers Surma, Kushiya and Manu at Topai Mukh in Assam.

With Alhaj Mubaswir in the chair, the meeting urged the government of Bangladesh to take up the matter with India immediately.

The Parishad said, the embankment would cause immense suffering to the people of Greater Sylhet.

Fate of only hospital for 18 lakh people of Satkhira

From Our Correspondent
SATKHIRA, Feb 14: Inadequate number of doctors, shortage of medicines, beds, and equipment in the sadar hospital has been hampering proper treatment of the patients in Satkhira district for a long time.

The 50-bed modern hospital can not cope with the increasing number of patients due to inadequate number of beds.

The existing beds can only meet 25 per cent requirement of the patients seeking admission. But surprisingly to note that this is the only hospital in the entire district having a population of more than 18 lakh people which means that there is one bed for about 40 thousand people which is too meagre to meet minimum requirements.

It is essential that this hospital should be developed into a 100-bed full-fledged hospital with adequate facilities such as experienced physicians, well trained nurses, instruments and life saving drugs and with maternity, child welfare, dental, eye specialist and other arrangements.

If such arrangements are made the acute treatment problem of the people of this district may be minimised. Otherwise, poor and middle class patients will have to embrace death for want of proper treatment.

At present most of the beds of the hospital have been

From Our Correspondent

come unfit for use and rarely replaced, it is alleged. A large number of patients, both male and female who come from remote areas of the district, return without receiving proper treatment for want of accommodation and medicines.

The only ambulance in the hospital remains out of order most of the time. The seriously ill patients cannot be shifted to Khulna, Jessor or Dhaka for want of ambulance. In emergency cases the people use hired vehicles on payment of Taka 2000 to Taka 3500 a day.

There is an X-ray machine in the hospital but for want of film the patients can not have their X-rays done from the X-ray machine. Patients are advised to have X-ray from private clinics.

The water supply is almost absent and if it is supplied that is irregular. The patients, staff of the hospital take water from hand driven tubewell.

The drains, hospital floor and other places of the hospital are not kept clean and bad odour emits all the time. The latrines and urinals are hardly cleaned. There is no separate ward for patients suffering from infectious diseases.

The government office timing is not maintained in the hospital and no doctors are available after 1-30 pm, it is alleged. The out door patients and visitors came to the hospital every now and then result-

ing in disturbance of the doctors and the patients.

Cows and dogs, are seen moving inside the hospital compound. Sometimes stray dogs are seen roaming.

When contacted, some doctors of the hospital informed this correspondent that there is sufficient medicines in the hospital. Both, indoor and outdoor patients are provided with only prescriptions. The poor indoor patients are to purchase medicines from markets.

There is no blood bank in the hospital and the patients are to collect blood from outside and sometimes have to collect blood from Khulna or Jessore.

The diets supplied to the patients are not up to the standard at all, it is alleged.

It may be mentioned here that the construction of Thana Health Complexes were completed few years ago but these are not equipped with necessary medical facilities.

These thana health complexes should be made full fledged with minimum 50 beds facilities with maternity, family planning and child welfare, surgical, dental and other arrangements.

Apart from this, it is required that every union should be provided with health centres equipped with maternity and child welfare arrangements promised by the previous governments.

Plan to rehabilitate 100 landless families

BHOLA, Feb 14: A pilot programme has been undertaken to rehabilitate about 100 landless families in two cluster villages in the current fiscal, reports UNB.

According to Land Department officials, the cluster villages will be constructed at Ramaganj of Dougornagar union and Charumad union in Lalmonirhat thana.

Under the programme some 65 landless families of Ramaganj and 32 families of Charumad have already been selected for rehabilitation officials said.

Each landless family will be given a dwelling houses and a sanitary latrine. One deep tubewell will be sunk for each 20 families.

The government has decided to disburse Tk five lakh interest free loan among the members of each cluster village to help them attain self-employment.

Headed by the Deputy Commissioner of Bhola, a committee has been formed to supervise the successful implementation of the cluster village programme.

Meanwhile, Local Government and Engineering Department of the district has taken up a project for construction of three low-cost primary schools in the sadar thana.

The project has been taken under the General Primary

More passengers travelling without tickets on train routes

More passengers travelling in trains on Brahmanbaria-Bhairab-Akhaura routes has considerably increased due to irregularities of the officials, says UNB.

According to a source, a good number of passengers have been travelling in the routes without ticket aggravating the sufferings of genuine ticket holders.

Passengers said, ticket checkers were hardly found doing their duties on the train. But the ticket checkers complained that while discharging their duties, they are sometimes being harassed even threatened by the unruly passengers.

The passengers alleged that ticket counters of the railway stations are opened just before the arrival of the train with an ulterior motive to give chance to ticket checkers and guards to take bribe from the ticketless passengers. Most of the passengers cannot purchase the tickets as the train starts leaving the station within a few minutes.

The passengers further alleged, ticketless travelling has increased due to the dishonest staff members of railways who take bribe openly from the travellers.

Businessmen seek protection from Shantibahinimen

KHAGRACHHARI, Feb 14: Local businessmen sought government step to save them from the threat of Shantibahinimen, reports UNB.

Bagaihat Market Businessmen Committee made the urge at a press conference at the local press club. It was addressed by secretary of the committee Dewan Mohammod Hasan.

They said their lives were under threat as the outlaws were demanding toll to the tune of lakhs of taka.

Taking shelter in rural areas, they have been continuing their anti-social activities like toll collection and kidnapping, they said.

"I can sign my name now"

NATORE, Feb 14: Under

the mass education programme of the government, Islamic Foundation Bangladesh (IFB), in 1993, introduced the mosque-based Integrated Non-formal Education Programme (MINEP) which has now started to attain confidence of the people of Dharabarisa village of Gurudahpur thana under Natore district.

IFB introduced the MINEP in one village of each district throughout the country. In Natore district, IFB selected Dharabarisa village of Gurudahpur thana for the education programme which has started to exert influence over the people of that village within a very short time.

According to official sources at least 18 non-formal schools and three non-formal libraries have been set up in the village so far. The classes at the schools are divided into two shifts, day shift and night shift. In day shift, one and two years long education programmes are being conducted for the children age group between 4 and 5 years and the age group between 6 and 10 years respectively and, in night shifts, there are only one year-long education programmes for the boys of the age group between 11 and 14 years and for the age group between 15 and 35 years.

IFB in Natore is supplying all the educational materials and equipment necessary for smooth continuation of the programmes.

A reliable source, however, informed this correspondent that in respect of better result of this education programme, the time may be extended which is at present is up to December 1996.

From M A Ali Himur

For educating the people in these non-formal schools, IFB has appointed 21 'imams' from different mosques of the village. The appointed imams are given proper training prior to their services.

Generally Bengali, Mathematics and Arabic subjects are studied at the classes of these schools and only the children of the age group between 6 and 10 years are facilitated with the English subject.

The number of interested people and participants of the education programmes are increasing every day. The girl participants are also included in this programme. About 360 children and men educated themselves through these schools in the village in 1993 — the inception year of the education programme in Natore while 540 children and men were educated in 1994.

In 1995 year, about 550 children and men are studying in these schools and the number of students may be increased during this year.

An official said, one can get himself admitted in class three or class four of primary level after completing the courses under MINEP.

IFB has also set up three libraries at the village under the programme. Three librarians are also appointed for conducting the libraries fairly. On an average, about 20 to 25 persons including students of the village gather in these libraries every day. Describing the attendance rate in these libraries in rural areas as a great success, an official said that the readers of these libraries are being facilitated with a Bengali daily newspaper.

While talking to The Daily

Star, Abdus Sakur, Deputy Director (DD) of IFB explaining about education programme said this is an experimental programme which has already proved itself efficient to make people vigilant about education, and he said, many more have been inspired by the dramatic interest shown by the people of this village.

The DD said that through this programme, the socio-economic condition of neglected 'imams' of the village are also being improved.

Abdus Sakur further informed that the authorities did not have to spend any money for building the schools or the libraries as the mosques of the village were selected for use as the schools and libraries under MINEP.

While contacted, Majibur Islam, the Field Supervisor of this programme told this correspondent that at first the peoples of Dharabarisa thought this programme as an NGO's activity. But, he added, in a short time, the people realised its importance and soon came forward with their heartfelt co-operation to make this programme a success.

The 14 years old Afaz Uddin who participated in education programme in 1994 told this correspondent that this programme has given him an opportunity to get himself admitted in class four in a primary school.

The 32 years old Md. Zamal Uddin who completed one year long course under MINEP in 1993 said, "I feel proud thinking that in spite of being a farmer, I can sign my name now." He added that, in every afternoon he goes to the mosque and after praying his noon prayers, he reads newspaper at the library.

An introduction to The Institute of Bangladesh Studies at RU

From Tareq Chowdhury

RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY,

Feb 13: The Institute of Bangladesh Studies (well-known as IBS) was established by the Rajshahi University Act, 1973, as an advanced centre for inter-disciplinary study and research on various aspects of Bangladesh society. It is the only national centre of its kind for teaching and research that undertakes scientific studies in the fields of humanities, social sciences, business studies, law, and non-experimental science offering programmes for M Phil and PhD degrees. The IBS is placed at the eastern side of the Rajshahi University campus with entrance at the Binodpur Bazar gate.

The IBS was founded with the aim of catering to the country's special needs by producing an advanced cadre of broad based specialists to provide leadership in the academic and developmental fields. Therefore, the academic programmes of the IBS are set out to increase the number of creative and competent research personnel through training and education, in Bangladesh oriented multi-disciplinary techniques; to increase availability of research material on the history, economy, society and culture of Bangladesh; and work for an effective understanding of the chronology, interaction and projection of indigenous variables, facts or events.

The Institute of Bangladesh Studies was established on September 25, 1973, under an Act of the Bangladesh Parliament described as the Rajshahi University Act, 1973. The IBS is a constituent Institute of the Rajshahi University with a separate Board of Governors. It is administered by the broad framework of policies, rules and regulations of the University.

It started functioning with the formation of the Board of Governors and appointment of the Director in January 1974. Since then the Institute first

of its kind in the country, has been entrusted with a role not only for providing facilities for pursuing advanced research degrees like M Phil and PhD but also for developing an integrated approach to Bangladesh studies.

Moreover, the establishment of the IBS has stimulated impressive research activities by its own faculty members on the one hand, and the teachers of the university attached to the institute on the other. Below is a reproduced extract from the statute of the institute specifying its aims and objectives:

a) to promote, and provide facilities for advanced studies and research on the history, geography, economics, politics, sociology, anthropology, law, language, literature and linguistics, philosophy, art, archaeology, music, and culture of Bangladesh and such other subjects as are significantly related to the life and society of Bangladesh leading to the M Phil and PhD degrees.

b) to undertake research projects in cooperation with public or private organisations as and when necessary under mutual agreements;

c) to place at the disposal of society the results of the researches conducted at the institute for fruitful utilisation in planning development schemes;

d) to cooperate with other departments of the University of Rajshahi in research activities relevant to Bangladesh studies;

e) to popularize Bangladesh studies in and outside the country through seminars, conferences and publications;

f) to perform such other functions as will facilitate attainment of the objects of the institute.

The scholar-researchers from diverse fields form a cohesive team being organically bound in interdisciplinary programme of research and in-

struction. Efforts have so far been made to gear M Phil and PhD degree programmes to the research activities of the institute. Students seeking those degrees from the institute, on the one hand, familiarise themselves with the history, culture and society of Bangladesh, and on the other, comprehend the necessary interrelatedness of a wide spectrum of academic disciplines bearing on their area of study imbued with a sense of direction.

The nation has to constantly seek and refine knowledge for action in the problem areas of identity, societal integration, and development. The institute deals with these interdependent problem areas for research. The approach, therefore, has always been multi-disciplinary.

The IBS tries to build up an exchange programme with international academic community. As it proposes to extend affiliation to foreign scholars to come to Bangladesh and conduct research in the institute, at the same time, the institute also supports, for higher studies abroad, its faculty, affiliated researchers and students on the basis of their having fulfilled course and/or research work pertaining to the life, society, and development issues of Bangladesh.

The Journal of the Institute of Bangladesh Studies (JIBS), now in its volume 18 (1995), is published annually. The journal provides an opportunity to publish in English the research and review articles by the institute faculty as well as fellow academicians elsewhere. Papers on problems regarding Bangladesh including theoretical orientations having applicability to the patrimony are accepted for publication. A separate journal in Bangla is also published from last year.

Apart from regular seminars given by IBS and RU teachers and research fellows of the institute, a number of dis-

tinguished scholars from home and abroad are invited each year to speak at seminars on topics of importance in their respective fields of speciality.

So far, about 100 candidates completed their PhD and M Phil degree at the IBS.

The institute admits to the M Phil and PhD degree programmes on a competitive basis. A student is selected for admission on the basis of past academic records and performance in the admission test, both written and oral. The IBS prefers students who are specially interested in research or who are already in the teaching profession. The admission process begins in early March with invitation of applications and the tests are held in May/June every year.

Candidates should have at least a good second class both at Bachelor and Master's levels scoring not less than 50 per cent of the maximum points or equivalent in any of the Humanities, Social Sciences, Sciences (except experimental ones), Commerce, and Jurisprudence. However, a student showing special aptitude for research and securing not less than second class in MA/MSS or MSc examination may also be considered eligible for admission. The academic year of IBS starts on July 1 and ends on June 30 following year.

The institute offers a good number of fellowships for full-time study at the institute. The award of fellowship is effective from the time of admission. Initially a M Phil fellow receives Tk 1500.00 per month tenable for two years and a PhD fellow receives Tk 2000.00 per month for three years. Two separate four-storied buildings with single/double accommodation as well as a few family quarters are located within the institute complex. Apartments for visiting scholars, accommodation for women researchers are available, too.

Discussion on development of small and cottage industries

FARIDPUR, Feb 14: A discussion meeting on "Development and Manifestation of Small and Cottage Industries" was held here on Monday, reports UNB.

Additional District Magistrate Ahaz A K M Manjurul Huq attended the meeting as chief guest with Akhtar Hossain, President of the branch of National Association of Small Industries, Bangladesh (NASIB), in the chair, organized by Faridpur district branch of NASIB. It was attended by a good number of entrepreneurs, bankers, industrialists, officials of BSCIC and leading businessmen.

Abdul Manjil Choudhury, Shawkat Ali, Akhunjil, Maleka Khan and Mirza Nurul Ghani and Anul Huq Sohel, among others, spoke on the occasion.



The Institute of Bangladesh Studies building inside the Rajshahi University campus. —Star photo