

News snaps

PHED takes up 2 uplift projects

KISHOREGANJ, Feb 16: Public Health and Engineering Department (PHED) has taken up two development projects called 'Bhairab Pouro Water Supply Project' and 'Sharishabari-Bajitpur Pouro Project' for the 1997-98 fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to PHED official sources, the government has sanctioned Taka 8.90 crore for the implementation of the projects. The projects included land development, sinking of deep and tara tubewells, construction of pump house, high water container, pipe-line, surface drainage and buying and setting of pumps. About 25 per cent of the work has already been completed and the rest is in full-swing, the source informed.

Female student commits suicide

RANGAMATI, Feb 16: A female college student allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself at her residence in Patharghata in the town on Saturday, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Anju Nag, 22, student of Rangamati University College. It is suspected that Anju committed suicide following a family feud. An unnatural death case was filed with the police.

Special train for Medinipur

RAJBARI, Feb 16: A special train leaves the local station on Sunday for Medinipur in the West Bengal of India to attend the Urs of Hazrat Morshid Ali Al Kadri Al Hasani Al Hosaini Al Bogdadi (Ra), reports UNB.

Organised by Anzuman E Kaderia, the train will leave the local station at 10pm with about 1000 devotees and is scheduled to return on February 20. Mentionable that the West Bengal and Bangladesh Railways have been jointly organising a special train on this occasion since 1901, said a western railway source.

New books yet to reach schools

SUNAMGANJ, Feb 16: Primary education in some thanas of the district is being hampered due to the late and incomplete delivery of free books, reports UNB.

The new books for the primary schools have yet to reach at the schools in three thanas of the district. The thanas are Sallah, Dharmapasha and Dwarabazar. Sources said the enlisted contractors of these thanas have stopped the collection and distribution of books on the plea of bad communication in the region. Local people alleged irregularities in the distribution of books sent from the Board. They said primary books are being illegally sold at different shops at high prices.

Golden jubilee ceremony of Ansars

NARSINGDI, Feb 16: A golden jubilee ceremony of Ansar and VDP members of the district was held on Thursday at the parade ground of district adjutant of Ansar and VDP office, reports BSS.

A rally, participated by about 450 male and female members of Ansar and VDP was held in this connection. District adjutant Abdul Awal presided over the rally. Deputy Commissioner, Narsingdi, Rafiqul Islam and Police Super, Narsingdi, Mokhlesur Rahman were present at the rally as chief guest and special guest respectively. The district adjutant of Ansar and VDP presented welcome address at the rally. The chief guest distributed the prizes of TV set, torchlight, umbrella among the best Ansar and VDP members.

OMS of rice starts in Satkhira

SATKHIRA, Feb 16: Open Market Sale (OMS) of rice has started recently in Satkhira town by five dealers, reports BSS.

A large number of poor people used to gather at each shop everyday to buy the rice. According to the relevant sources, five dealers have got the dealership licence for selling rice in the town.

Each dealer gets 500 kgs of rice to sale at Taka 12.50 per kilogram. One person can buy more than 3 kgs of rice everyday.

Science Week opens

MYMENSINGH, Feb 16: The 21st Science and Technology Week was inaugurated on Saturday by Deputy Commissioner Md Rafiqul Islam at the premises of Mymensingh Zila School, reports BSS.

Speaking on the occasion, the deputy commissioner urged all concerned to come forward to free the country from the curse of illiteracy. He said that removal of illiteracy is essential for poverty alleviation and national development. A total of 160 stalls have been set up in the science fair by the students of different educational institutions and members of science clubs.

OMS of rice starts in Kushtia

KUSHTIA, Feb 16: Open Market Sale (OMS) of rice started in five out of six thanas of the district from February 9, reports BSS.

OMS was, earlier, started in sadar thana before Eid. Rice is being sold in OMS at the rate of Taka twelve and fifty paise per kilogram.

Road development work progressing

MANIKGANJ, Feb 16: The development work of Katgram Road in Manikganj sadar thana under Second Rural Road and Bazar Development and Maintenance Programme at a cost of Taka 1,08,50,000 is nearing completion. Local Government Engineering Department is implementing the project. More than 95 per cent work of the project has already been completed. The communication system of the area will be developed much after the completion of the project.

Reception to eminent personalities

THAKURGAON, Feb 16: A reception was accorded to eight eminent persons of Pirganj thana at Pirganj Press Club recently, reports BSS.

The noted persons included educationists, political leader, journalists, freedom fighter and sportsman. Arranged by Pirganj Press Club, the function was presided over by M Faizul Islam, president of the club. M Imdadul Huq MP was present at the reception as chief guest. The speakers recalled the contribution of the eminent persons to their respective fields.

Science fair concludes

JHALAKATI, Feb 16: A science fair on the occasion of '21st National Science and Technology Week' concluded here on Jhalakati Government College campus on Thursday, reports UNB.

A total of 25 schools, colleges, madrasahs, science clubs and children organisations from four thanas of the district took part in the three-day fair. Over a hundred of science projects were exhibited in the fair. Science-based essay, extempore speech, debate and quiz competition were also arranged. Deputy Commissioner M Jahiruddin was the chief guest on the inaugural day while educationist Prof Kudrat-e-Khuda attended as chief guest on the concluding day.

Young man commits suicide

BANDARBAN, Feb 16: A young man allegedly committed suicide by taking poison at Chaingdong union in Alikadam thana on Friday, reports UNB.

The dead was identified as Abdul Malek, 28. Villagers said Malek took poison and laid unconscious on the road. They rushed him to the Thana Health Complex where the attending physicians declared him dead. The reason behind the suicide could not be known immediately. The body was sent to Bandarban Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Khokon murder: Principal accused held

COMILLA, Feb 16: Principal accused of student leader Khokon murder case Noor Alam was arrested from Thirapukur area in the town on Friday, reports UNB.

Alam, said to be a smuggler, stabbed AGS of Ajit Guha College Khorsheed Alam Bhuiyan (Khokon) to death on February 27, 1996. Wanted in connection with many cases, including dacoity, abduction, smuggling and terrorism, Alam also awarded five-year jail term in absentia in a criminal case.

UP chairmen asked to serve commonmen

MYMENSINGH, Feb 16: State Minister for Health and Family Welfare Prof Dr M Amanullah called upon the newly elected chairmen and members of union parishads to come forward with a view to rendering their service for the common people of the country, reports BSS.

The state minister was speaking at the chief guest at the oath taking ceremony of the newly elected union parishad chairmen and members of Bhaluka thana on Saturday last. He said that education and health are essential for national development and to achieve these two factors the women can play a very important role.

Businessman robbed, stabbed to death

NARSINGDI, Feb 16: A businessman has been robbed and stabbed to death by some miscreants at Madhyonagar village in Raipura thana in the district, reports UNB.

According to police, Abu Bakar, 35, son of late Altaf Ali was waylaid on Thursday by some villagers when he was returning home from Raipura thana headquarters. The attackers stabbed him indiscriminately, looted Tk 65,000 and managed to escape. He was sent to DMCH in a critical condition. He died on Friday. A case has been filed with the Raipura thana, but the miscreants are said to be absconding.



KHULNA: Health and Family Welfare Minister Salahuddin Yusuf on February 13 inaugurated the Spring Fair organised by Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) at Khulna Zilla School

Scarcity of quality seed

Cotton seed production likely to be hampered

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Feb 16: Cotton seed production is likely to be hampered next year for want of quality seeds, according to officials of Cotton Development Board (CDB).

According to CDB sources, they had taken a target to produce cotton seeds on a total of 11,000 hectares of land. Under the programme 750 hectares of land was brought under Mohespur unit, 550 hectares under Bidiyadhampur unit, 1,350 hectares under Shyamkur unit, 975 hectares under Napa unit, 800 hectares under Jinnanagar unit, 575 hectares under Ceurdah unit, 850 hectares under Kotchandpur unit, 675 hectares under Jhenidah unit, 250 hectares under Dakbanga unit, 800 hectares under Saikupa unit, 800 hectares under Seikpara unit and 500 hectares under Hatfajilpur unit of Jhenidah district and 600 hectares under Ichhakhada

unit, 500 hectares under Magura unit, 275 hectares under Satrujitpur unit, 300 hectares under Langalbandh unit and on 750 hectares of land under Sripur unit of Magura district this season.

But 8,000 hectares of land was brought under the programme, 12,792 metric tonnes of cotton seeds is likely to be produced from Jhenidah zone which comprised of Jhenidah zone and Magura districts.

When this correspondent visited Hatfajilpur, Saikupa and Jhenidah units of the zone, he saw the farmers are harvesting cotton seeds and selling the wet ones to the buyers between Taka 1.050 and 1.100 per maund from their land. Dried cotton seeds are being sold between Taka 1.250 and 1.300 instead of government rate of Taka 1.200 per maund.

MA Waseque, Chief Cotton Development Officer (CCDO) of

CDB said they had taken target to purchase 130 metric tonnes of cotton seeds. But till February 8 last only 30 metric tonnes of cotton seeds are available. Another 20 metric tonnes of cotton seeds are hardly be procured for the purpose.

Some farmers said, cotton farming has become a profitable one and the number of farmers are increasing every year.

CCDO of CDB informed, the buyers are purchasing wet cotton seeds which might not be used as seeds. It those seeds are used on cotton fields the farmers would get poor yield. Further the quality of fibre of cotton would not be ensured though the mill owners were purchasing cotton seeds rampantly.

An official of CDB requesting anonymity said that there was no concrete policy for cotton seed purchasing.

Democracy Killing Day observed

KHULNA, Feb 16: Democracy killing Day on February 15 was observed here by Awami League and its front organisations, Jatiya Party and various other organisations, reports BSS.

On this day in 1996 the then BNP government held a so-called Jatiya Sangsad election leaving all major political parties out of the race.

Khulna city and Sonadanga thana Awami League jointly brought out a procession in the city from the Awami League office and paraded the main thoroughfares and later held a meeting in the office premises.

The meeting was presided over by president of Khulna sadar thana Awami League Prof Fakir Abu Hossain and addressed, among others, by Awami League leaders Monirul Islam Moni, MA Babul Rana, Malik Abid Hossain Kabir, BM Jafar, Nur Islam Bandh and Shaikh Mohammed Jahangir Alam.

Speakers in the meeting severely criticised the BNP government of killing democracy in 1996.

Tk 25cr KU uplift project

KHULNA, Feb 16: Uplift programmes for expansion of academic activities and physical infrastructure of Khulna University (KU), involving Tk 25 crore, have been taken up under the next Fifth Five-Year Plan (FFYP), reports UNB.

According to the varsity sources, the projects include construction of a new dormitory for the students, an academic building, an administrative building, staff quarters for teachers, officers and employees and collection of new educational appliances. A mosque will also be built under the scheme.

Nine more departments will be opened soon. These are: Production Engineering, Mining Engineering, Economics, English, Nutrition and Food Technology, Journalism and Public Affairs.

After the installation of the new departments, the number of students will be over 2,000 while teachers over 200 in Khulna University, the sources said.

At present, there are 1,070 students in all the 11 disciplines of the university.

Illegal occupation of R&H Deptt land

NARAIL, Feb 16: A vast area of acquired land of the Roads and Highways (R&H) Department in the district have illegally been grabbed by a section of influential people, reports UNB.

They have built a large number of sheds, semi-pucca and pucca shops on the land beside the roads over the years without the permission of the authorities concerned.

The process of the illegal possession of the land has already narrowed the roads hindering the smooth movement of vehicular traffic.

A big portion of the roads in the heart of the town has been used as a parking place causing untold sufferings to the pedestrians.

Agriculture land and many ponds belonging to the department are also being used for cultivation and pisciculture without the lawful authority with the collaboration of some dishonest officials.

4 killed, 16 hurt in Rangpur road accident

RANGPUR, Feb 16: Four persons were killed and 16 others injured in a road mishap on Saturday on Rangpur-Bogra highway, reports BSS.

According to police, a mini-bus carrying about 40 devotees from Ranipukur was moving for Atrashi. Suddenly mechanical trouble developed in the engine. The driver went to look for a mechanic leaving the bus on Rangpur-Bogra highway near Al-Faruq Madrasa.

A paddy-loaded truck coming from Rangpur hit the standing mini-bus from behind causing deaths of four persons on the spot and injuring 16 others.

The injured persons were admitted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital (RMCH) and Mithapukur Health Complex. Condition of five injured are critical.

The driver of the truck managed to escape.

In another accident on Saturday morning one cyclist was killed under the wheels of a Parbatipur bound passenger bus at Badarganj.

Driver of the bus escaped.

2,000 oilmen jobless

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Feb 16: More than two thousand oilmen in six thanas of the district are now in passing their days in miseries. They are unable to run their bullock driven oil mills, popularly known as *ghanti* due to abject poverty.

Many oil producers have been forced to close down their mills and are now unemployed.

About 1,500 bullock driven oil mills once operated in the district. It generated employment for about 10,000 people. However, decline of there oil mills has led to the expansion of more efficient and cheaper mechanised oil mills in various parts of the district including

Lalpur, Bagatipara, Gurudaspur, Baraigram and Natore sadar thanas.

The demand of bullock driven edible oil mills has been decreased now-a-days because of imported soyabean and palm oil which have flooded local markets.

About Tk 7,000 is required to operate a bullock-driven oil mill. However, without loan, the oilmen can not invest this amount of money.

Some of the oilmen collect the running capital from local money lenders at exorbitant interest rates, leading to higher costs of production.

In Gaibandha

Farm labourers in misery

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Feb 16: Nearly one and a half lakh farm labourers of Gaibandha district have become jobless in this season. This was revealed in a study conducted by a non-governmental organisation (NGO).

Such situation has been prevailing following harvesting of Aman crops. This season production of Aman crop is not satisfactory in the district. Production of Aman crop was 12 to 15 maunds per acre which is far below than the expectation of farmers.

Every season huge farm labourers of Gaibandha district migrate to different districts for cultivation and harvesting crops.

This season there is no such demand of labourer in other district. So, maximum of them have become jobless and passing their days in misery.

This huge number of farm labourers are to wait for next

Irri-Boro crop season. A little number of such labourers are engaged in pulling rickshaws and vans. Some of them also have become beggar.

According to government statistics conducted in 1995 there are 1,02,623 persons engaged as farm labourers in Gaibandha district. Thana-wise break-up is as follows:

Fulchhari—5,788, Gobindaganj—21,665, Palashbari—11,611, Sadullapur—13,364, Shaghata—11,931, Sunderganj—20,509, Gaibandha sadar—17,755.

The number of farm labourers are increasing day by day which now stands at nearly one lakh and 50 thousand. They are fully dependent on farm work and have no experience of other jobs.

Every year a huge number of people become land less following river erosion or other reasons.

Satkhira Newsletter

From Our Correspondent

Ansar, VDP rally concludes

SATKHIRA, Feb 16: A two-day long Ansar and VDP rally concluded here at the district Adjutant of Ansar and VDP parade ground on February 12.

Dev Dutta Khisa, Deputy Commissioner, Satkhira was the chief guest while Abu Bakar Siddique, Police Super, Satkhira presided over the concluding function. Abdul Mutalib, President, Satkhira Press Club, Capt (Retd) Fazul Halim, General Manager, REB, Satkhira, FM Badaruzzaman, Adjutant, Ansar and VDP, Satkhira and Sakawat Hossain also spoke on the occasion.

The speakers at the concluding function asserted the Ansar and VDP members have their obligation to help law enforcing agencies in curbing terrorism and smuggling in the bordering areas, maintenance of law and order besides their role in the socio-economic development through participation in setting up of livestock and poultry farms, pisciculture, family planning and literacy programmes.

A total of over 350 Ansar and VDP members from 16 village training projects in seven thanas of the district took part in the rally.

21 arrested while crossing border illegally

A total of 21 persons including eight women were arrested by Kalaroa thana police from Hatahganj village of the same thana while they were going to India by crossing the border illegally on February 12.

According to police sources, the arrested persons hail from the districts of Khulna and Gopalganj.

10-yr RI for illegal firearms possessor

One person has been convicted and sentenced to suffer 10 years rigorous imprisonment (RI) on charge of keeping illegal firearms.

The convict is Osman Ali of village Aichgati under Rupsa thana of Khulna district.

The prosecution story in brief is that acting on a secret information Tala thana police caught red handed the accused person from a Khulna bound bus near Patkelghata over-bridge and after searching his body police recovered a country made shattergun from his possession on April, 1994.

A case was lodged with Tala police station. Additional District and Sessions Judge Didar Ali Fakir after examining the relevant documents and witnesses found him guilty and announced the punishment.

Murderer gets life term

A person has been convicted and sentenced to life term imprisonment with a fine of Taka 2000, in default, to suffer another one month RI on charge of killing a shopkeeper.

The convict is Rezaul Islam alias Reza of village Thanagata under Sadar thana of the district.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Didar Ali Fakir after examining the witnesses

and relevant documents found Reza guilty and announced the punishment in a recent judgement.

The prosecution story in brief is that the accused person went to the grocery shop owned by Ahmad Ali and sought shelter on December 9, 1992 and at dead of night Reza killed the shopkeeper. A case was lodged with Satkhira police station.

3 noted persons dead

Three renowned personalities died here during the fortnight.

Renowned social worker, experienced politician and Freedom Fighter Advocate AFM Entaz Ali died at Khulna 500-bed hospital at the age of 65. He was the senior vice president of Satkhira District Awami League, Secretary, Rifles Club, Satkhira, Vice President, Sanskrit Parishad and also connected with several socio-cultural organisations.

Abdul Gafur, ex-chairman, Satkhira *porasava* died due to old age ailments at his residence at Chhatlata. He was 80. Advocate Asir Uddin died at his residence at Katia. He was 60. Various government and autonomous bodies in separate statements condoled their death.

WDB projects implemented

Water Development Board (WDB) has implemented 47 projects under Food for Works Programme (FWP) in four districts under Khulna division.

A total of 12,600 metric tons of wheat were spent for the purpose.

Of the total projects, 20 were executed in Khulna district, 15 in Satkhira district, 1 in Bagerhat district and 5 in Jessore district.

The projects included reconstruction of 182 kilometers of cross dam and re-excavation of five canals. With the execution of the projects about 30,000 acres of land in these districts will be saved from salinity which will help produce additional foodgrain worth Taka seven crore annually.

Loan disbursed among farmers

Sonali Bank has taken up a programme to disburse Taka 7 crore 20 lakh as loan for Boro cultivation in 10 districts under Khulna division during the current season.

Of the total loan, Taka 85 lakh will be distributed in Satkhira district, Taka 75 lakh each in Narail, Chuadanga and Kushtia districts, Taka 50 lakh in Khulna and Bagerhat districts, Taka one crore in Jhenidah district, Taka one crore fifty lakh in Jessore district and Taka 50 lakh in Magura district.

Valuables worth Tk 25,000 looted

A dacoity was committed at the house of Girendra Nath Mondal of village Jellekhal under Shyamnagar thana of the district recently.

According to police sources, a group of dacoits numbering 10 to 12 raided the house of Girendra Nath at dead of night and looted cash and valuables worth about Taka 25,000.



SYLHET: Prof Mohammad Sirajul Islam, former chairman, Department of Islamic History, Dhaka University and visiting Professor of Harvard University inaugurated the exhibition of historic antiques organised by Bangladesh History Association in Sylhet on Wednesday.

— Star Photo

7 commit suicide in Gopalganj

From Our Correspondent

GOPALGANJ, Feb 16: Seven persons including three housewives committed suicide in Gopalganj sadar thana during the first week of the month of February, hospital sources said.

One Najor Ali Sheikh, 35, son of late Bhulu Sheikh of village Hedgram under Gopalganj sadar thana committed suicide by taking poison for failing to bring dowry from his father-in-law's residence on February 3.

According to local people, Najor Ali Sheikh quarrelled with his wife for dowry from his father-in-law.

He beat his wife Morium Begum on February 2. Then Najor Ali's brother-in-law and other relatives tortured him. He was seriously injured.

As a result Najor Ali committed suicide by taking poison on February 3 midnight. An unnatural death (UD) case has been registered with Gopalganj PS in this connection.

Shamima Begum, 21, wife of Ziad Ali Khan of Janata Road in Gopalganj town committed suicide by taking poison on February 2.

Shamima Begum quarrelled with her husband for family maintenance. She was very annoyed and committed suicide by taking poison on February 2 midnight.

An unnatural death (UD) case has been registered with Gopalganj PS in this connection.

Sabin Chowdhury, 13, son of Babul Chowdhury of village Barfa under Gopalganj sadar thana committed suicide by hanging on February 4 night.

According to police sources, Sabin Chowdhury quarrelled with his parents for a shirt and he was annoyed.

Ultimately Sabin committed suicide by hanging with a branch of tree by the side of his residence on February 4 night.

An unnatural death (UD) case has been registered with Gopalganj PS in this connection.

Jahanara Begum, 22, wife of Zahangir Kazi village of Chotia under Gopalganj sadar thana committed suicide by taking poison on February 3.

It is learnt that Zahangir

Kazi was beat his wife Jahanara Begum for failing to bring dowry from her father's residence. She was very frustrated and committed suicide by taking poison on February 3 midnight.

An unnatural death (UD) case has been registered with Gopalganj PS in this connection.

Abdul Quim, 30, son of Hasanuddin Sardar of village Mular under Gopalganj sadar thana committed suicide by taking poison on February 4.

According to Gopalganj po-

Villagers clash with BDR men in Jessore

JESSORE, Feb 16: Five BDR men were injured in a clash with local people at a village in the district on Sunday, BDR sources said, reports UNB.

The clash took place at a BDR camp at village Sadipur in Sharsha thana after Hawaldar Nazrul Islam of BDR beat up local UP member Gias Uddin.

Gias came to the BDR camp to seek release of one alleged smuggler identified as T