

News snaps

Fire incidents on rise in Noakhali

NOAKHALI, Jan 19: Valuable worth crores of taka are being burnt every year in fire incidents in absence of fire service stations in four thana headquarters of the district, reports UNB.

According to a survey conducted by a non-government organisation, at least 40 big fire incidents occurred in the four thanas in the last year that charred property worth about Tk 3 crore. Of the incidents, eight were occurred in Hatiya, 12 in Chakhal, 10 in Senbagh and 10 in Companiganj thanas. The local people said they time and again demanded of the government to set up fire service stations at the thana headquarters but not step has yet been taken in this regard.

Warm clothes distributed

JAMALPUR, Jan 19: Warm clothes have been distributed among the cold stricken distressed people by the allocated money of zilla parishad for liftar, reports UNB.

Deputy Commissioner Auchhut Pada Goswami distributed 500 warm clothes among the shelterless people of rail junction platform at midnight on Jan 13. According to officials the district administration has undertaken drive to collect more warm clothes to distribute to the cold-hit people of other areas.

Foggy weather affects farming

GAIBANDHA, Jan 19: Cultivation of Robi crops, winter vegetables and seasonal flowers in northern districts including Gaibandha has been badly affected due to recent severe cold wave and foggy weather, reports BSS.

During survey in local vegetables markets the vegetable sellers told this correspondent that besides heavy damage of winter vegetables their supply in the market is not satisfactory. Severe cold wave is the major cause for dislocation of supply of the vegetables.

Four arrested for fishing illegally

PATUAKHALI, Jan 19: Police arrested four persons for fishing illegally from different ponds and waterbodies in Dashedmania thana of the district recently, reports BSS.

The arrested persons were identified as Gobinda, 28, Mangal, 22, Rabindra, 18, and Kalu, 25. A case has been filed with Dashedmania thana in this connection.

Jhenidah admin distributes warm clothes

JHENIDAH, Jan 19: The district administration distributed 1,000 pieces of warm clothes among the poor people in pourashava area on Monday, reports UNB.

Forming three teams one headed by Deputy Commissioner Aminur Rasul for ward no. 2, another by Police Super Miah Ataul Gani Badsha for ward no. 1 and yet another by Civil Surgeon Dr Sardar M Badaruddin for ward no. 3, the warm clothes were distributed. Local pourashava chairman, Red Crescent vice chairman, TNO and other local elite were also present on the occasion. Meanwhile, Red Crescent Society, Islami Bank and Rover Scouts have distributed warm clothes among the slum dwellers.

REB continues extension programme

KUSHTIA, Jan 19: Rural Electrification Board (REB) continues its gradual extension programme in six thanas covering 1,626 sq km area to give electric connection to 26,522 families in 886 villages, reports UNB.

A total of 43,693 connections have been made ready and gradually being given. Meanwhile, connections have been given to 22,944 residential, 2,171 commercial, 426 industrial, 75 deep tubewells, 307 shallow tubewells, 96 power pumps, 371 charitable institutions and 66 street lights. The board has erected 1,486 km power line including 236 km PDB line. But occasional theft of transformers has been hampering the smooth functioning of the system. So far, 60 transformers have been stolen mainly from sadar thana, board sources said.

Smuggled goods seized

COX'S BAZAR, Jan 19: Bangladesh Rifles in different raids seized huge quantity of smuggled goods, including foreign liquor, worth about Tk 20 lakh from a truck and two boats in the district on Thursday, reports UNB.

Liquor including brandy, beer, whisky and other goods including mawseeds and multi-vitamin tablets were recovered from a Chittagong bound truck at Damdamia checkpoint on Cox's Bazar-Thana road. In another raid, mawseeds, beer and other kinds of liquor were also recovered from two boats near number one and two sluice gates in the Naf river. But BDR jawans could not arrest the smugglers. Another report from Sirajganj adds: Police recovered 100 bottles of phenisidyl from the riverghat in Sadar thana on Friday. Police said, they seized the contraband while two youths tried to pick up these, containing in two bags, to a waiting microbus. But the youths managed to flee.

Fish marketing project facing setback

PATUAKHALI, Jan 19: Khepupara Fish Processing and Marketing Project has been facing a set back for want of fund, hampering research works for development of fisheries, reports UNB.

Local people said that the project, handed over to the Fisheries Research Institute (FRI) in June last year, now is being run by the Chandpur, sub-station of FRI with limited resources. According to a report, BFDC has already handed over almost all the facilities including cold storage, vessels, fish handling centre and mini dockyard to FRI to carry on research works. An official of BFDC, unwilling to be named said that BFDC had no other alternative but to hand over the 16-year old fish project of FRI because of mismanagement in the project.

Plan to construct sub-registry offices

TANGAIL, Jan 19: A sub-registry office building will be constructed in Shakhipur thana headquarters of the district, reports BSS.

The construction work will be done under government's programme to construct 52 sub-registry office building in the country in this fiscal year. Official sources said that Taka 18,73,975 has been earmarked to construct the sub-registry office building and its adjacent record room. The construction work will be started soon to complete it by this fiscal year, the sources added.

Radiotherapy machine out of order

SYLHET, Jan 19: The only radiotherapy machine in Sadar Hospital of the district remained out of order for the last two months, depriving nearly 100 cancer patients of their necessary treatment, reports UNB.

Hospital sources said the help of the related company engineers might be needed to repair the machine as a team from Dhaka failed to repair it earlier. Local people urged the authorities concerned to repair the machine soon and thus assuage the sufferings of the cancer patients in the region.

Condolence meeting

SATKHIRA, Jan 19: A condolence meeting at the death of advocate Asiruddin of Satkhira Judge's Court was held at the judge's court auditorium on Thursday under the auspices of district bar association, reports BSS.

The condolence meeting was presided over by the district and session judge MA Shahidur Rahman. The meeting was addressed, among others, by the president of bar council advocate SM Salahuddin Ahmed, principal of Satkhira Law College, advocate Alhaj Abdul Goffar, advocates Abdur Rahim, Shamsul Hauge, Gopal Chandra Bairagi and the judges.

Eye camp in Noakhali

NOAKHALI, Jan 19: A two-day eye camp sponsored by Bangladesh Jatiya Andha Kalyan Samity, Chittagong branch was held recently at Khalipara High School premises here, reports BSS.

Over 500 patients were treated free of cost. 2 cataract patients were operated upon.

Outstanding agri-loan disbursed

BARISAL, Jan 19: Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB), Barisal region has realised outstanding agriculture loan amounting to Taka 53.66 crore from the farmers of 11 southern districts of the region during the first six months of the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

The districts are: Barisal, Jhalakati, Bhola, Pirojpur, Patuakhali, Barguna, Faridpur, Gopalganj, Madaripur, Rajbari and Shariatpur. According to an official source, the target of recovery was fixed at Tk 178 crore this year in this region. Of the total, Tk 5.92 crore was recovered from Barisal district, Tk 2.21 crore from Jhalakati, Tk 4.99 crore from Bhola, Tk 4.65 crore from Patuakhali, Tk 4.75 crore from Pirojpur, Tk 4.43 crore from Barguna, Tk 7.06 crore from Faridpur, Tk 4.59 crore from Madaripur, Tk 5.07 crore from Rajbari, Tk 4.92 crore from Gopalganj and Tk 5.07 crore from Shariatpur district.



MUNSHIGANJ: Acute scarcity of fish has been prevailing in the district during this winter season. As a result, price of fish has shot up. This is because a small number of fishermen came out of their homes for fishing braving severe cold, while a large number of their fellow colleagues remained indoors sitting idle. — Star photo by A K M Mohsin

Re-elections conclude in Gaibandha

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Jan 19: Re-elections in seven postponed unions in the district concluded on January 8 and 11 peacefully.

Election of one centre at Jumarbari and one centre at Halda under Shahat thana, three centres at Fulchhari sadar and Gajaria union under Fulchhari thana, three centres at Ramchandrapur union under Gaibandha sadar thana, one centre at Khordakamarpur under Sadulapur thana and one centre at Darbantha union under Gobindganj thana remained suspended following snatching of ballot papers and boxes.

Re-election of five centres in four unions was held on January 8 and five centres of three unions held on January 11.

Those who were unofficially re-elected as chairmen in narrow margin are Fulchhari union - Azizur Rahman, Gajaria union - Shafiqul Islam Sajju, Jumarbari union - Shajahan Ali Sajju, Halda union - Shahadat Hossain, Khordakamarpur union - Shafiqul Alam Prodhan, Darbantha union - Tajnur Islam and Ramchandrapur union - Abul Kalam Azad.

The Buddhist leader, who is regarded as very respectable among the tribal people in the hill districts, made the comment while addressing a function marking his 79th birth anniversary.

Newly appointed minister Kalpananj Chakma attended the function and sought Banabhaney's blessings for the implementation of the agreement, signed between the government and the tribal leaders early last month.

The spiritual leader asked the minister to take steps for setting up mills and factories in the district to generate employment for the unemployed youths.

Chakma king Raja De-bashish Roy, Dipankar Talukder MP, and the chairmen of the local government councils of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban also attended the functions.

Crimes like burglary, dacoity, murder, abduction, rape, gambling and prostitution have vitiated the serene atmosphere of the town.

The dwellers find it difficult to reside in the town. They here can not move freely due to the alarming rise in the incidents of snatching.

Criminals move freely on the streets as the law enforcement agencies do not take any action against them.

Besides, law and order situation has deteriorated with the increase in the number of murder cases in the district. The situation aggravated further with the post-election clashes and violent activities between the supporters of the winners and defeated candidates.

As a result, life in both the rural and urban areas have become miserable.

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Extortion, abduction on rise in Bandarban

BANDARBAN, Jan 19: People of the hill district are passing their days in much anxieties due to abnormal rise in criminal activities including toll collection, reports UNB.

Holaksu Marma, a former upazila chairman of Thanchhi thana, alleged that some separatist groups from Myanmar are mainly engaged in such heinous activities causing concern among the people.

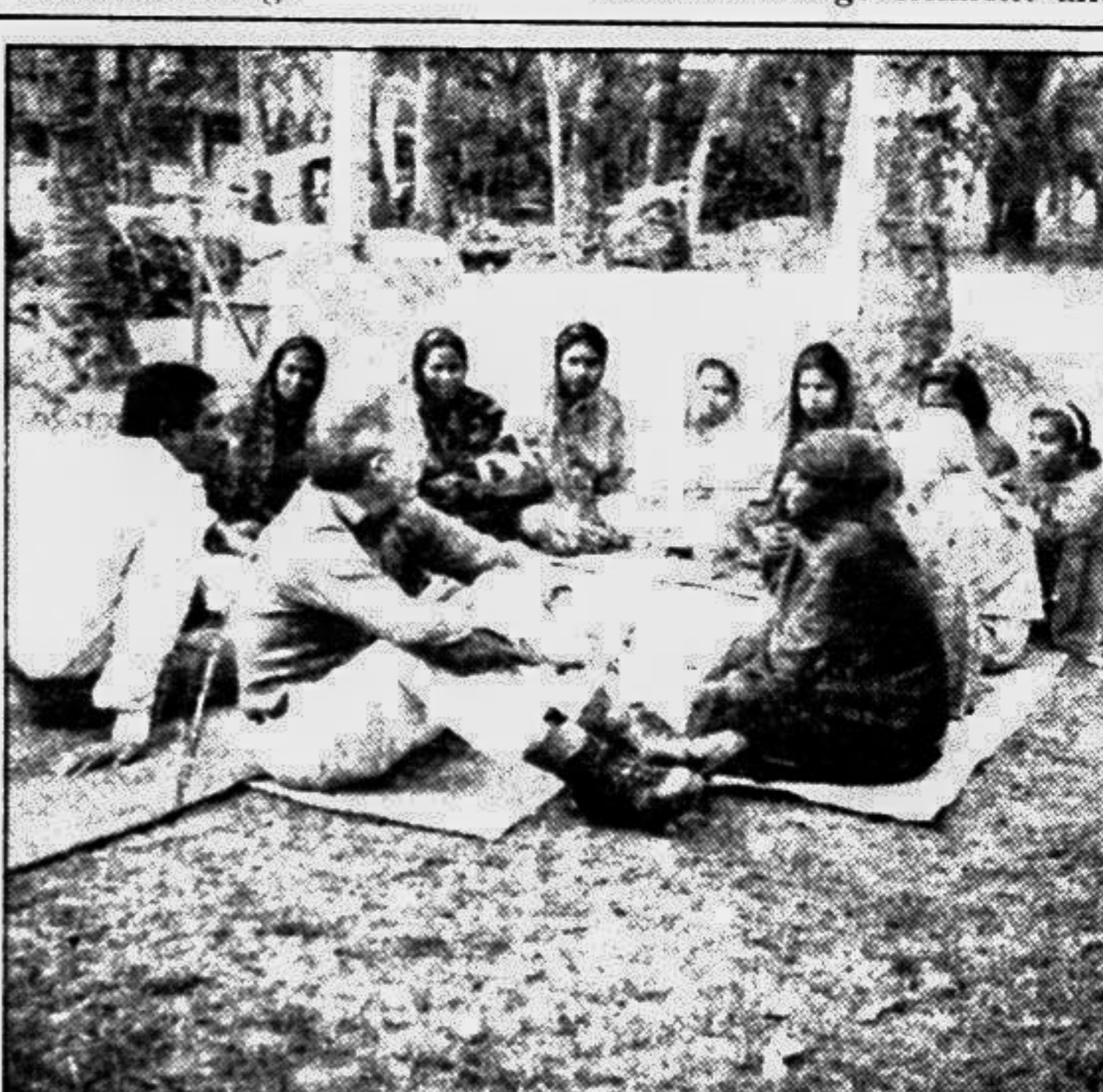
But local people said that the tribal people in connivance with the outsiders have established a reign of terror in Sadar, Roanghchari, Ruma and Thanchhi thanas who are engaged in toll extortion, abduction and looting.

Meanwhile, people expressed concern over the mushroom growth of fake NGOs since the signing of the peace agreement between the government and

the Parbattya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity on December 2.

Local leaders said after the agreement, a bright prospect of implementing development workers with financial assistance from donor countries has been created. A number of fake NGOs have already sprung up in the hill tracts to take the advantage of development works of the region, the major development works of which are likely to be implemented by the NGOs.

They also urged the authorities concerned to take immediate steps to combat the growing terrorism in the region.



The first secretary of Australian High Commission in Bangladesh, Jason Reynolds on January 13 visited the self-employment development project of Bangladesh Friendship Education Society (BFES) at Rampal in Bagerhat district. Australian High Commission has been assisting this project financially. Raqib Hossain, Development Officer of the high commission was also present there.

According to the local Boat Owners' Association, boat looting has turned into a regular feature in Sangu river, but authorities are yet to take any action in this regard.

A higher army official, however, said that he had not yet got any information from the authorities about the anti-social activities of the Burmese, adding that, BDR and police forces have been deployed in the area to check the terrorist activities.

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In 16 N-dists

Paddy procurement drive may not be achieved

PABNA, Jan 19: The procurement targets of Aman paddy and rice in the 16 northern districts including Pabna may not be achieved this year as the official procurement price is much lower than the market price, reports UNB.

The month-long official procurement drive kicked off on January 8, but no procurement in many centres was reported even after two weeks time.

The government has fixed the price of Aman paddy at Tk 280 per maund while the existing market price is between Tk 300 and Tk 310. Local farmers are not going to the food godowns to sell their crop below the market price.

According to official sources, the target of procurement in Pabna has been fixed at 3,559 mts of paddy and rice at 1,696 mts. In Sirajganj paddy 3,678 mts and rice 1,696 mts, Natore-paddy 3,800 mts and rice 1,500 tons, Lalmonirhat — paddy 7,726 mts and rice 3,537 mts, Kurigram — paddy 5,228 mts and rice 1,228 mts, Gaibandha — paddy 12,000 mts and rice 4,618 mts, Rangpur —

paddy 18,084 mts and rice 6,389 mts, Nilphamari — paddy 13,165 mts and rice 10,822 mts, Joypurhat — paddy 7,636 mts and rice 3,683 mts, Bogra — paddy 15,759 mts and rice 9,100 mts, Cnawabganj — paddy 6,701 mts and rice 2,833 mts, Rajshahi — paddy 6,035 mts and rice 4,054 mts, Panchagarh — paddy 10,996 mts and rice 5,067 mts, Thakurgaon — paddy 13,259 mts and rice 4,185 mts and Dinajpur-paddy 33,180 mts and rice 11,171 mts.

Agriculture extension officials said Aman production would be about 45 lakh n ts this seasons which would be 1.5 times higher than the production fixed in the region.

Huge Indian sarees, clothes seized

FENI, Jan 19: Chhagalnaiya police Friday seized huge Indian sarees and clothes worth about Tk 35 lakh, reports UNB.

The smuggled items include some 45,000 pieces of sarees and 1,500 meters of clothes. Police also seized the truck which was carrying the goods.

Brahmanbaria Newsletter

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, Jan 19: Mushroom growth of hotel and restaurants in the district town and thana headquarters has been threatening public health for long time. Most of the hotels and restaurants are dirty and unclean. These are grown near the DC office, Ananda Bazar, Kasba Naya Bazar, Sarail Jame-Mosque, Nasirnagar ghat, Nabinagar Launch ghat, Gukarna Launch ghat, near the Kharampur Mazhar and Akhaura Rail Station. Food-stuffs are being prepared in most unhygienic manner in these hotels and restaurants.

The foodstuff are kept open in the big dish for open show. Flies sit and fly again and again on those food items.

Unscrupulous owners of hotels and restaurants are doing brisk business.

Quacks doing brisk business

Quacks are on rise in the rural areas of the district.

A group of youngmen who are untrained and do not know how to prescribe proper medicine for a patient have become quacks. Most of them fail to find any job take up this business. They are half educated young men who have completed only primary education while only a few of them have passed the SSC & HSC examinations. They do their business at rural hats and bazars of the district. In Shah-jadpur Chak Bazar, Malais Chak Bazar, Daowra, Shah-bazpur, Bariura, Austagram, Chandura, Suhilpur and many other chak and hat bazar of the rural areas of all seven thanas.

Betel leaf farming faces setback

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, Jan 19: Betel leaf cultivation in Chandpur district has been facing a serious set back.

As a result about ten thousand betel leaf growers have been passing very hard days. About ten thousand hectares of land have been brought under betel leaf cultivation in all seven thanas of the district. The betel leaf growers are in acute financial crisis due to various reasons. Cultivation of betel leaf nowadays has turned costly

as the prices of inputs marked a sharp rise in the markets than before. Besides, growers are also finding it hard to sell betel leaf in the markets due to competitions and low prices.

Betel leaf growers are also facing natural calamities like cold, wave, drought, cyclone very frequently. It may be mentioned, once betel leaf was exported to Pakistan and other middle-eastern countries, but at present export of betel leaf has been reduced to a great extent.

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