

Smuggled goods worth Tk 3 lakh seized from train

From Our Correspondent
SIRAJGANJ, Feb 12: CID police seized smuggled Indian goods worth about Tk 3 lakh from the inter-city Padma Express train at the outer signal of Jamtoli Railway Station in Kamarkhanda thana on February 2 last.

As a regular practice, smuggled goods were being unloaded at the selected point while sudden raid by CID police was operated. The seized goods include 2,170 pieces of printed shares and 30 nylon-made fishing nets. The agents of smugglers, however, managed to escape apprehending police arrival.

Two commit suicide in Faridpur

From Our Correspondent
FARIDPUR, Feb 12: Wazed Ali, 50, of Babur char village under Sadarpur thana committed suicide by hanging himself from the branch of a tree recently.

Another person named Shambal Shil, 55, of village Brammandi under the same thana committed suicide by taking insecticide recently.

Family feud may be the reason of the suicides.

Two separate cases were lodged with Sadarpur thana in these connections.

Case filed against three JCD leaders

JHENIDAH, Feb 12: District Awami League president Advocate Ayub Hossain filed a case against three Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leaders on Friday last, reports UNB.

The case was lodged against district JCD unit chief M A Majid, organising secretary Abdul Alim and member Pintu in which Ayub Hossain complained that he was attacked and injured by them while returning home from a meeting at Barbari village in sadar thana on Wednesday last, reports UNB.

Meanwhile, district BNP president Al-haj Moshir Rahman, Sraniak Dal president A K M Moshir Rahman, secretary Abdul Wajed, district JCD secretary Abdul Majid, thana BNP president Advocate Abdul Haq and secretary Abu Bakar Siddique in a joint statement demanded withdrawal of the false case.

They also demanded judicial enquiry into the matter.

Alleged wanted criminal arrested

CHITTAGONG, Feb 12: An alleged infamous criminal, wanted in connection with 46 cases, including 10 murder cases, was arrested along with his two accomplices from the city's Pathantuli area last Saturday, police said, reports UNB.

In a joint operation, Kotwali and Doublinmoring police nabbed Chhatra Shakti leader Iqbal, 32, the mentor of many city incidents, from a boarding house.

Police said, warrant of arrests were issued against him in connection with 31 cases, who is also a convict of ten-year imprisonment on charge of committing violence, remain absconding since 1992.

While conducting the operation the accomplices of Iqbal opened fire at the police and at one stage they managed to arrest Sekandar and Javed Chowdhury and recovered three rounds of bullets and seized a private car from their possession.

Over 1 lakh hectares brought under Rabi cultivation

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, Feb 12: An ambitious programme has been taken up by the Agricultural Extension Department to bring about 1,76,025 hectares of land under intensive Rabi Crops Cultivation Programmes in 13 thanas of Kishoreganj district during the current season. The programmes include Boro, wheat, potato sweet potato, mustard, groundnut, pulse and vegetables cultivation.

Out of the total acreage, boro will be cultivated in 1,43,200 hectares, wheat in 12,500 hectares, potato in 3600 hectares sweet potato in 2400 hectares mustard in 6720 hectares, groundnut in 2500 hectares, pulses in 3605 hectares and vegetables in 1500 hectares of land.

The production target has been estimated at 4,44,710 tons of boro rice, 25000 metric tons of wheat, 43200 metric tons of potato, 36000 metric tons of sweet potato, 6048 metric tons of mustard, 4750 metric tons of groundnut, 2758 metric tons of pulses and 45700 metric tons of vegetables.

To achieve the target, all sorts of arrangements have been made to ensure supply of HYV seeds, fertilizers and irrigation instruments to the farmers.

Demonstration plots in every union will also be set up to provide practical training to the growers for cultivation of rabi crops.

Fertilizer crisis apprehended in Sherpur district

SHERPUR, Feb 12: After the urea fertilizer crisis shook the entire district including all its adjoining parts recently another earth shaking crisis is expected in near future.

In the open market, a farmer is finding a bag of TSP (50 kg bag) selling at Taka 257 more than the rate fixed by the government. TSP official selling rate is Taka 343, but in each and every places of the areas TSP is being sold at Taka 600 to 630 per 50 kg bag. To meet the TSP crisis, concerned authority or government is yet to take any effective measure to mitigate the suffering of the farmers. S M Shajahan Ali Chowdhury farmer of Kamarchar under sadar thana of the district told to The Daily Star, TSP season begins from September. So to meet any shortfall administration or Agricultural Department did not take any initiative to solve the suffering of the farmers.

On the other hand, many unscrupulous dealers are fleecing farmers by selling them grey colour SSP (single sugar phosphate) claiming it to be similar to grey coloured TSP.

Local experts said in the market instead of TSP, it is SSP which is generally being

From Ratan Chowdhury sold to the gullible members of the farmers community. These sources claimed that since SSP looks similar to TSP, some profit hungry dealers have smuggled in low quality SSP fertilizer from a neighbouring country. They are reaping enormous profits. Only the SSP using farmers are suffering.

An agri-expert Rezaul Karim Chowdhury (Teacher of Mymensingh Agri-University) told to this correspondent TSP has 46% phosphate and 13% calcium, this combination works as a helpful nutrient for the crops. SSP has 18% phosphate and 20% calcium. TSP helps crop yield to

750 Sarbahara Party members arrested in last 3 years

BARISAL, Feb 12: Police arrested over 750 members, and local and regional leaders of outlawed Sarbahara Party from different parts of six southern districts of Barisal Division during last three years, police sources said, reports BSS.

increase three fold. SSP increases yield by only one third. Due to used SSP against TSP farmers are undergoing heavy financial loss by purchasing SSP unknowingly as TSP. The government rate of TSP is Taka 343 per 50 kg bag while SSP price is Taka 180 for a similar bag. After using SSP the farmer is getting a considerably low yield than he would have got from using TSP.

District Agriculture Department sources told to The Daily Star, we have received complaints but we have no official capacity to take any positive action. If strict government measures are not taken farmers will continue to suffer.

Distribution and marketing system of fertilizer allocated whole sell dealers handled total distribution and marketing after lifting their allotted quota from the mill or respective places, they controlling. This system allowed dealers to much leeway for undue profiteering, said Md Mazharul Islam Helal, President District unit Krishak League. He further added, Judicial enquiry should constitute by the higher authoritative into the reasons for the TSP crisis and pin point the persons.

In Natore district

1995 witnessed maximum crimes

From M A Ali Himu

NATORE, Feb 12: The law and order situation of Natore district has been deteriorating alarmingly creating panic among people.

The inhabitants of Natore are absolutely left to the mercy of the notorious criminals and terrorists.

According to the statistical data of last five years, it appears that crimes have increased by 27.05 per cent in six thanas of the district. The data also shows that the number of political incidents and murders in 1995 is much higher than that in the previous four years.

The data says, the number of crimes recorded in 1995 throughout the district is 785. Among other crimes, 14 murders with clashes, 34 secret murders, 10 women oppression, 13 rahajani, 2 dacoity and 125 burglary and theft are mentionable.

At least 715 crimes were recorded in 1994. Of the total, the number of secret murders is 39 while about eight persons were killed in different clashes. In 1993, the number of total crimes was 874 while 728 crimes were occurred in 1992 and 618 crimes were recorded in 1991 year.

The statistical report further says that the year 1995 recorded the biggest number of clashes in which at least 14 persons were killed.

The political ground of Natore in 1995 was full of conflicts. No mentionable incidents were reported at the beginning of the year, but since the mid-April incidents started to occur one after another.

On April 19, a BCL worker, Faroque, 16, was killed and about 20 persons including a police constable were injured in a clash between BCL and JCD activists at Kandivutia area of the town. Abdur Razzak Master, Lalpur thana BNP leader was beaten up in Natore town during the hartal on April 20 to protest of Faroque's murder. About two hundred persons were injured, over 100 kutcha houses were set afire

and many more houses and shops were looted while armed youths indiscriminately made attack on four villages (inhabited by AL supporters) of Lalpur thana on April 21. AL leaders blamed BNP for the incident that was a sequel of the April 20 incident.

A former pro-VP of Natore NS Government College and JCD leader Alim-ul Islam Zia Babu was killed on June 26 reportedly by his intra party rivals.

A JCD worker Shwadhin was seriously injured when some armed men attacked him at Alipur area of the town on June 25. Iqbal, another JCD worker was seriously injured when some

miscreants shot him on June 26. On the same day some unidentified men hurled bomb at Kotoali Mosque.

Abdus Salam, 15, a tea stall boy was killed and about 300 persons were injured during a two hour long armed clashes between activists of the BNP and the AL at Abdulpur Bazar areas on August 4. At least 300 bullets were fired in the incident that erupted following a protest rally of Lalpur thana BNP.

The rally was organised to protest an attack by AL activists on Abdul Ratan Azad, a JCD worker on July 30.

The BNP fractions of Kanaikhal and Madrasa crossing clashed on December 6 and 7 and a few persons

were injured in the incident but a heavy panic was prevailing among the people.

Vice-President of sadar thana Awami League Shirajul Islam and a BNP leader Shahidul Islam Bachchu were seriously injured in two separate incidents in the town on a same day in 3rd week of December.

Besides, minor clashes between AL and BNP, AL and Jatiya Party and incidents of bomb blasts were common feature during the last year.

The role of police in most of the incidents was of silent spectators. It is alleged. There is also allegation of converting dacoity cases into rahajani cases against police.

Most of Tk 229cr project work still not started

Implementation of Beel Dakatia Drainage Rehabilitation prog uncertain

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, Feb 12: Implementation of Beel Dakatia Drainage Rehabilitation Project covering part of Jessore and Khulna districts became uncertain within stipulated date following delay to start work.

It is learnt that the official formalities even after two and half years of six-year long plan programme have been delayed.

The project was taken up at a cost of Taka 229 crore under ADB (Asian Development Bank) fund in fiscal 1993-94.

It may be noted here that the project was designed to protect vast areas under two districts permanently against onrush of flash flood and water logging adversely affecting food production and rural economy, said sources. According to source, projects including 105 KM long canal digging, constructing 17 KM long communication roads, and repairing three and half KM long embankments as part of whole project, were taken up at a cost of Taka 25 crore during current fiscal.

Delay in fulfilling pre-conditions by the authority, has made it impossible to start the work yet.

The sources said, Project Implementing Agency, WDB (Water Development Board) was not yet given possession of 51.72 hectares of land needed to start work by acquisition from district administration, despite placement of fund worth Taka one crore fifty lakh with Deputy Commissioners of Jessore and Khulna in last fiscal, as compensation to affected landowners.

It is reported, that official complications have halted the progress of the work for the project. It is also reported that four-member advisory committee for the project still awaited formation due to delay to pick up one agricultural specialist.

Reports also say that delay to form Water Management Association and problems caused by free use of drainage and canals after lease out, installing pipe by cutting polders and resisting loopcutting over the river Vakra at Chuknagore point, have hampered progress of the work to large extent.

It is alleged that recently

some NGOs, working in project area, are spreading disinformation among target groups in a bid to sabotage the project.

This problem is being marked in Jessore area than Khulna. As such resistance is being faced from local people while attempts are made for loopcutting to remove waterlogging. Another source said that two-thirds of the project area are still under waterlogging. Precisely, beel Pajia-Patra of Keshabpur thana in the district is fully covered by waterlogging.

During visit to this area recently, good number of affected farmers told this correspondent that since implementation of total project would take long time as it appears from lack drop of present situation. They proposed for setting a dozen of powerpumps in Pajia-Patra beel area purely on temporary basis to remove the waterlogging thereby enabling them to grow IRR in current season.

Narrating this miseries, they accused local authority for their negligence and carelessness to them.

A source on condition of

anonymity told that project work was not yet finalised. This was key reason for the project to delay to start work immediately, the source said.

It was also told that if the delay continued any further project cost had every chance to go up. New problems might arise to dig canals if shoals emerge in lower portion of these canals.

According to local people, a coordinated move jointly by all concerned including local administration is necessary for implementing the project on priority basis.

Incidentally vast areas under Monirampur, Kishorepur and part of Obhainagar thanas in Jessore and Dumuria, Ful-tala and part of Daulatpur thanas in Khulna go under flashflood and remain waterlogged for years causing heavy losses to agriculture, due to lack of measures to resist the disaster.

The proposal Beel Dakatia Drainage Rehabilitation is an attempt to find out way to end the long-standing problem thereby bringing new hope of life of millions of distressed farmers in the area.

Training course on 'Primary Health Care' concludes

JHENIDAH, Feb 12: A two-day-long training course on 'Primary Health Care' concluded here at the Civil Surgeon's office on Wednesday last, reports UNB.

Experts from different departments, including health services, imparted training to the participants on different aspects of basic health care.

A total of 50 volunteers from Maharajpur union of sadar thana took part in the course.

Deputy Director of Department Health of M Abul Kashem attended as chief guest at the concluding day which was earlier inaugurated by M Nurunnabi, district Civil Surgeon.

Non-govt pry school teachers deprived of govt benefits

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Feb 12: Teachers of about 87 non-government primary schools under seven thanas of Satkhira district have been leading a sub-human life in absence of government benefits for a long time.

Teachers working in 87 non-government primary schools established those schools spending their personal cash in collaboration with some educationists with the hope that those schools and their services would be nationalised by the government.

Those ill-fated teachers got their primary schools

registered through the local thana education officer.

It was learnt that many teachers of the schools disposed their landed property to meet the educational expenses of the students in these schools.

The teachers of 87 non-government primary schools appeared for several aptitude test according to the directives of the government through thana and district education officer for having their jobs as well as the institutions nationalised, teachers said they even opened the bank accounts for having the government benefits.

Gunfight in Sirajganj, 50 persons injured

SIRAJGANJ, Feb 12: Anti-election activists trying to storm Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's projection meeting here yesterday clashed with police and student workers of BNP, leaving at least 50 people injured, ten with bullet, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the fierce fighting erupted in front of the Press Club in the hartal-bound town at about 3:30 pm when pro-Awami League Chhatra League militants tried to mass into Begum Zia's meeting venue in the Sirajganj University College compound.

They said, the protesters, being intercepted, opened fire on police and activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, the student wing of ruling BNP.

Pro-Jamaat Islami Chhatra Shibir activists also fired from the nearby Mujib road, triggering a fierce gunfight.

The entire area appeared like a battlefield as the two sides traded more than a hundred bullets and police fired teargas shells to disperse the attackers.

Of the ten seriously injured with bullets, BCL worker Belal and policeman Abu Saeed were rushed to Sirajganj Sadar Hospital.

Among those hit by bullets are also district BCL President Golam Haider, workers Yusuf, Sohail, Zihad and Milat, AL leader Thandu, JCD leader Liton and Shibir ac-

tivist Sobhan. Most of them were taken to different clinics to avoid arrest.

Several bombs were lobbed into the Prime Minister's meeting venue. None was reported hurt.

A BCL activist, Asad, with a bomb in his possession was caught yards away from the meeting.

The agitators also attacked a police box near the Press Club and damaged the car of ADC (General).

Another clash between JCD and Shibir activists in front of the town's VIP Hotel left six injured.

Some JCD activists also attacked the CPB office where a number of LDF workers were preparing to move towards the Prime Minister's meeting. Ten people were injured, according to LDF leaders.

In the morning, opposition activists set BNP leader Azizur Rahman Dulal's motorcycle ablaze in front of Roads and Highways office near the Circuit House.

The district headquarters remained under a complete shutdown at the call of the election-boycotting parties — Awami League, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Left Democratic Front — paralysing the town life.

All modes of transport remained off the street and business centres closed amidst widespread violence.

BWDB implements 199 projects in Pabna

PABNA, Feb 12: Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) has sanctioned 1.13 lakh tons of wheat for implementing 199 schemes in the district under Food for Works Programme, reports UNB.

The works of the schemes have already begun in seven regions of the country — Dhaka, Sylhet, Barisal, Rangpur, Chittagong, Faridpur and northern region.

After completion of the schemes, the schemes areas will be protected from flood as well as surplus crops worth Tk 30 crore will be produced in these regions, official sources said.

To prevent misappropriation of wheat sanctioned for the schemes, a central control cell has been opened. Chief Engineer of BWDB's Food for Works Division Alhaj A B M Abdul Hye said.

Under the programme, 7,000 tons of wheat was sanctioned for 23 schemes in Dhaka region, 16,608 tons for 17 schemes in Sylhet, 17,288 tons for 17 schemes in northern region, 13,000 tons for 27 schemes in Barisal, 11,000 tons for 8 schemes in Rangpur, 15,500 tons for 27 schemes in Chittagong, and 33,000 tons of wheat for 70 schemes in Faridpur region.

Passengers suffer for lack of sheds

NOAKHALI, Feb 12: Thousands of bus passengers travelling to different destinations from the Chaumuhani commercial centre everyday have been suffering much due to absence of passengers' sheds, reports UNB.

The travellers of various routes are to wait here for a long time in the scorching sun in summer and rain in the rainy season facing a lot of difficulties. Women and children are the worst sufferers.

Local people said, although Chaumuhani Municipal authority has chalked out plans for construction of two passengers' sheds at the main road but no step has yet been taken to implement the plan.

College office room looted

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Feb 12: A daring theft was committed in Bhangla College office recently, college sources said.

It was reported that the thieves unlocked the door at dead of night and entered the college office room. They took away cash of Tk 27,000 by breaking open the iron safe of the office.



MUNSHIGANJ: Hundred of people of Haluaghat, Mymensingh, now sheltering in Tungi Bari, Munshiganj are involved in a new profession. They hunt in holes in ponds, beels and other water bodies in search of a snake like fish, known in Bengali as *kuicha*. They sell these fishes, alive and in good shape, to *mahajans* or brokers at about Tk 100 each. After exchange of various hands they are exported abroad to Korea, China, Japan etc where they are consumed as food. This method of fishing has brought a new era in the district from this year. Many more are adopting the profitable trade. The photo (above) shows fishermen hunting for *kuicha* and (bottom) returning home after catch.

— Star photo