

2000 landless tribal families rehabilitated

KHAGRACHHARI, May 24: Some 2,000 landless tribal families have been rehabilitated in the first phase of the high land settlement project by the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Development Board, reports UNB.

Another 1,000 Jhum families will be incorporated for the second phase of the project. Under the project about 8,000 acres of land have been brought under rubber plantation.

Other socio-economic uplift project such as construction of schools, ring-well, sinking of tubewells for the supply of drinking water, embankment, diversion road, prayer centres are going on in full swing.

Board sources said, one fourth of the rubber trees have matured and by this time 150 metric tons of rubber are being produced and sold.

The second phase of the rehabilitation project at a cost of Tk 20.95 crore will bring some 4,000 rubber gardens and 1,000 other gardens along with other social services, officials said.

The second phase of the project has been extended to the year 1999-2000 from 1993-1994, they added.

Lathials attack villagers: 30 injured in clash

BARISAL, May 24: At least 30 people were injured, 10 seriously, when a group of armed 'lathials' attacked villagers of Char Zahuruddin of Bhola district on May 13, reports UNB.

Witnesses and police said the armed musclemen suddenly attacked the villagers and indiscriminately beat them up. They also used fire arms during the attack.

On way back, the lathials kidnapped three villagers - Faizullah, 40, Hamid, 48, and Alamgir, 35.

On information, police at Char Zahuruddin outpost rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control. They also arrested three lathials from the spot and recovered the kidnapped farmers.

Reasons behind the attack was to establish supremacy in the charland, local people said. The inhabitant of the char urged the concerned authorities to ensure the safety of their life and property.

Seminar on moral dev approach

RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY: May 24: Rajshahi University Summer Course organised a seminar on "A Proposal to the United Nations on Moral Development Approach: A New World Order for Peace" at the Science Building on May 20, says a press release.

The key note paper on the universal moral development proposal was presented by Dr Abu Obaidul Huque, Professor and Director of Bangladesh Institute for Advancement of Science and Technology Teaching (IASTT). In the proposal Dr Huque rightly argued that the morality is the master key to curb today's widely talked about problems of AIDS, Poverty, population control, violation of human rights, environment pollution, oppression on women, terrorism, drug abuses, smoking etc.

Many teachers from different universities and colleges of Bangladesh attended the seminar and those who, among others, took part in the discussion were Dr Ataur Rahman Khan, Chairman of Zoology Department and Dr Azimul Islam, Chairman of Chemistry Department of Rajshahi University.

Cultural centre at Cox's Bazar by next June

COX'S BAZAR, May 24: A cultural centre with modern facilities is being set up at a cost of about Tk three crore in Cox's Bazar, the number-one beach-town and health resort of the country, reports UNB.

Starting in 1994, the construction work of the Cox's Bazar Cultural Centre is expected to be completed by the June of next year.

This was revealed at the 38th meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee of Cultural Affairs Ministry at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban yesterday.

The objective of the project is to create more attraction for the local and foreign tourists to Cox's Bazar, said an official handout.

The centre comprising a training centre, and auditorium and a museum, will also help flourish the local culture.

Presided over by State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahan Ara Begum the meeting discussed the activities of the Birishiri Tribal Cultural Academy in Netrakona district.



SYLHET: Abdul Basit, President, Jalalabad Association (Ine) USA speaking in a press conference at Sylhet Press Club on Friday. General Secretary of the organisation (extreme right) also spoke in the conference. — Star photo

Tk 100 cr loan money remain unrealised with six banks

SIRAJGANJ, May 24: Authorities of different banks in the district could not realise over Tk 100 crore from the defaulter loanees despite court orders, says UNB.

Bank and court sources said the realisation could not be done due to non-trace of many loanees or minimum value of the property shown as mortgage.

They said the authorities of Sonali, Rupali, Agrani, Janata, Krishi and Utitara banks have filed 861 cases to realise Tk 120 crore. Of them, 600 cases were disposed of in favour of the banks and the court ordered the loanees to deposit the amount to the respective banks. But the court could not

trace a number of loanees who took loan in fictitious names.

It is learnt that the possibility of realising the loan is bleak as the value of the mortgaged property of some loanees is less than the amount to be realised. Even nobody participates in auctions of selling out of some of their property.

On the other hand, the bank's expenditure is gradually increasing in meeting the court and other expenses which stood at over Tk 11 crore, bank sources said.

Reliable sources said some opportunist political leaders, businessmen and other influential persons of the district had taken loan from different banks in their own or false

names with the help of the bank employees. Most of them had submitted mere documents of their property.

After receiving the loan, they went into hiding and the bank authorities could not find out their addresses.

Rupali Bank sources said, Sirajganj Spinning Mills have taken a loan of Tk 11 crore from it. But the total value of its property is not more than Tk 10 crore. Besides, the mills have other liabilities of huge amount.

Similarly, many defaulters have a little property to repay the amount which makes it difficult to realise the huge amount of loan in the district.

Gopalganj sub-jail needs to be expanded

From Our Correspondent

GOPALGANJ, May 24: Construction of Gopalganj district jail in sadar Mania replacing the existing one is urgently necessary, but initiatives are absent.

The existing sub-jail of Gopalganj has been facing various problems for pretty long time. The inmates of the sub-jail live in a congested space. The capacity of the sub-jail is about thirty-eight prisoners. Of that, thirty-six are for male and the remaining two are for female prisoners. But sometimes, the number of prisoners triples multiplying the existing problems. Besides, shortage of space is acute for the jail superintendent, doctor, pharmacist and jail subedar. They have neither any office space nor any residential quarters. The sub-jailor performs his duties in a tinshed hut. Moreover, the main gate and the passage gate are very narrow. There is no sufficient space in between the main and the security gates. There is no prisoner van at the sub-jail, it was learnt.

There is no scope of extension of the sub-jail in the present location as all the available spaces around the jail have already been occupied by construction of the government quarters and offices. So renovating Gopalganj sub-jail into a district jail is not possible.

The suffering of the inmates of Gopalganj sub-jail worsen during the rainy seasons. After a heavy shower, water accumulates in the jail compound and remains stagnant for long time. Very often rain and flood water enters into the prisoner's cells which

create much suffering for the inmates.

The sub-jail of Gopalganj was constructed on one acre of land with only two wards when the population of the area was negligible. Now the population of the district has increase to over 15 lakh.

Due to space problem handicraft or other work programmes could not be introduced for the prisoners serving rigorous imprisonment. On different occasions the people of Gopalganj placed demand for shifting of the sub-jail and upgrading it to a standard district jail.

In 1994-96 fiscal year the Public Works Department (PWD) undertook a programme for the construction of Gopalganj district jail. For the purpose, a site was also selected at Goshcherbar in the Gopalganj pourashava area. Afterwards, no initiative was taken for implementing the programme of construction of the district jail.

3 Hajj returnees killed in Pabna road accident

PABNA, May 24: Three pilgrims returning from Saudi Arabia were killed and 15 injured when a bus carrying them met with an accident in Sathia here on Nagarbari-Pabna highway today, reports UNB.

Police said Haji Mohammad Shahjahan Ali, 50, of Bagmara, Haji Mohammad Ismail Hossain, 45, of Pabna and Haji Mohammad Saitmullah Khan, 55, of Serail in Rajshahi district died on the spot.

Smuggled Indian goods worth Tk 2.6 lakh seized

BRAHMANBARIA, May 24: Bangladeshi Rifles seized smuggled Indian goods worth about Tk 2.60 lakh in two raids on May 6 and 8, reports UNB.

Following a tip off, the BDR men of 23 Rifle battalion halted a Dhaka bound night coach at Kulpapura of Sarail thana and recovered 200 bottles of phensidyl worth Tk 20,200.

In another raid BDR personnel seized contrabands including 312 pieces of saree and 35 bottles of phensidyl worth Tk 2.40 lakh from Joyantika express train.

PDB employee electrocuted

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, May 24: An employee of the Power Development Board (PDB) was electrocuted near the Patuakhali Court Bhavan this morning.

Witnesses and police said Nurul Haq, 32, was electrocuted when he was working on 11 thousand KV electric lines.

It is learnt that before going to work Nurul Haq had informed the control room but he was misinformed and the electric lines remained live. He was taken to Patuakhali Sadar hospital where the doctor on duty declared him dead.

Another report adds: One Shawkat Hossain, 37, drowned when a boat collided with an oil tanker coming from the opposite direction at the Dhanshiri and Bishkhali river crossing at 9:30 this morning and capsized.

Witnesses said, the boat was coming to Jhalakathi from Nalchity. A case was filed with Jhalakathi thana.

Water supply in Patuakhali town inadequate

PATUAKHALI, May 24: Water supply problem has turned acute in the district town causing untold suffering to the dwellers, reports UNB.

The municipal authorities have failed to ensure adequate and regular supply of water for the dwellers of the town.

At least 30,000 residents here are not getting necessary supply of water for them since Eid-ul-Azha.

The chairman of the pourashava said due to faulty power supply the main pumps could not be operated causing aggravation of the problem.

The residents of Sher-e-Bangla road area of the town have been the worst sufferers of the water crisis.

The tax payers of the pourashava urged the authority several times for ensuring water supply but the situation is deteriorating day by day.

They alleged that pourashava enhanced taxes on several occasions but they could not provide the basic amenities of civic life of the town.

Tension arises as Indians try to cultivate in Bangladeshi land

KHAGRACHHARI, May 24: Tension gripped the Achalong border area in Matriganga thana, as some intruding Indian farmers tried to cultivate Bangladeshi land with the backing of BSF, witnesses said, reports UNB.

According to an official source, the Indians of Joloya border area in South Tripura encroached upon the Bangladeshi territorial land on Saturday.

The Indians tried to capture 1500 acres of cultivable land, the source added.

A similar attempt in 1990 was foiled by the local people of the hill district.

The frontier villagers said the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) had already constructed two camps and a metalled road and erected electric poles on Bangladeshi land along the border.

They said they also saw the BSF digging trenches on the other side of Joloya border.

However, a sector commander-level meeting of BDR and BSF is scheduled to be held on May 25 to settle the disputes, sources, at 35 Company of BDR in Khagrachhari said on Tuesday.

Miscreants kill housewife, another commits suicide

KUSHTIA, May 24: A housewife was killed by miscreants in village Kamalapur of Sadar thana on Friday, says UNB.

Police said, a gang of armed miscreants attacked the residence of one Abdul Gafur on Thursday night and stabbed his wife Kamela Khatun (40) with sharp weapon.

She succumbed to her injuries on Friday morning at Kushtia General Hospital. Police suspected that the motive behind the killing might be past enmity. A case was filed with the police.

Another report says, Afroza, 22, wife of Taher Hossain of Village Shyamnagar in Daulatpur thana allegedly committed suicide Thursday night by taking poison.

The reason behind the suicide could not be known immediately. A case was filed in this connection.

They have chosen politics of destruction, death

BENAPOLE (JESSORE), May 24: Post and Telecommunications Minister Tariqul Islam called upon all to resist the anarchists to continue the democratic process in the country, reports UNB.

"The enemy of democracy is desperately trying to create chaos in the society by taking up the path of death and destruction," he said.

The minister was addressing a meeting as chief guest at Benapole football ground on Friday, arranged on the occasion of returning home of the Parsha thana BNP president Alhaj Ali Kader after his treatment abroad. Alhaj Ali Kader was wounded in a bomb attack and gunshot by the miscreants in January last, said an official handout.

Referring the present political situation, Tariqul Islam said, "politics that does not do any welfare of the people cannot be a politics at all" adding "those who are engaged in damaging the life and property of the people in the name of politics will be punished under the law of the land."

Presided over by vice president of the Sharsha thana BNP Shamsur Rahman, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Alhaj Ali Kader, District BNP president Ali Reza Razu, general secretary Nazrul Islam and Mofiqul Hasan Tripti.

Eight rivers in Jhenidah are about to vanish

From Delwar Kabir

JHENIDAH, May 24: Eight rivers in Jhenidah district have silted up due to the effect of Farakka. As a result about seven hundred KM river routes had to be closed down.

River Padma is the main source of the eight rivers: Bhairab, Kobadak, Chitra, Begabati, Nabaganga, Kumar, Kali and Gorai. Recently the water level of Padma has fallen remarkably, which affected the branches of the river Bhairab. Further more, flow of water has stopped due to construction of a regulator at Gangarampur in India. Another cross dam was built at the source of River Bhairab. As a result, from the fountain at Darshana in Chuadanga to Novapara in Jessore the 120 kilometres long river line of Bhairab has dried up showing numerous shoals.

River Kobadak is a branch of Bhairab. It originated from Bhairab in Chuadanga. It flowed through Mohespur and Kotchandpur. Due to continuous drying up of Bhairab, the Kobadak also faced the fate. About 145 km long river route has been turned into crop field.

Chitra is the branch of river Ichhamati. This river has also dried up. The once mighty Chitra is now merely a canal. Local farmers are cultivating paddy and other crops in the river bed.

River Begabati is now almost dead. It flowed

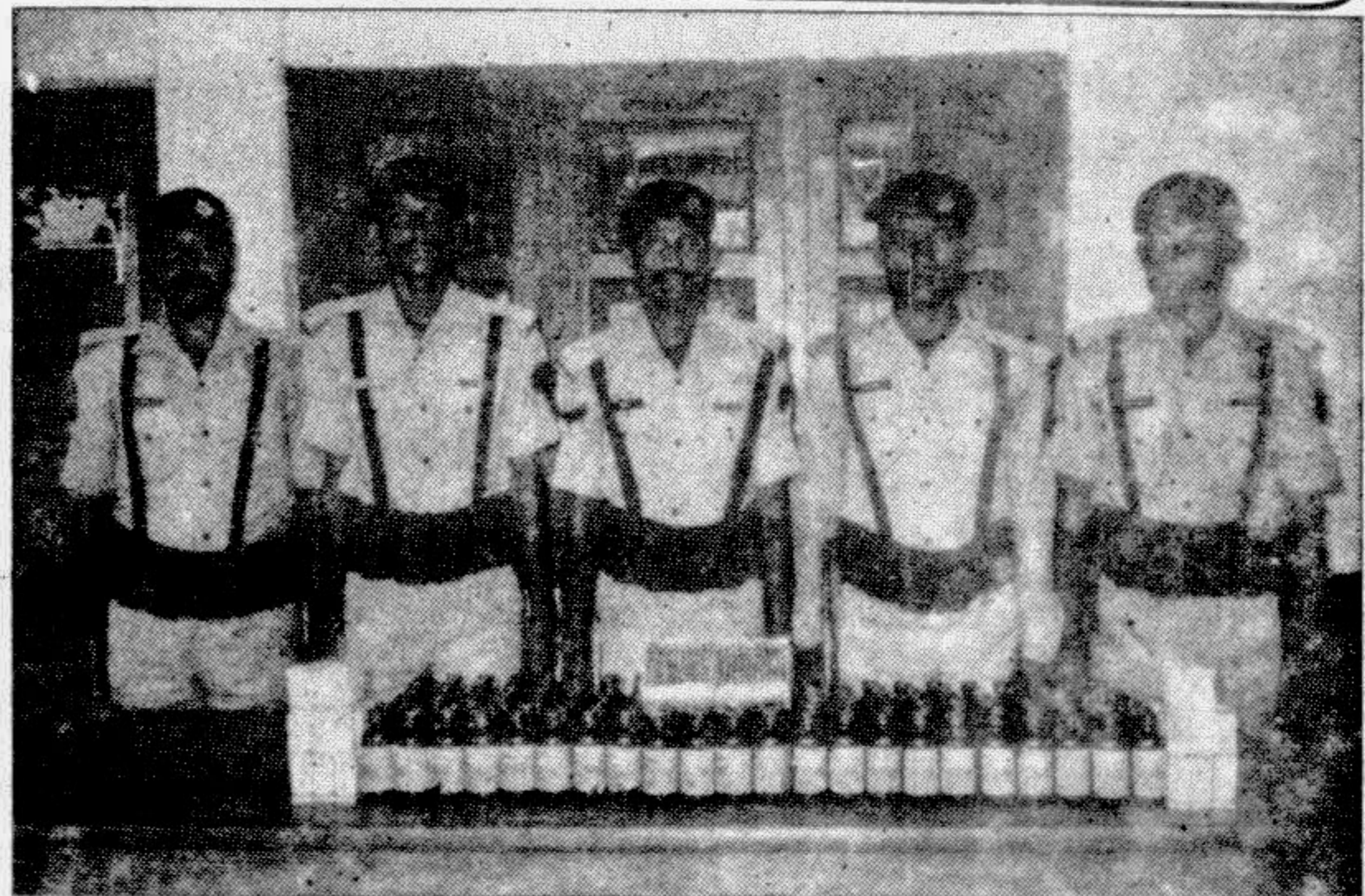
through Bishoykhali in Jhenidah sadar thana and Naldanga and Kaliganj in Kaliganj thana. The 95 km long surface of river Begabati is now being used for cultivation for the past six months.

River Nabaganga also ran through Jhenidah town marking the border between Jhenidah sadar and Harinakundu thanas. Nabaganga joined with river Madhumati and passed through Magura and Narail districts. About 115 km of river line has turned into ditches.

Kumar was once a mighty river which originated from Padma and flowed into Madhumati near Magura district. It passed through Kushtia, Meherpur and Chuadanga districts. But due to construction of a dam about 150 km long Kumar river and 50 km long Kali have turned into small canals.

River Gorai joined river Madhumati at Kamarkhali in Saikupa thana in Jhenidah district. But due to water crisis in Padma Gorai has almost dried up. As a result big shoals appeared.

Due to siltation of the rivers, all the water lines have become inoperative as no motor launch, steamer even small boats can move in these rivers. This has caused untold sufferings to the businessmen and the people of the locality.



SATKHIRA: The BDR in the district recently seized huge quantity of phensidyl syrup bottles by raiding border areas. Photo shows few of the seized items. — Star photo

Shortage of fertilizer bags hampering crop production

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, May 24: The production of winter crops are being hampered in the current season due to price hike of fertilizers in the district.

Farmer have alleged that the supply of the fertilizer like TSP, potash and urea are quite short in the local market. As a result, the prices of the fertilizers have gone up beyond the purchasing capacity of the farmers. Some dishonest dealers buying a lot of fertilizer from company and markets keep stock these into their own godown creating artificial crisis in the open-market. Later getting more profit they sold the fertilizers to the farmers at high rate.

According to sources, dishonest dealers showing licence to the company bought fertilizers from factory at

cheap rate. They bought a bag of urea of 50 kg at Tk 186.25 from Asuganj Zia Fertilizer Company Limited (ZFLC) and at once sold per bag of urea at Tk 295 to 310. It is alleged that some dishonest traders realised advanced money to ensure their supply. Thus they are doing brisk business.

At present per bag of urea are sold at Tk 295 to 310 against 186 to 190 Tk TSP are sold at Tk 460 against Tk 355 and potash are sold at Tk 325 in the open-market of the district town.

Meanwhile, the traders of rural areas sell the fertilizers at higher rates than that of Brahmanbaria district town. During the pick-up time of cultivation, dishonest dealers stocking fertilizers create an artificial crisis in the market

to earn brisk money. Agricultural Extension Departments (AED) have also failed to ensure the smooth supplies of fertilizer. According to AED sources, of the total about 120811 lakh hectares of lands were planned to bring under winter crops cultivation scheme in all seven thanas of the district during the current season.

Intellectual have proposed that the government should give a good facilities to the farmers for buying necessary fertilizers direct from the company or should establish rural selling centre at every union to ensure the available supply of fertilizers and necessary equipment of cultivation.

The farmers have urged the authorities to take proper steps in this regard soon.

Govt ban ignored Non-iodised salt sold everywhere in Patuakhali

PATUAKHALI, May 24: Non-iodised salt is being sold everywhere in the district in the absence of implementation of government order regarding production, storage, import and distribution of salt, reports UNB.

In spite of ban on selling of non-iodised salt, the commodity is being sold in different markets. The ignorant people are purchasing the non-iodised salt due to its cheap price.

Market sources said one kilogram of iodised salt is being sold at Tk 12 while the price of non-iodised salt is Tk 8. As a result the people always

go for non-iodised salt. The consumers alleged that most of the salt being sold at the markets are dirty. Even the iodised salt packets are found in non-refined condition. Besides, some unscrupulous traders are selling the non-iodised salt in the packet of iodised salt.

Iodine deficiency may cause outbreak of diseases like goitre, dwarfism, squint-eyed and mental and physical retardation. To prevent these diseases the government has made mandatory to convert all the salt factories to iodised factories.

45 cyclone shelters built in S-dists

BARISAL, May 24: At least 45 multi-purpose cyclone shelters have been constructed in the southern region of the country to give shelters to the people during the natural disaster, reports UNB.

The shelters were constructed at a cost of Tk 12 crore including foreign exchange component. Of them, 10 shelters have been constructed in Khulna district, 18 in Bagerhat district, 6 in Satkhira, 5 in Sundarban area and 6 in Patuakhali districts, official sources said.

Two more cyclone shelters will be constructed at Dublar Char of Bagherhat district.

Road mishaps claim two

SIRAJGANJ, May 24: A minor girl was killed in a road mishap near Sahabganj under Raiganj thana of the district on Tuesday, police and hospital sources said, reports UNB.

The victim, identified as Ruby, 8, died on the spot while she was crossing the Bogra-Nagarbari Highway. The body was sent to a local hospital for autopsy.

On the same day, Habibur Rahman of village Koira under Ullapara thana, a driver of rikshaw van, succumbed to his injuries at Sirajganj sadar hospital. He, along with four other passengers was wounded seriously in road mishap on Monday night at Nabagram on the same highway.



JAMALPUR: Farmers have to irrigate their crop fields as rainfall recorded in the district recently was abnormally low. It was reported in some places less than 10 mm of rainfall was recorded while other areas virtually did not experience any rainfall. — Star photo



AGRI-VARSITY (Mymensingh): VC Professor Dr Shah M Faruq distributing certificates among teachers who participated in the training course on teaching methodology recently. — Star photo