

News snaps

Erratic power supply in Noakhali

NOAKHALI, Jan 26: Erratic power supply and frequent load-shedding have made the life unbearable in the district, reports UNB.

The situation aggravated further during the holy month of Ramadan and the devotees have been facing problems in offering their 'tarab' prayers. Residents of Maidjee town and its adjoining areas and Choumuhuni, a commercial hub of the district, are the worst sufferers. They even face load-shedding at 11 p.m. time everyday. The frequency of load shedding has increased during the month of Ramadan, said local people adding that they used to face one to two hours of power failure in the past. But now they face it four to five times a day with a duration of even five hours. Some small industries in the district have been forced to shut down due to the erratic power supply.

5 arrested on charge of piracy

KHULNA, Jan 26: Police arrested five people on charge of piracy from Machmara village in Mongla thana on Friday and recovered illegal firearms from their possession, reports UNB.

They were identified as Alamgir, 35, Malek, 25, Habib, 49, Jahangir, 27, and Amir, 24. A case was filed with the police. In another drive, police nabbed a young man from Sher-e-Bangla road of the city with a pipegun while he along with his two accomplices were allegedly preparing for kidnapping. The arrested was identified as Selim Bachchu, 22. His accomplices managed to flee the scene.

Work of BSCIC estate starts

SUNAMGANJ, Jan 26: The work of the BSCIC industrial town has started at Wazekhali in the municipality area here, reports UNB.

Some 116 industrial units will be set up in the 'Shilpa Nagar' which is being developed at a cost of Tk 4.85 crore on over 15 acres of land. Officials said as the first step earth work has been started under annual development programme. The earth work will cost Tk 1.39 crore. But, the sources said, the work was hampered because of a dispute over the approach land. BSCIC officials requested the Deputy Commissioner to hand over the land to them, but no decision was taken as yet in this regard. The sources said the work of the BSCIC industrial town will be creating various industries including glass factory, lime factory, cement factory, soap factory, engineering plant, textile mill and fisheries processing units would be set up there. The decision to set up an industrial town in Sunamganj was taken 7 years ago and the land for it was acquired by the Ministry of Industries in August 1990.

BKB target to disburse agri-loan

RAJBARI, Jan 26: Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) has set a target to disburse Tk 12 crore agri-loan in four thanas of the district in the current fiscal year, reports UNB.

According to the official sources, BKB has already disbursed Tk 5 crore among 4,914 farmers during the last six months till December and realised Tk 5.04 crore outstanding loan from the farmers during the period. Of the disbursed loan, Tk 3.37 lakh was disbursed for crop cultivation and rest in other sectors, including poultry and dairy farming and cow fattening.

Peanut farming gains momentum

NARAIL, Jan 26: Cultivation of peanut has gained popularity in the district as the plain and sandy lands on the banks of river Nabaganga and Madhumoti proved suitable, reports UNB.

Last year, some 8,000 hectares of land in district were brought under the peanut cultivation with a production target of 10,000 metric tons. Growers here alleged that a section of unscrupulous traders have hoarded the peanut seeds causing its acute scarcity while Indian smuggled groundnut seeds are available in the market and forcing them to cultivate groundnut on their lands. Moreover, they have no practical knowledge about the cultivation of peanut, required for manufacturing nutritious drink such as Horlicks, Boost and Viva. Farmers said a mound of seeds are being sold between Tk 1,400 and Tk 1,500 in the market. So, they failed to procure seeds at an exorbitant price. The growers in the region are needed government patronisation for intensive cultivation of peanut.

Leprosy Day observed

KHULNA, Jan 26: World Leprosy Day was observed here in Khulna as elsewhere in the country, reports BSS.

The day's programme included a rally at the local Saheed Haidis Park followed by a procession. Later, a discussion meeting was held at the local BMA Auditorium. Presided over by Civil Surgeon Khulna, Dr Habibur Rahman the meeting was also addressed, among others, by Dr Syed Mahfuzul Huq former Deputy Director of Health, Dr Abul Kashem, Dr Yu Toka Ishida and Sister Helena. Speakers at the meeting the speakers stressed the need for creating awareness about the multidrug treatment of the disease and easy cure.

Warm clothes distributed

JAMALPUR, Jan 26: Two hundred fifty pieces of chaddar and warm jumpers were distributed among the cold-stricken poor and distressed by the Deputy Commissioner, Jamalpur, Achyuta Padma Goswami recently, district administration sources said, reports BSS.

The same sources said that responding to the call of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the deputy commissioner cancelled the Ifar party of district administration and the money allocated for the purpose was utilised for distributing winter clothes to the needy and poor people staying in the railway platform, foot paths and verandahs of the road-side buildings.

Massive wheat farming scheme

MADARIPUR, Jan 26: A scheme has been taken up to bring 71,980 hectares under high yielding variety wheat in five districts in the current winter season, reports UNB.

According to Agriculture Extension Department, the districts are Faridpur, Rajbari, Madaripur, Gopalganj and Shariatpur. The AED also have set up 35 integrated demonstration plots in these districts to acquaint the farmers with the scientific methods of cultivation. Besides, Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) will supply HYV seeds and other necessary inputs to the farmers at fair prices to make the scheme a success.

78 uplift schemes undertaken at Hajeeganj

CHANDPUR, Jan 26: Hajeeganj municipality has undertaken a comprehensive plan to implement 78 development work at a cost of Taka two crore in the current year, reports BSS.

Hawkers market has been completed at a cost of Tk 70 lakh to accommodate about two hundred hawkers. Other development work includes construction and re-construction of roads, bridges, culverts and drainages. Besides, 40 more development work will be implemented at a cost of Tk 23 lakh.

Manikganj villages electrified

MANIKGANJ, Jan 26: Manikganj Pali Bidyut Samiti completed a massive programme of giving 40218 lines electric connection covering 1539 kilometre in seven thanas of Manikganj, one thana in Tangail and one in Sirajganj district up to last month, reports BSS.

The thanas are Manikganj sadar, Harirampur, Shibabaya, Ghior, Daulatpur, Sattaria and Singair in Manikganj district, Nagarpur of Tangail district and Chowhali of Sirajganj district. Manikganj Pali Bidyut Samiti has already given a total of 34,404 consumer lines including 27,631 domestic, 4716 commercial and 512 industrial connection in the areas. The samiti has also given electric connection in 278 deep tubewells, 767 shallow tubewells and 5 low-lift pumps (LLP). After completion of the programme the people of 385 villages are being benefited.

2 more killed in road mishap

JHENIDAH, Jan 26: Two person were killed and 20 others injured, four of them seriously, in a road accident on Jhenidah-Khulna highway in Jhenidah town recently, reports BSS.

Police and eyewitnesses said, the driver of a Khulna-bound bus from Barisal lost control over the steering. The bus rammed into a wayside tree and turned turtle. Two persons died on the spot, four critically injured passengers were rushed to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital. The bodies were sent to sadar hospital for post mortem. Police seized the vehicle. The driver managed to flee after the accident. A case was filed with sadar thana.

LGED projects' works programming

BARISAL, Jan 26: The construction of 225 projects in 10 thanas of Barisal district has been progressing fast in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to an official source, Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has been implementing 8 projects with the allocation of over 1,609 tonnes of wheat and the rest 217 projects at a cost of Tk 16.10 crore. The projects to be implemented included construction of bridges, roads, Harring Bone Bond (HBB) and earth work for Growth Centre Connecting Road (GCCR). Meanwhile, on an average 80 per cent work on these projects has already been completed till December and the rest is expected to be completed within next June.



Innocent smile of farmers of Bangladesh following hard toil of the day.

— Star photo by AKM Mohsin

Cargo with banned SSP fertiliser seized

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Jan 26: CID police of Narayanganj have unearthed imported huge quantity of banned granular SSP fertiliser.

They seized a cargo at the Narayanganj Port carrying 16,500 bags of unauthorised granular SSP fertiliser on Saturday afternoon.

The fertiliser was imported from China under the cover of powder SSP fertiliser which was unloaded by a Chinese ship at the Chittagong port recently, police said.

The fertiliser was imported in the name of Monir Enterprise, a local importing firm, and through a Dhaka-based indenting company, Overseas Export-Import Company. They added, A Chinese company called 'Guizhou Anfa Phosphorus Chemicals' is the exporter of the goods.

The government banned the import of granular SSP fertiliser on March 4, 1994 and prohibited its sale in the country after December 31 last year. Meanwhile, the High Court on a writ petition by three distributing firms has stayed the government's prohibition order for six weeks, expiring on February 22 this year.

Proprietor of the importing firm is absconding since the cargo named Kanak Master was detained. The Deputy Commissioner and officials of the Agricultural Extension Department on Sunday visited the seized cargo.

1 killed, 40 hurt in Gopalganj road accident

From Our Correspondent

GOPALGANJ, Jan 26: One person was killed and 40 others including 5 women were injured in a road accident at Bherarhat on Gopalganj-Takerhat road on January 18 afternoon.

The dead was identified as Bidhan Chandra Biswas, 48, school teacher of Nizra High School under Gopalganj sadar thana.

The accident occurred when a Gopalganj-Takerhat bound passenger bus was going to Takerhat from Gopalganj town. The bus was giving side to another passenger bus near Bherarhat on January 18. Then the driver lost the control of the bus. The bus fell down into the roadside ditch.

As a result, one Bidhan Chandra Biswas died on the spot. Forty others were injured 10 of them seriously. They were admitted to Gopalganj Sadar Hospital in a critical condition.

A case has been registered with Gopalganj Police Station in this connection.

A police rescue team rushed to the spot after the accident. The dead body was sent to Gopalganj Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Oppositions' help sought for development

BARISAL, Jan 26: Chief Whip Abul Hasanat Abdulla has said that people irrespective of party affiliation should take part in the development activities taken by the present government, reports BSS.

It was difficult to materialise the hopes and aspiration of the people on the part of the government alone without help of other political parties, he said.

The chief whip was addressing the local officials at the Patuakhali circuit house premises.

Among others advocate Shahjahan Mia MP, ASM Firoz MP, Majibur Rahman Talukder, MP, Nargis Ara Huq MP, district Awami League secretary Khan Mosarraf Hossain and Abdur Rashid were present.

Earlier, the leaders of the Awami League accorded a reception to the Chief Whip at the ferryghat of Patuakhali.

Hasanat then went to the mazar of late Earuddin Khalifa at Mirjagonj and offered fataha.

He attended an Ifar party at the circuit house premises.

Spurious drugs flood markets in N-dists

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Jan 26: The markets of the northern part of the country are flooded with spurious, substandard and mysterious brands of cough syrups which are a serious threat to public health.

Some cough syrups with fictitious brand-names are being sold in Natore, Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Rangpur and Dinajpur. As these are all priced below Taka 25 per bottle, these are in great demand and even some homoeopaths and village quacks are recommending them to the illiterate patients.

Most of these syrups do not bear the name of the manufacturing company, date of manufacture, date of expiry and drug licence number.

Residents of the bordering districts including Natore said that the ingredients were being smuggled from across the border and the syrups were produced in small factories on Bangladesh side of the border.

In the last few years, there has been a mushroom growth of unlicensed pharmaceutical

companies, many of which are doing brisk business by making spurious drugs. As these medicines are cheap, they find ready buyers even in remote rural areas.

According to Narcotics Control Department sources, due to shortage of manpower, it has not been possible for them to check every product in the market or send them to the Drug Testing Laboratory for analysis.

They do not have even inspectors in all the 16 districts of this region.

Pabna town dwellers deprived of basic civic amenities

PABNA, Jan 26: The town dwellers are deprived of basic civic amenities even after upgrading the town into municipality 10 years back, reports UNB.

The town covering an area of 21.73 km with about 2.50 lakh population was declared the first class municipality on June 23, 1986 but different facilities like road communication, proper drainage and sanitary system and street lights are quite inadequate causing suffering to the people.

The municipality consists of seven wards and have a total 14,701 holding numbers.

Most of the roads, lanes and by-lanes are in deplorable condition as cracks and pot-holes have developed at many points. After a slight rainfall, many roads go under water due to lack

of proper drainage system.

Traffic jam is a common feature due to the violation of traffic rules, occupation of roads by the hawkers and indiscriminate parking of vehicles including rickshaws.

According to municipal authorities, there are 8,700 authorised rickshaws in the town out of the total 15,000.

The inter-district buses coming from Dhaka, Bogra, Sirajganj, Kushtia, Rajshahi, Naogaon, Rangpur and Iswardi park near the Town hall, Puran Bus Stand, Chatala crossing, T&T crossing and Traffic Bridge haphazardly in the absence of bus terminals.

Water supply is insufficient as at present 15 lakh gallons are being supplied against the requirement of 30 lakh gallons

per day. Four public toilets and 570 sodium lights are quite insufficient for several lakh town dwellers.

Many roads such as Kalachandrapara road, Square road, Fakiripara road, Jugi para road and many other areas plunge into darkness after the sunset due to erratic power supply.

About 20 tons of wastes are accumulated in 920 dustbins but the municipality has the capacity to remove 15 tons of garbage daily through its seven trucks. Of these, two trucks have been lying inoperative for a long time.

Moreover, the spaces for fish and vegetable markets are insufficient causing suffering to both the buyers and sellers.

Tk 36 lakh sanctioned for construction of school bldgs

PATUAKHALI, Jan 26: The Facilities Department of the Ministry of Education has taken up a programme for construction of two-room administrative and academy buildings of four secondary schools in the current fiscal, reports BSS.

An official source said, the educational institutions are: Bakerganj JSU Secondary School, Ujirpur Sher-e-Bangla Girls Secondary School, Muladi Mahmudjan Secondary School and Borhanuddin Girls Secondary School under Barisal division.

The government has sanctioned Taka 36,18,356 for completion of the project.

Roads in bad shape in B'baria

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, Jan 26: The residents of Brahmanbaria pourashava are deprived of civic amenities for a long time.

Although the population of the poura areas are increasing day by day, the respective authorities are not providing basic civic amenities to them.

It has been learnt that Brahmanbaria pourashava was established in 1868. At present, the pourashava is covering an area of seven square miles and the population of the poura area is about 1,25,000.

Brahmanbaria pourashava was declared a first class pourashava. It was upgraded from 'B' grade to 'A' grade in 1994. But the facilities of a first class pourashava are not being rendered to the town dwellers.

Absence of proper drainage system, deplorable condition of roads, inadequate street light, lack of proper sanitary arrangement, traffic jams and absence of recreational facilities are the main problems of the pourashava which made the lives of poura dwellers miserable.

Absence of proper drainage system is a big problem in the pourashava area.

The town dwellers face difficulties due to stagnation of water in drains. Most of the drains are filled with filth and garbage are not cleaned in proper time. In many areas there are no drains. During the rainy season the drains are accumulated with dirt and filth. It cause health hazards to the inhabitants.

Due to absence of proper maintenance and repair, most of the roads of the poura areas

are in a deplorable condition. The damaged roads are: Jail Road, Paikpara Road, Medda Bazar Road, Kazi Para Road, Gukarna Road and Sarkerpara Road. Cracks and potholes have developed at many point of the road. The workers of Titas gas pipe line distribution also made some holes and potholes on the roads which are not repaired in due time.

Meanwhile, the Sarkerpara Road is in very bad shape. Cracks and potholes have developed at all points of the road. Some big holes have been developed on the northern side of Sarker Para mosque which have turned into a death trap for lines for years together. Tufayel Azam Road (TA Road) is the main road of the town but the pedestrians cannot even walk easily. The most covers of the drains are broken and the footpath is generally occupied with make-shift shops.

Some roads of the town is very narrow which are unfit to ply two rickshaws at a time. Kazi para Road is one of them. After a slight rainfall some of

the roads become muddy and slippery. Rain water remains stagnant on the roads causing difficulties and suffering to the passers-by and vehicular movement.

The violation of traffic rules has become a normal affair. It create a serious traffic jam in different points of the town. The super market premises, Medda Bazar Road, Paikpara Tempo Stand, Tan Bazar Road, Mosque Road, Cinema Hall Road, TA Road, Station Road and Kali Bari Crossing Point are seriously affected by traffic jams.

It is alleged that because of increasing number of rickshaws traffic jam has also become a serious threat in the town. According to office source of Brahmanbaria pourashava, there are 4,000 licensed rickshaws on the road, but about 10,000 rickshaws are plying on the road.

Streets light are inadequate. The bulbs of the minimum street light post are broken or out of order for a long time. Most of the roads and residential areas go under darkness just after sunset.

Sanitary arrangement of the town is not satisfactory. A few dustbins are setup in the town which always remain unclean. Garbage of the drain are removed at day time creating obnoxious odour. Some people who are floating respond to the call of nature in the roadside and drains causing inconvenience to the common people.

Consequently the environment is polluted. Besides, some dwellers of the pourashava are using katcha latrines.

Massive afforestation drive in CHT planned

RANGAMATI, Jan 26: As the access of forest officials has been ensured in the forest hills on restoration of peace following the signing of the peace accord, the Chittagong Hill Tracts South Forest Division (CHTSFD) has undertaken a plan to plant trees on 900 acres of denuded hills associating tribal forest villagers, headmen and karbaris in the participatory afforestation programme for the first time in the hilly region, reports BSS.

The third phase of the state forest afforestation and Jhumia Rehabilitation Project, a participatory afforestation programme, undertaken at a cost of Taka 280 crore, scheduled to be implemented during 1995-2000 was facing an absolute impasse as there was virtually no access of the forest officials in the forest areas due to prevailing insurgency, Tapan Kumar Dey, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of CHTSFD told at his office at Bonorupa on Saturday.

Necessary steps have already been taken for collection of seeds and raising of nursery to implement the programme properly in the inaccessible forests of Alikhiong, Farua, Sangrakhari and Kapitai ranges of CHTSFD ensuring reservation of 30 per cent share for the participants and 70 per cent for the department in, DFO said.

While detailing the quantum of shares, Tapan Dey said the tribal forest villagers who will raise plantation with the all-round supports and supervisions of the department will gate 15 per cent since its introduction in the country.

Cent per cent out turn of the 'first thinning' from the 'to be raised plantation' will be given

to the participants followed by 50 per cent each from the second and third thinning, the DFO said, adding that after the maturity of the plantation, 30 per cent from the final yield will be distributed among the participants in addition to the thinned produces.

CHTSFD, one of the major territorial forest division in the country, comprising seven territorial forest ranges — Karnaphuli, Katali, Alikhiong, Farua, Sangrakhari, Shubhalong and Borkal — possesses forest resources worth hundreds of crores with virgin forests on a vast tract of hills rearing century-old valuable trees like teak, garjan, champaphul, chapalish, telsur, jarul and hundreds of other species of shrubs and plants.

TB claimed 25 lives in Natore in 3 years

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Jan 26: At least 25 people died in Natore in 3 years were attacked with tuberculosis (TB) in six thanas of the district during last three years.

According to sources concerned, at least nine persons died and 1,000 were attacked with TB in 1995. Of them, only 39 were cured. A total of 14 TB patients died while they were undergoing treatment and 2,000 others were attacked in 1996. Of them 116 were cured.

In 1997, only two TB patients who were undergoing treatment, died and 700 others were attacked during the period.

He added that there was a possibility of 100 per cent cure by proper treatment.

Khulna Newsletter

From Staff Correspondent

Body recovered

KHULNA, Jan 26: Police recovered recently the decomposed body of Mehedi Hasan, 28, Assistant Engineer of the Khulna office of Water Development Board (WDB) who drowned on January 11 in the river Bhairab. Four of his colleagues who also accompanied him for inspecting Town Protection Embankment works managed to swim ashore after the speed boat capsized.

Property worth Tk 50 lakh gutted

At least six persons were injured and over a hundred of thatched houses were gutted in a devastating fire at Mohebpurpasha under Daulatpur thana recently.

The fire originated from an oven of a thatched house and damaged property worth over Taka 50 lakh was, however, extinguished by the personnel of four fire brigade units of Boyra, Khalishpur, Daulatpur and Khulna town.

The injured persons are Mahub, Malek, Kalu, Akram, Ambia and Shaheda. Eyewitnesses said some unruly elements looted some houses during rescue operation in presence of police. The fire has rendered over a thousand of people homeless, police and eyewitnesses said.

Another body recovered

Police recovered another dead body Jahangir Hossain, 23, who was among the four died in firing by forest guards of Swarankhola range. The dead bodies of Sabur and Fazlu were recovered from Chandmari under Swarankhola thana in Bagerhat district recently. Dead body of Samad Munshi 30 is yet to be recovered. All the three dead bodies have been sent to their relatives after autopsy.

The forest guards reportedly fired shot when the deceased tried to escape with Sundari wood stolen from the forest.

A case against the killing of these four woodcutters was, however, lodged with the Swarankhola thana.

Jute mills worker chopped to death

Azimuddin, 45, a worker of Aaleem Jute Mills was chopped to death by some unidentified miscreants recently at Damodar village under Phul-tala thana. According to FIR, after committing the murder, they looted the house of the deceased.

Unauthorised toll collection rises

Businessmen of Khulna city have expressed their grave concern over extortion and toll collection by armed cadres of different political parties on the eve of Eid.

Leaders of Khulna bazar traders' association have threatened greater movement if the administration fails to tackle extortionists and toll collectors.

Housewife raped

Shirin Begum, 25, wife of Khalilur Rahman of Khalishpur was allegedly raped by Sarwar Hossain, Head Assistant of the Judge's court recently in an abandoned house at Daspara under Sonadanga thana. Police quoting the FIR said that the alleged rapist took her by rickshaw from the court for giving document of a case she needed for getting her husband released on bail.



BRAHMANBARIA: Potholes have developed on Sarkarpura Road in the district town. Now the road has been turned into a death trap.

— Star photo