

Fifteen given life-term in Khulna

KHULNA, Jan 30: Fifteen people were awarded life-term imprisonment with a fine of Tk 2,000 each, in default, to suffer more six months, court sources said today, reports UNB.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Mohammad Sirajuddin Ahmed delivered the judgement against the accused for damaging the eyes of Abdul Mannan Mollah of Chandpur village in Rupsha thana.

The prosecution story, in brief, was that the accused attacked Abdul Mannan Mollah on January 7, 1993 while he was returning from his shrimp gher and damaged his eyes by sharp weapons. The court also acquitted five others.

Election campaign Three beaten, vehicles ransacked

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Jan 30: Three persons were beaten and three vehicles were ransacked yesterday in the city during election campaigning in favour of the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia. The incidents happened at Poba area in the noon and at the Shaheb Bazar Zero Point and Fudlipara in the evening. The beaten persons were identified as Chattra Dal worker Milon, Mishuk drivers Shamim and Abdul.

No case was filed till writing this report at 9 pm. BNP blamed Awami League and Jatiya Party for the attacks.

One killed in road accident in Gaibandha

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Jan 30: One person was killed in road mishap at Chara Batgach on Gobindaganj-Fulbari highway on January 21 last.

According to police, a Gobindaganj bound mini bus while proceeding it dashed a pedestrian Shahrudin Akand, 50. The victim died on the spot. He was the inhabitant of village Polupara under Gobindaganj thana.

A case was filed with Gobindaganj thana. The killer bus managed to flee.

Buffalo trader killed in road mishap

JHENIDAH, Jan 30: A buffalo trader was killed in a road accident at Bordah on Jhenidah-Jessore road in Shalakupata thana of the district last Sunday night, reports UNB.

Witnesses said that the accident occurred when a Kushtha-bound truck hit the trader from behind while he was returning at his village home at Basantapur from Vata bazar.

The dead could not be identified immediately. The driver managed to flee the scene with the vehicle. A case was filed with the police.

Five students held with arms, ammunition

KISHOREGANJ, Jan 30: Police here yesterday arrested five students, including three schoolboys, and recovered an Indian revolver with five bullets from their possession, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip, sadar thana police nabbed them from Batrish Government Primary School premises. The bullets were hidden inside a deck set which was also seized.

The arrested are: Altaf Hossain and Samiran Saha of Gurudayal College, Krishna Basak and Khairul Ahsan of Azimuddin High School, and Mizanur Rahman of Government High School.

Altaf and Samiran claimed themselves as the activists of pro-Awami League Chhatra League. A case has been filed in Sadar thana in this connection.

Two trawlers hijacked

SATKHIRA, Jan 30: Pirates hijacked two trawlers last Friday in Rajmangol river in Sundarban near the Bay of Bengal, witnesses said, reports UNB.

The trawlers, owned by Mansur Akkas Tarafdar of Kaikhali in Shyamnagar thana, were attacked by the pirates while engaged in catching shrimp fry in the river within the Bangladesh territory.

The pirates, later released the inmates keeping the trawlers, cash and shrimp fry worth about Tk 4 lakh.

Another report says: Bangladesh Rifles on Monday last seized 1000 pieces of Indian special glass worth about Tk one lakh from Bankal BDR checkpoint in Sadar thana of the district. A man, identified as Shahadat, was also arrested in this connection.

An embankment could make all the difference

From Rezaul Hoque

GAIBANDHA, Jan 30: Thousands of acres of farm land in three unions under Shaghata thana could not be used for cultivation due to stagnant flood water still remaining in most areas.

About 40,000 villagers most of whom depend on agriculture of three unions could not maintain their livelihood properly as the crops on their cultivable land have been damaged by flood water since 1988. The affected unions are Kachua, Bonarpura and Padumshahar. Alai Katakhal river flows along the western belt of the said unions. Every rainy season flood water enter the crops land overflowing the river Katakhal for want of a flood protection embankment along eastern bank.

Earlier, a flood protection embankment was constructed along the western bank of the river from Katakhal highway bridge to Dewantola Railway bridge. During rainy season after a heavy shower the river overflows and submerges thousands of acres of land in the eastern belt where the water gates are accumulated and remain stagnant for the rest of the year. As a result crops specially aman and other winter crops could not be cultivated on those land. Villagers of the areas depends on the mercy of nature for cultivation of IRRI-Boro crops. However, during harvesting period crop lands go under water due to flash flood as the river Katakhal overflows causing maximum damages to the crops.

On the other hand, due to continued deposition of silts at the bottom of river basin it could not accommodate heavy onrush of water from upper catchment and consequently flooded adjacent areas overflowing the banks.

Over 90 per cent of the people of these areas are farmers fully dependent on agriculture and farm labourer. Their living standard was better ten years ago when there was a flood protection embankment along the eastern bank of river Katakhal via Badikhali, Nayabander, Sankerganj, Trimohini ghat up to Dewantola bridge. But the said embankment was completely washed away by the onrush of flood water in 1988 which could not be reconstructed as yet. As a result every year flood water engulfs the vast track of crop land of said unions and continued its devastation due to absence of an embankment in eastern bank of river Katakhal.

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CHITTAGONG: President of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) seen addressing the annual general meeting held recently.

Khulna city inhabitants see no end to crime

From Our Correspondent

KHULNA, Jan 30: The law and order situation of Khulna city has been deteriorating alarmingly. Crimes like murder, rape, acid throwing, kidnapping, abduction, extortion of money, robbery, theft and burglary are the common feature of the city.

The city inhabitants are absolutely left to the mercy of notorious criminals and terrorists. The Khulna Metropolitan Police failed to act properly against the cumulative crimes. As per statistical data of last 5 years, it appears that crimes are increasing.

According to the KMP officials source, 85 persons including 25 political leaders were killed in 5 thanas of KMP from 1991 to 1995.

The affected people rarely wish to go to thana police to complain against any criminals to avoid the harassment by police as police are sometimes reportedly bribed.

According to the Police source, 16 persons were killed in 91. Jaytatabadi Chattral Dal leader Reza Mahamud was killed this year. 300 crimes were committed yearly.

Ten persons were killed in 1992. Communist leader Comrade Ratan Sen, Chattral Union leader Mukti, Shibir leader Aminul Islam were killed & 770 crimes were committed this year.

Twenty-two persons were killed in 1993. Shibir leader of BL Government College Abdul Halim Munshi, Rahmat Amanullah of Alia Madrasha, Jubo League leader Tutul, Chattral Union leader Shiplu, Azhar of Chattral Union were killed and 800 other crimes were committed in the year.

As many as 14 persons were killed in 1994. Shibir leader Abul Kashem (Pathan), Jubodal leader Dablow, JCD activist Tarun and JP leader Razatul Haque were killed and 1500 crimes were committed the same year.

Last year 23 persons were killed in Khulna city. JCD City Unit Secretary Abul Kalam Azad Chowdhury, Jubodal leader Gowtdam, Mohibullah (Sujal), Altaf Hossain, AL leader and Ward Commissioner, Moslemuddin Khan, Anisur Rahman, Aminul Islam (Bablu) of AL, JP City Secretary and former President of Khulna Chamber of Commerce and Industries Abul Kashem, JP Activist Jakir Hossain were killed and 1600 crimes were committed.

To control the crimes the KMP authority introduced a special police unit, 'Soda Jarkata'. They are well decorated with arms, wireless set and 200 CC Motor cycle. The city dwellers got a hope that the ever vigilant police unit may be able to bring back congenial atmosphere.

But the law and order situation started to deteriorate.

Hundreds of families become jobless as demand for cane, bamboo articles declines

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, Jan 30: Traditional bamboo and cane-based cottage industry is facing extinction in the district following scarcity of raw materials and their soaring prices forcing about one thousand families jobless in recent time, sources said.

According to reports, supply of chair, table, cradle book-shelf made of bamboo and that of sofa-set tea-table and other articles, made of cane, has been reduced largely.

Non-availability of raw materials has hampered these production. There is no denying the fact that land which was previously preserved for growth of bamboo and cane, has been brought under of IRRI and Boro cultivation.

According to another report, a matured bamboo, standard in size and quality sells at Taka 100. This size of bamboo is hardly available in the market, the local traders said.

Cane is already out of market. Hence its question of production does not arise at all. However on rare occasions, products of these materials are found in the markets, but the price is so high and abnormal that buyers feel no more interested to buy them.

Report also said that market position of the above articles has been quite changed after introduction of nylon and plastic goods. These are of different design, quality, size, colour and shape. This has been the main cause to attract buyers. In respect of price, these products are comparatively cheaper. From points of durability, use and utility, nylon and plastic goods are far better. These are the factors that have led to win the market and create demands by replacing bamboo and cane products.

During recent visit to Khairincha under Sharupdih Union of Chowgacha thana, Kagmari under Gargamandapur union of Thinkergacha Thana, and Chandpara under Fatepur union of sadar thana in the district, this correspondent talked with a number of cobblers on decline of bamboo and cane industry in the district.

The picture they presented during their exchange of views was most disappointing. According to Bishwanath of Kharincha Robi of Kagmari and Haripada of Chandpara rising scarcity of raw-materials, fund constraint and lack of marketing facilities along with lack of government patronisation, the industry is on the ruins.

They also informed that in view of present market prices of raw materials, the artisans cannot make profit their cost of production is exceeding that of selling rate by wide margin.

According to them, this profession is no more gainful. And that is why many of them, have meanwhile left the profession and are living in sub-human condition, they added. They also said that there are still a few families engaged in manufacturing mora, bookshelf, chalon, kula, jhuri and kuchi. They sell it by peddling in towns and village markets.

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Clash leaves one killed, four injured

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Jan 30: One person was killed and four others sustained serious injuries in a clash over the possession of a disputed plot at village Padumshahar under Shaghata thana last January 26.

According to report the victim Akilur Rahman, 25, was ploughing a recently procured land which was instantly protested by a rival group of same village. Soon there ensued a clash, using deadly weapons, in which five persons, Akilur Rahman, Abdus Sobhan, Ayenuddin, Abdul Majid and Mostafa, were injured.

Aklur Rahman, however was removed to Gaibandha hospital in critical condition where he succumbed to his injuries on January 27 last.

A case was filed with Shaghata thana.

Huge quantities of phensidyl bottles seized

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Jan 30: Through intensification of their drive, the Anti-Narcotics and Drug Control Department of Pabna, with the help of Pabna thana police, recovered 515 bottles of banned Indian phensidyl syrup in their one day's operation here recently.

Upon a secret information, they raided the old bus stand of Pabna town, searched Dhaka-bound coach, named Atique Super De Lux (Dhaka Metro Ba-02-0214) and recovered 350 bottles of phensidyl syrup. But none could be arrested.

Few hours prior to this operation, they raided another coach bound for Dhaka, styled as 'Sakal Sandhya' coach service and recovered 165 bottles of phensidyl. Cases have been lodged.

Wife stabbed to death in Gaibandha

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Jan 30: A housewife was killed by her agitated husband at village Kuptola under Gaibandha sadar thana last January 25.

According to information a family quarrel developed between the wives of Joyanal Abedin and Sanjel over some squabble issue. Witnessing the situation in one stage Joyanal flew into rage and attacked wife of Sanjel with sharp weapon. The attack was resisted by his old mother who was pushed to ground. Later the wife of Joyanal tried to resist him but agitated Joyanal stabbed her with the weapon in which Feroja Begum died on the spot.

10 pc students of pry schools did not receive books in Rangpur

From Our correspondent

RANGPUR, Jan 30: At least ten per cent students of primary schools out of the total four lakh did not receive books from the school authorities, although the distribution of books have been completed all over the district.

There are 702 government primary and about 500 non-government primary schools in the district. About four lakh set of books were allocated for free distribution among the students of these schools.

But so far ninety per cent allocated books was distributed in the district, while the rest ten per cent books are yet to arrive here due to non-printing of these books by the Board authority.

As a result about 4,000 primary students all over the district have been deprived of having new books since it is not available in the markets due to strong restrictions for its printing and marketing in private sectors.

On the otherhand, large number of students studying in class III and IV have been facing great inconveniences with old books which were distributed among them by the school authorities as per direction of the Board.

According to the allegations, at least 50 per cent books out of the total six books in each set of these classes fall short and the Board did not print them as yet.

However, in view to run the classes the Board authority instructed the schools to distribute old books among these students by collecting them back from their students who were promoted to higher classes.

It was alleged that most of these books are torn and many others have lost vital pages due to mishandling by the students of these schools.

Arms recovered

TONGI, Jan 30: The law enforcing agencies recovered two foreign-made revolver from Ershadnagar in Tongi early yesterday, reports UNB.

The law enforcers raided block five of the colony and hauled up a point 38 and one Burmese revolver. Meanwhile, police arrested three wanted men — Milon, Beal and Rahman — from Modhumita road of Arifpur in the thana last Sunday night.

Biman can not cope with increasing demand for seat reservation

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, Jan 30: One-third passengers of Biman Bangladesh are being refused reservation on Jessore-Dhaka route by its local office everyday following limited number of flights causing heavy financial losses for quite sometime past, said sources.

According to source, nearly 200 passengers crowd booking counter for tickets. But only 70 per cent of them are accommodated while the rest 30 per cent remain unattended. This happens almost everyday.

Lack of seat capacity in the aircraft has been the main reasons, the source observed.

Reports said that currently two flights are operating on this route and not more than a total of 140 passengers can be accommodated daily. Seat capacity of the aircraft is 70.

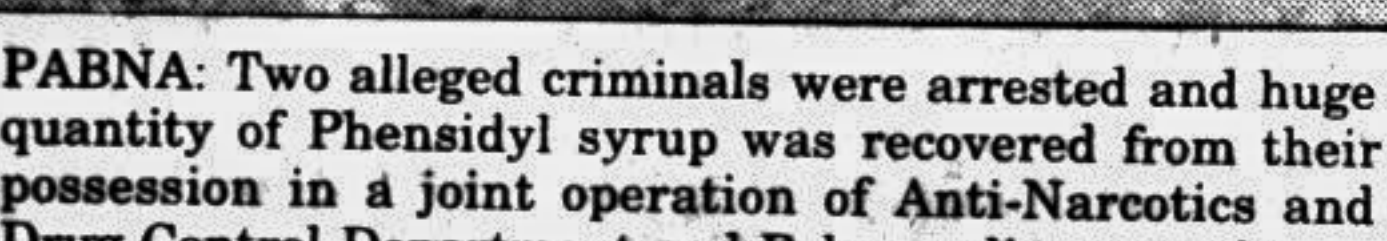
Reports also said that sometimes the F-28 aircraft having seat capacity of 85 operates on the route. It is very occasional and irregular though.

It will not be out of place to mention here that this route is the only arrangement of air-link for 20 million people in 10 districts of Khulna Division including the Benapole and Mongla ports.

Jessore airport is a busy station no less important than any of its counterparts in the country.

A source, on condition of anonymity told The Daily Star that at present Biman is losing Tk 40,000 daily on this route from Jessore end alone. The turn-out of passengers has increased in recent time, but there has been no increase in flight numbers to cover the excess passengers. The source also informed that ATP is operative. Its seat is 70.

In view of increasing rush of passengers and current wave of business activities in this division, frequency of flight numbers, deserves to be increased to three from two daily to meet the situation.



PABNA: Two alleged criminals were arrested and huge quantity of Phensidyl syrup was recovered from their possession in a joint operation of Anti-Narcotics and Drug Control Department and Pabna police recently.

— Star photo

Week-long Book Fair, Shishu Mela held

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Jan 30: A week-long Book Festival and Shishu Mela was held recently in Pabna Zilla School premises amidst great enthusiasm.

The festival was inaugurated by Mohammad Ali, Deputy Commissioner, Pabna, who was the chief guest at the inaugural function presided over by Hedayatul Islam, Additional Deputy Commissioner (General), Pabna.

The function was addressed as special guests, among others, by Jamshed Uddin Bhuiyan, Superintendent of Police, Pabna, Dr A K M Fazul Haque, Civil Surgeon, Pabna, Advocate Ramesh Maitra, a senior journalist and Abdul Motiur, another journalist.

The chief guest in his speech stressed the need of study to acquire knowledge and technology for building society that could make its proper place in the highly competitive modern world. He hoped, parents and guardians would encourage their children to buy and read more books for making them worthy of a civilised society.

At least 20 cultural organisations presented their attractive cultural shows every day. Moreover, on this occasion literary competitions were also organised through the week.

About 60 stalls were set up and a large number of books, handicrafts, and other items reflecting cultural heritage were sold during the mela.

As many as seven dramas were staged every night by different drama societies of Pabna.

The exhibition and the cultural shows were witnessed by a large number of people — men, women and children — amidst a great discipline.

Book-stalls namely "Dishari Boi Bhan," "Biki Kuni Mart" and "Priyanka" were selected as best book stalls in the exhibition and were awarded first, second and third prizes respectively.

Besides, a large number of prizes were awarded to the best literary competitors. All the prizes were distributed by Mohammad Ishaque Ali, Deputy Commissioner.

On the inaugural day, a big rally was brought out and paraded main thoroughfares of Pabna town. A large number of men, women and children participated in the colourful rally.

AGRI-VARSITY (Mymensingh): Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr Shah Muhammad Farouk handing over a Television set to Employees' Parishad's President A K M Abdul Wadud in the Parishad office. BAU Registrar Abdul Hannan Khan also seen in the photo.

— BAU photo

Tragic death of mill worker

MEHERPUR, Jan 30: An oil mill worker was killed as his lungi was wrapped with a moving ribbon roll of the mill at Tatipara in the town yesterday, reports UNB.

According to witnesses, Hamidur Rahman, 18, was seriously wounded when his lungi rolled up with the roll at about 8:30 in the morning. He was rushed to Sadar Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries at 9:30.

An Unnatural Death (UD) case was filed with Sadar thana in this connection.

Town dwellers said after a number of accidents local authorities imposed a ban on wearing lungi during work hours in rice and oil mills long ago. But most of the mills do not follow the rules of operating modern machines, they alleged.

After 16 years

HABIGANJ, Jan 30: Nineteen people including a former union parishad chairman were sentenced to imprisonment for different terms in two cases of rival groups filed 16 years ago, court sources said today, reports UNB.

The cases were filed in April, 1979 after a clash occurred at Bolakipur village in Baniachang thana between that two rival groups over the demarcation line of a plot of land.

Additional District Magistrate Mohammad Delwar Hossain after examining the witnesses and records awarded the punishment on January 21 last.

The court in one case awarded Ajman for nine months imprisonment while his accomplices including Hashim, Rahim, Jabbar, Hamid, Tingaj, Sohid, Seraj, Idris and Yunus Mohibullah for six months each.

On the other hand, in the counter case, Atabullah, Mahmood, Alauddin and Rajob Ali were given one year rigorous imprisonment each and former chairman of Umednagar Amir Ali Chowdhury, Shobhan and Paikya for six months each.

The judgements were delayed as the hearing was stayed by higher court following appeal motions of both the rival groups. Meanwhile, many witnesses and lawyers of both sides died.

Brutal murder

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, Jan 30: A 3-year-old girl was murdered by her uncle. This brutal incident occurred at village Panchat in Itna thana on January 20 last.

According to police, accused Abdus Samed used to live in his brother's house as he had no job. Exchange of hot words took place off and on for not earning between him and his brother. In the evening of the day of the incident, accused Abdus Samed entered his brother's house while his sister-in-law went to the nearby river-ghat leaving her 3-year-old daughter Rezia Khatun in the house. Abdus Samed hurriedly cut Rezia's throat with a sharp dao. Returning home, mother of the victim cried for help following which the neighbours rushed to the spot. They caught Abdus Samed red-handed and later handed over him to the police.

A case was registered with Itna police station in this connection. The SP visited the spot.

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A case was registered with Itna police station in this connection. The SP visited the spot.

Too much spirit!

PABNA, Jan 30: A businessman died at the district town today due to excessive drug addiction, reports UNB.

Police and witnesses said, Ram Pada Das, 35, took excessive rectified spirit at his residence in the town's Yogi-para area last night and became senseless.

He was rushed to the Sadar Hospital where he succumbed this morning. A case was filed with the police.

Kala-ajar claims lives of three in Pabna

PABNA, Jan 30: Kala-ajar, a deadly disease, claimed three lives and attacked more than 100 others in two thanas of the district during the last week, according to official sources, reports UNB.

The victims were Madar Khan, 52, of Radial village and Fulbibi, 40, of Mulbaria village in Faridpur thana and Kader Ali, 32, of Hogaigram in Chatmohar thana.

More than 100 attacked people are now being treated in different hospitals and health complexes in the district.

Local people alleged that the injections for curing the disease are not available here.

Alleged thief held in Sirajganj