

News snaps

Newly built road develops cracks

SIRAJGANJ, Dec 26: The construction work on 17 km road from the western side of Jamuna Bridge in Rajganj to Saidabad of Sirajganj sadar thana was completed this month, officials said, reports UNB.

But the newly constructed road developed cracks at some points as buses and trucks have already started playing without clearance from the concerned authorities. Vehicles are plying in Kamarkhand, Belkuchi, Enayetpur and Kajuri and Khukri in Shajadpur areas with the help of some local musclemen who put barricades by bamboo at Nalka and khoda road crossings. The musclemen are collecting Tk 10-15 for each vehicle, local people alleged. The 17 km long road is the connecting road of western side of the Jamuna Bridge.

3 elected UP chairmen join AL

SATHIRA, Dec 26: Three newly-elected Union Parishad (UP) chairmen of three thanas of the district joined Bangladesh Awami League (AL) on Sunday, reports BSS.

The chairmen are: Fazul Haque Malik of Kolkhal union under Shyamnagar thana, Fazul Rahman of Ghona union under sadar thana and Gazi Abdur Rouf of Bardal union under Asansol thana. Awami League presidium member Amir Hossain Amu, Fazul Huq MP and Syed Kamal Makht MP were, among others, present on the occasion.

Couple arrested from Cox's Bazar

COX'S BAZAR, Dec 26: Police have arrested an adolescent pair who came to the tourist town here to get married without the consent of their parents, reports UNB.

Local police picked up Salahuddin Mamun, 18, and Muntaha Begum Tania, 14, from a residential hotel Wednesday night and produced them before the court on Thursday. Tania is a student of class nine of Saint Placids School in Chittagong while her lover Mamun has passed the HSC examination. Police said they nabbed the under-aged pair after Tania's father filed an abduction case with Kotwali thana in the port city.

Boy killed in Sylhet road accident

SYLHET, Dec 26: A boy was run over under the wheels of a coal-leaden truck at Asampara on Sylhet-Tamabil road on Wednesday, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Sufian Ahmed, son of Moniruddin of Joyntapur and a class two student of Asampara Primary School. Traffic on the road was disrupted for about one hour as the angry people blocked it for about one hour, protesting the mishap. They also seized the truck, but the driver fled the scene. Police sent the body to Osmani Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy. A case was filed.

Abducted girl yet to be rescued

PABNA, Dec 26: Police could not rescue the girl student Shamima Parvin Jolly of Pabna Government Girls High School even after eight days of her abduction till Wednesday, reports UNB.

According to Jolly's family sources, she was abducted by a gang of youths, led by one Rubel of neighbouring area, on her way to the school on December 17. Jolly, daughter of a local politician Sajjad Hossain Bachchu of Shalgaria in the town and a student of class seven was being disturbed by Rubel on her way very often. The father of the victim filed a case accusing five people, including Rubel, with the local police on December 18. The parents of the girl urged the higher authorities to take immediate steps to rescue their daughter and arrest the kidnapers.

Marriages of minor girls on rise

NARAIL, 26: Marriages of minor girls without any registration are on rise in rural areas of the district, reports UNB.

According to local people, about 60 per cent marriages among the poverty-stricken families are being solemnised without registration giving rise to the number of divorces. Some of the families are so poor that they are even unable to pay the registration fees. Parents who are mostly day labourers, marginal farmers and small vendors, do not hesitate to marry their wards at the early age. The sources said cruelly to women is going on taking advantage of the non-registrations of marriages. In some cases, divorced women are to come back to their parents houses within a few months of their marriages. There are reports of some fake marriage registrars in many village of the district who are also creating problems for those guardians who were willing to register the marriages of their wards.

Rokeya Day observed

CHANDPUR, Dec 26: Begum Rokeya Day was observed here recently in a befitting manner, reports BSS.

In observance of the day different women social, cultural, educational organisations and district administration chalked out an elaborate programme on the occasion. A discussion meeting was held at Chandpur Press Club, M Khalid Anwar, DC, Chandpur, attended the meeting as the chief guest. A colourful procession paraded the streets of the town and a *milad mahfil* was held at Lady Pratima Girls High School on the occasion.

Victory Day observed

MADARIPUR, Dec 26: Victory Day was observed in the Madaripur district in a befitting manner, reports BSS.

The day began with 21 gun salute and national flag was hoisted atop private and public buildings on the occasion. Different political parties, district administration, sociocultural and literacy organisation observed the day holding various programmes. Special prayers were offered at mosques after *Johr* prayer on the day.

Farmers yet to get compensation

NARSINGDI, Dec 26: At least 35 affected farmers are yet to get their compensation from the government even after 17 years of the acquisition of their lands in Bilasdi and Bhehanagar area in Sadar thana, reports UNB.

The affected farmers informed that the government acquired 7.62 acres of their lands from Tarua and Bilasdi in 1978-79 fiscal year for the construction of the Sub-Divisional office of the land ministry and the district jail. The compensation worth about Tk 17.54 lakh was estimated by the concerned authorities and subsequently approved by the Minister of Land. But the Deputy Commissioner paid them Tk 15.24 lakh in 1987 as per the advice of the ministry, the farmers added.

Massive Rabi farming programme

NARSINGDI, Dec 26: A scheme has been taken up to bring 55,000 hectares of land under Rabi crops cultivation in the district during the current season, reports UNB.

According to Agriculture Extension Department (AED) sources, of the total land 35,000 hectares will be brought under Upsi variety and rest under local variety. The production target has been fixed at 1,112 lakh metric tons. Meanwhile, wheat will be cultivated on 3,000 hectares with a production target of 5,500 metric tons. Besides, potato will be cultivated on 350 hectares, maize on 70 hectares, sweet potato on 550 hectares, *masur dal* on 1,800 hectares, *chhola* on 11,500 hectares, *mug* on 850 hectares.

Youth urged to fulfil dreams of Bangabandhu

KHULNA, Dec 26: Health and Family Welfare Minister Salahuddin Yusuf called upon the younger generation to fulfil the ideals and unfinished dreams of the father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, reports BSS.

The health minister was speaking as chief guest at the prize giving ceremony of the literary and cultural function of Khulna Government Girls College. Presided over by principal of the college Hazera Nazrul the ceremony was addressed by Kazi Sekendar Ali MP, Awami League central committee member Shamsur Rahman Mani, secretary of teachers council AKM Shamim, Prof Abul Bashir and Santi Shanker Bhattacharya.

Tk 36 lakh road construction project

BARISAL, Dec 26: Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) will implement three-projects involving Tk 36 lakh in three thanas of Patuakhali district in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the projects include the development of three roads through haring bone bond (HBB). About Tk 12 lakh will be spent for the construction of each of the roads. Work on the roads will be started soon and is expected to be completed within this fiscal year, the source added. After the implementation of the projects the communication systems of Betagi, Anitali and Bamna thanas will be developed to a great extent.

Freedom Fighter dead

JHALAKATI, Dec 26: Rustam A Zaman, a frontline Freedom Fighter of Sector 9 during the Liberation War of 1971, died at his residence in the town recently. He was 57, reports UNB.

Zaman was unit commander of district Muktiyoddha Sangsad for four years till 1988. He had been suffering from paralysis for last three years. Late freedom fighter is survived by his wife and three sons. He was buried at his family graveyard. District Muktiyoddha Sangsad, Press Club, Freedom Fighting Research Centre and District Hindu-Christian-Boud-dha Oikyo Parishad, in separate condolence messages, expressed deep shock at the death of Zaman.



RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY: Begum Rasheda Khaleque, wife of the Vice-Chancellor of Rajshahi University, distributing prizes among successful students at the annual prize distribution ceremony of Rajshahi University School recently. — Star photo

UP elections

No untoward incidents in 73 polling centres in Barisal

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Dec 26: Union Parishad (UP) elections were held here in 73 centres of 8 unions under Barisal sadar thana on Tuesday. Magistrates were on duty in different polling centres of the district headquarters. A total of 31 mobile police teams remained vigilant. Polling in two unions of Jagua and Tungbaria remained postponed.

Female voters were seen standing in long queues at Etimkhana female polling centre of Kashiipur union. Two women, one of them very elderly and looking very sick were making their way out to the street. They said to this correspondent, "We are going back

casting no vote as it is very late to enter into the booth. Officials inside are very slow," they alleged. This allegation seems to be true in some centres. At Nabajagarani Primary School polling centre, an armed police guard said, "Till now, everything is going well though sounds of some hand bomb blasts were heard around the polling centres on Monday night", he added, but that matters almost nothing to the voter.

At a polling centre Zahura Begum, Jobeda Khatun and Protima Ghosh all aged 60 years and from the female voters' queue said, "Still the elec-

tion is going on fine than the previous elections. Abdur Rab Mollah, 65, a shopkeeper of Kashiipur bazar who was in a queue said, this time I'm feeling secured at this queue in the polling centre."

According to local people, voters have been preferring to cast votes as early as possible within noon. So rush of voters is seen in every polling centre from 8 am to 12 noon. Within this time, more than 60 per cent votes were caste, said the officials in the polling booths.

No reports of clash or untoward incidents were reported from any of the 8 unions. Total voters of 8 unions are 96,766.

Law, order situation worsens

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, December 26: Law and order situation is Kushtia district particularly in Mirpur thana has deteriorated further leaving the law abiding people hostage in the hands of terrorists.

Armed terrorists reign supreme in the area although police raids are being conducted regularly.

In the month of November several crimes were committed in the district including abduction, kidnapping for ransom, dacoities, highway dacoities rape and murder.

On November 5 a dacoity was committed in the house of Shaymol Choudhury, district president of ADAB and Director "Pipasha". Dacoits raided his village house at Chitholia under Mirpur thana. On gun point they looted cash, gold ornaments and other valuables worth Taka 50 thousand, according to family source. Besides armed terrorists kidnapped, on gun point, son of Harekrishna Devnath, former Head Parrot of Mirpur Pilot High School. They demanded ransom of Taka one lakh 50 thousand. After three days family members released him

by paying Taka 75 thousand. Madon Pal of same village Chitholia was kidnapped by the terrorists in a similar way by demanding Taka 50 thousand as ransom. Later he was also released by his family members after paying Taka 30 thousand. Police was not informed in those incidents.

On November 7 a gang of armed dacoits numbering 12 raided the house of Khalilur Rahman of Bheramara town, but three sons of Khalilur Rahman resisted. Dacoits beat them up seriously and tied them with a pillar and looted gold ornaments and other valuables worth Taka 50 thousand and escaped safely. Two businessmen of Dararup under Kumarkhali thana were abducted by the terrorists on gun point from their houses recently.

Police, however, rescued them after seven days. The victims are Shaymol Ghose and Gandhi Ghose. Meanwhile, on November 1 burglars committed burglaries in 16 houses in the same night in three villages of Khoksa thana.

November 3 a dacoity was committed in Mosan Bazar un-

der Mirpur thana. After entering into the market the dacoits caught hold of three night guards and tied them up. The dacoits broke open the doors of grocery shop of Mohwar, cloth shop of Osman Ghani, Jewellery shop of Abul Kalam and tailoring shop of Abdul Malek. They looted goods and valuables worth Taka one lakh and escaped safely.

On November 1 a dacoity was committed in the house of Elahi of village Sonatala under Daulatpur thana. Dacoits forced their entry into the house but the house owner resisted. The dacoits stabbed him and looted cash and other valuables worth Taka 50 thousand. Injured Elahi was later shifted to Daulatpur Thana Health Complex.

On November 3 Daulatpur thana police recovered a dead body in hanging condition from Pearpur field. The victim was identified as Alim, son of Hassan Mondol of Pearpur village. Police suspected that he was murdered and later kept in hanging condition. Police sent the body to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy.

Pabna town dwellers being deprived of civic amenities

PABNA, Dec 26: Dwellers of Pabna town are being deprived of many civic amenities for long due to the indifference of the municipal authorities, reports UNB.

The municipality was established in 1896 and now covers an area of 21.73 square kilometres with a population of about 2.5 lakh.

It was upgraded to a first class municipality in 1986, but the town dwellers are still being deprived of basic facilities.

Deplorable condition of roads, lanes and by-lanes has been causing untold sufferings to the pedestrians as well as the passengers of vehicles plying on the roads.

Officials said there is a total of 195 kilometres of roads within the municipality area. Condition of most of the streets and lanes are pitiable as cracks and pot holes have developed at many points.

Traffic jam is another menace causing suffering to the people. The number of rickshaws in the town is unusually high, buses and other vehicles used to occupy space on the roads violating the traffic rules, complained local people.

Insufficient water supply is another serious problem faced by the inmates. The authorities said they could only supply half

of the total demand of 30 lakh gallons per day.

There is only four public toilets in the town which, the dwellers said, is insufficient causing problems for thousands of people who visit the town everyday.

Street light is also insufficient and a large area of the municipality plunge into darkness after sun set.

Most of the 570 sodium lights went out of order for long. The officials, however, told that these would be replaced within the next two months.

Garbage disposal capacity of the municipality was reduced substantially as two out of 7 disposal trucks remained inoperative for long.

Rajshahi BNP observes road barricade programme

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Dec 26: Local BNP observed a road-barricade programme in the city to protest what it said, attacks on its rally by police and Awami League activists on December 6 at the Shaheb Bazar square in the city.

About 30 activists of BNP were injured in the incident. BNP activists put up barricade on the highway in front of Rajshahi government college for about two hours.

They also held a rally there which was addressed, among others, by Mayor of Rajshahi City Corporation Mijanur Rahman Minu, former MP Momenuddin Ahmed Manik, Matiar Rahman Mantu, Nazrul Huda, Saqqul Huque and others.



JESSORE: A colourful rally was brought out in the town recently on the occasion of World Human Rights Day. — Star photo

Diarrhoea claims 2 in Kishoreganj

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, Dec 26: Two people died of diarrhoea at Aus-togran in Kishoreganj on December 12 and 16.

According to Austogram thana hospital, the victims were identified as Azu Rahman 45, and Islam Uddin, 65.

Diarrhoea broke out at Austogram, Egurda, Khalgaon and Bajuk, sources informed.

Another source from Katiadi thana Hospital said, diarrhoea has also broken out in some places of the thana.

People being deprived of medicare service

BARGUNA, Dec 26: Medicare services in all the thana health complexes of the district are being hampered for lack of manpower, medicines and equipment, reports UNB.

The number of doctors and other para medical staff in each health complex is too inadequate to cope with the rising demand for medical treatment, according to sources there.

More worrying is that the health complexes have no dental and eye specialists. Besides, lack of equipment in Ophthalmology departments and shortage of surgical instruments have made the situation more worsening.

Diarrhoea breaks out in Comilla

COMILLA, Dec 26: Diarrhoea that broke out in the district claimed 14 lives and affected more 2,101 people in 11 months till November this year, reports UNB.

The affected thanas are — Sadar, Laksam, Choudhagram, Borura, Debidwar, Chandina, Muradnagar, Brahmanpara, Langalkot, Daudkandi and Burichang.

According to the district civil surgeon office, six people died and 121 others were attacked in Choudhagram thana.

Four people died and 142 others were attacked in Debidwar thana, one died and 141 others affected in Muradnagar, one died and 70 others affected in Langalkot, 2 people died and 297 others affected in Brahmanpara thana.

Fertility of soil decreases in Shariatpur

SHARIATPUR, Dec 26: Fertility of soil in the district has been decreased for want of natural manure, causing reduction of production of crops, reports UNB.

According to the official sources, after the introduction of the chemical fertilizers, use of natural fertilizers has been decreased to a large extent and soil is losing fertility due to the decaying of sulphur and zinc, the main components of the soil.

According to Agriculture Extension Department, the farmers have little knowledge on how to increase fertility of soil applying natural manures on their land. Besides, they cultivate repeatedly one crop at the same land hampering the fertility.

Bamboo production declines

PABNA, Dec 26: Indiscriminate felling of clusters a lack of proper planning have caused a serious decline in bamboo production of the district, once famous for bamboo, reports UNB.

A section of people was learnt to have been cutting bamboo clusters to use them as fuel, giving an unusual rise to the price of bamboo in the local markets.

Production in cottage industries, mostly depend on bamboo, is also being affected for want of the tall plant.

Meanwhile, the number of cottage industry workers came down to 15,000 from 63,000 in 70s as most of them are giving up their ancestral profession due to lack of raw materials.

Sources said one bamboo is now being sold at Tk 100 to Tk 150 in the local markets, up from Tk 20 to 25 few years back.

A small number of growers are now trying to increase the production, but they cannot achieve the target as they do not have proper knowledge about bamboo production.

The growers have urged the authorities to take immediate steps to provide training on bamboo production to save the country's cottage industries.

Massive Rabi crops farming programme

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, Dec 26: About 1.64 lakh hectares of land in 13 thanas of the district have been brought under Rabi crops cultivation programme in the current season.

According to the Agriculture Extension Department (AED), the production target has been fixed at 5.20 lakh metric tonnes.

Of the total land Boro paddy will be cultivated on 1,29,000 hectares of land, wheat on 12,000 hectares, potato on 3000 hectares, sweet potato on 1600 hectares, mustard on 6700 hectares, maize on 4000 hectares, ground-nut on 2500 hectares and vegetables on 5200 hectares.

CHT accord 'Consensus can be reached in JS, not in roundtable'

NETRAKONA, Dec 26: Awami League general secretary and LGRD Minister Zillur Rahman has rejected the opposition's plea for a roundtable on the CHT peace accord, saying that any dispute can be resolved in Parliament, reports UNB.

"A consensus on the CHT peace agreement can be reached in the Jatiya Sangsad, not in the roundtable," he told a public rally at Kendua High School ground.

On December 21, BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia met with the President and sought his initiative to arrange a roundtable with the government to discuss the CHT accord.

Responding to the BNP's proposal, Zillur said disputes on all national issues, including the CHT, could be settled in Parliament only.

"BNP should not bypass the Parliament for discussion on a national issue like Chittagong Hill Tracts," he said.

The LGRD minister said those who are opposing the accord do not want to see peace in the hill tracts.

The agreement is in no way against the country's independence and sovereignty, he said, adding that it will also not curtail the authority of the government, nor the supremacy of Parliament.

Presided over by Kendua thana AL president Nazrul Islam, the rally was also addressed by Fazlur Rahman, MP, Jalauddin Talukdar, MP, former MP Zobed Ali and Netrakona AL general secretary Anrui Islam.

Call to work together for overall uplift

SHARIATPUR, Dec 26: Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak laid the foundation stone of Kalkihola bridge on Shariatpur-Gosairhat road on Thursday, reports UNB.

The 60-metre long bridge with three spans will be constructed at a cost of Tk 1.20 lakh within one year.

Communications Minister Anwar Hossain was present on the occasion.

Later, the ministers visited the site of the proposed 300-feet long bridge over Shariatpur-Narayonpur, the construction work on which will begin in the current fiscal.

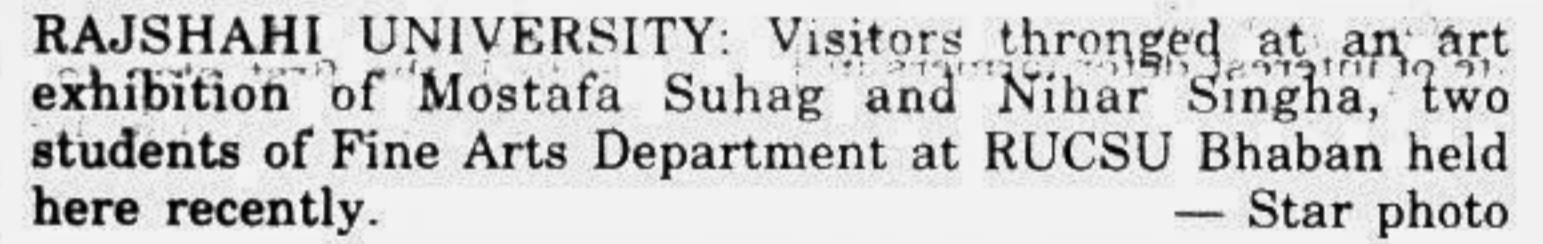
They also inspected the construction works on the 5-km Char Janazat-Kathalbari-Kaorakandi link road, being constructed at a cost of Tk three crore.

Meanwhile, the construction works on Madaripur-Shariatpur-Bhedarganj-Chandpur road, Shariatpur-gosairhat-Damodah road, Shariatpur-Zazira road and Shariatpur-Naria road, costing Tk 4.5 crore are going on in full swing.

Addressing several wayside meetings, the Water Resources Minister said, "we should work together, irrespective of party and political affiliations. For overall development of the country."

Communications Minister Anwar Hossain said a vested quarter is out to block the development activities of the government and urged the people to remain alert about their conspiracy against the country.

Master Muzibur Rahman MP, deputy commissioner Subhash Chandra Roy present.



RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY: Visitors thronged at an art exhibition of Mostafa Suhag and Nihar Singha, two students of Fine Arts Department at RUCSU Bhahan held here recently. — Star photo

Siltation hampers navigability

NARSINGDI, Dec 26: Navigability in the district has greatly been hampered due to siltation in different river routes, reports UNB.

The four-kilometre Srinagar-Panchabati-Devidwar route remained silted since long and the river Meghna flowing through the route turned into a narrow channel.

The authorities have taken no measures to improve the situation, local people complained. They demanded immediate dredging of the river bed to make it navigable.

The people feared that Narsingdi river port might be cut off from rest of the country production of the district, once famous for bamboo, reports UNB.

Kushtia Newsletter

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Dec 26: The district command of Kushtia Muktiyoddha Sangsad observed the historic event of liberation of Kushtia known as Kushtia Free Day on December 11.

Freedom Fighters (FFs) and local people brought out processions on the day.

Doctors shortage in hospital

The Sadar Hospital here has been running with inadequate number of doctors, technicians, staff, equipment beds hindering normal process of treatment facilities, hospital sources said.

The 50-bed hospital cannot cope with the rising number of patients attending from various parts of the district. The situation may improve only if the number of beds are increased to 200. It is alleged that most of the cots and the bedsheets are worn out which need immediate replacement by new ones. Most of the patients who come to the hospital return for want of accommodation and medicine. There is not even a single ambulance in the hospital for quite a long time.

Martyred Intellectuals Day observed

Martyred Intellectuals Day was observed here recently in a befitting manner.

Mourning procession was brought out under the auspices of Kushtia Bangabandhu Parishad. A discussion meeting was held at Public Library premises with Motiar Rahman in chair. Dr Abul Ahsan Chowdhury, Prof Sudin Lahiri, Prof Yeasin Ali, advocate Ashraf, Aminul Haq Badsha the then press secretary of Bangabandhu spoke on the occasion.

Sub-standard drugs flood markets

Sub-standard life saving drugs have flooded the markets of the district for a long time. It is alleged that worms, fungus flies are often found in many drug containers including saline and injection.

It is learnt that mushroom growth of drug companies are responsible for manufacturing sub-standard drugs. Many Homeopathic laboratories without having any licence are producing drugs mostly liquids. It is alleged that these companies have no legal permission to sell the products.