

News snaps

Hons courses in Thakurgaon College

THAKURGAON, Feb 27: Honours courses in four subjects have been introduced in Thakurgaon Government College from 1997-98 academic session, reports BSS.

The National University has given permission to open honours courses in mathematics, accountancy, economics and political science. With the introduction of honours courses a long standing demand of the people of this district has been fulfilled. Thakurgaon Government College was established 40 years ago but honours courses were not introduced for lack of initiative by the previous governments.

Wheat allocated for uplift schemes

MADARIPUR, Feb 27: Some 1,202 tons of wheat have been allocated for implementation of 92 schemes under rural development programme during the current fiscal year in all the four thanas of the district, reports UNB.

Official sources said the schemes are being implemented to create employment opportunities for the poor people. The schemes include construction and repair of roads, educational institutions and earth work of rural roads. The break-up of the wheat allocation is: Kalkini thana — 298 tons, Sadar — 307 tons, Rajoir — 239 tons and Shibchar — 358 tons.

Certificates distributed

MYMENSINGH, Feb 27: Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh Agricultural University Prof Dr Mohammad Hossain said our entanglement must be strengthened with the growing present day information technology, reports UNB.

He was speaking as chief guest at a certificate giving ceremony of first batch and inaugural function of 2nd batch of computer training course, organised by Bureau of Research Training and Consultation here on Monday. The VC emphasised on the introduction of full-fledged computer course in the syllabus of the University and said all the manpower of the University should be well-trained in computer. Presided over by Prof Dr Mohammad Nazul Islam, the function was addressed, among others, by former VC Dr Mohammad Farooq, Dr Abu Ahmed Moinul Hossain and course coordinator Prof Akhtaruzzaman. Later, the VC distributed certificates among 14 trainees who have completed the course.

Massive potato farming scheme

CHUADANGA, Feb 27: A total of 1065 hectares have been brought under potato cultivation in the four thanas of Chuadanga district in the current potato cultivation season, reports BSS.

According to an official source, of the total land 220 hectares have been brought under cultivation in Chuadanga sadar thana, 350 hectares in Alamdanga thana, 355 hectares in Damurhuda thana and 140 hectares in Jibannagar thana. About 12,800 tonnes of potato is expected to be produced in the district. The harvesting of potato will start in the district in the first week of March. Potato cultivation target has exceeded this year in the district to 165 hectares.

Lord Baden Powell Day observed

JAMALPUR, Feb 27: The BP Day was observed here on Sunday through a rally participated by scouts, cubs and girl guides, reports BSS.

Later, a meeting on Lord Baden Powell (BP), founder of scouts movement throughout the world was held at Jamalpur High School. The day was observed as a part of national programme as directed by Bangladesh Scouts office at Dhaka. The Deputy Commissioner, as ex-officio president of Jamalpur District Scouts, presided over the meeting. Vice-presidents — Headmaster S M Yusuf Ali, journalists Utpal Kanti Dhar, District Scout Commissioner Ali Akbar Fakir, Secretary A S M Harunur Rashid were, among others, spoke on the occasion.

Mother-child welfare centre sick

MADARIPUR, Feb 27: The lone mother and child welfare centre in the district headquarters is beset with manifold problems, reports UNB.

Sources said the centre is facing the problems of drinking water due to the unhygienic water tanker and most of the time the tubewells go out of order. Besides, there is no labour ward, no quarters for nurses, healthy visitors and attendants. The dirty toilets always emit bad odour vitiating the atmosphere. Besides, there are no sitting arrangements for the attendants, no waiting room for the visitors. Moreover, the morgue is adjacent to the centre which pollutes the environment. The lone ambulance of the centre is not functioning due to registration problems. Local leaders urged the authority concerned to take immediate steps to renovate the centre for the benefit of the local people.

Body recovered

RANGPUR, Feb 27: The body of one youth, who allegedly killed his fiancée on the previous day, was recovered from a rest house in Kotwali thana on Sunday, reports UNB.

He was identified as Aktarul, 19, of Parbatipur Puratan Bazar village of Dinajpur district. Police said the body of Aktarul was hanged from the ceiling fan of a room which he rented after stabbing to death his fiancée. The girl succumbed to her injury at Parbatipur Thana Health Complex on Saturday. Police suspected that he might have committed suicide being regretted at the demise of his fiancée. The body was handed over to his parents after the post-mortem. A case was filed with the Kotwali police.

5 robbers get 2-yr RI

SIRAJGANJ, Feb 27: A court here on Tuesday awarded two years rigorous imprisonment (RI) to five people each with a fine of Tk 1,000, in default, to suffer three months more for committing a robbery, reports UNB.

The convicted Tomshur Ali, Akbar Ali, Mohammad Ratan, Mohammad Shahidul Islam and Mohammad Swapan are the inhabitants of Bazar Badargah village in Kamarkhand thana. Of them, Tomshur and Swapan remained absconding. The prosecution story, in brief, was that a gang of armed robbers swooped on a truck on Sirajganj-Bogra road in February, 1994 at 12:40 am and looted money from the truck driver and businessmen who were on the vehicle. A case was filed with the Sadar thana and the police after investigation submitted chargesheet against them. After examining the witnesses and records Assistant Sessions Judge Mohammad Mukhlesur Rahman awarded the punishment.

Science Week in Chuadanga College

CHUADANGA, Feb 27: The 21st National Science and Technology Week was observed here from February 18 to 20 through various programmes held at Chuadanga Government College, reports BSS.

The programme included science projects exhibition, extempore speech and debate competition and prize distribution ceremony. The week was inaugurated by Prof Nurul Hoque, former Principal Chuadanga Government College on February 18 in the premises of Chuadanga Government College. Prof Siddiqur Rahman, Vice-Principal of the college presided over the function. Twenty educational institutions of the district set up stalls in the exhibition.

School girl gang raped

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Feb 27: A school girl was gang raped by some miscreants at village Muraridaha under Kotwali thana on the night of February 13.

According to local source, one Osman Gani along with his four accomplices forcibly took the victim, Malati Rani Karmaker, 14, to a nearby crop field while she went out of her bedroom to attend to her nature's call and raped her by turns. The villagers rushed to the spot hearing shouting for help and rescued her. She is a student of Class-VIII of Dumrakandi High School.

Shallow pump machines being stolen

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA, Feb 27: Shallow pump machines are being stolen from IRRi-Boro paddy field at Kumarkota village under Shahlikha thana in the district recently, police and family sources said.

According to the sources, a pump machine of Shaheb Ali at Kumarkota village worth about Taka 20,000 was stolen from the field. A case was lodged with the local thana in this connection. It was reported that stealing of shallow pump machines have increased from the paddy field in the district. As a result, the IRRi-Boro paddy cultivation has been hampered in the areas.

Scheme for reconstruction of pry schools

RANGPUR, Feb 27: A scheme for the re-construction and extension of 43 primary schools in Kurigram district has been stated under German financial assistance in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

The scheme costs about Taka two crore. Local Government Engineering Department is implementing the scheme under the primary education development programme. The work of the scheme is expected to be completed by the end of the current fiscal year.

3 police officers, 5 cops of Balaganj PS rescued

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Feb 27: Three police officers and five constables were rescued on Tuesday following detention for a night by a group of villagers at Sunampur under Balaganj thana.

Police officials said, at about 10:30 PM on Monday two SIS, one ASI and 5 constables of Balaganj thana went to Sunampur village in Gourpur union to arrest some wanted accused persons. When the policemen were returning along with two arrested persons, namely Lichu Miah and Fazlu Miah they came under attack of the villagers. They made a hue and cry tempting the police party as dacoits. The frightened policemen then went back to the house of arrested Lichu Miah. The villagers then again gheraoed the police party and kept them detained for the whole night.

On a tip-off, the Thana Nirbahi Officer and Officer-in-Charge of Balaganj thana went to the village and asked the villagers to release the police party but the villagers refused.

Later, a police contingent from Sylhet went to the village and rescued them at about 10 am. A case has been registered, but no arrest has yet been reported.

Child burnt to death

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Feb 27: A child was burnt to death and four others received serious burn injury in Chapra bazaar area under Tanore thana on Wednesday, when a barrel of petrol burst and turned into inferno.

Sources said, Alamgir, 7, son of a petrol trader unconsciously put up a burning lamp on a barrel of petrol in their house on Wednesday night. The mouth of the barrel was open. So soon the fire petrol in it caught fire. The barrel (drum) burst into an inferno. Alamgir was burnt by the fire and four members of the house received serious burn injury. Three of them have been admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) in a critical condition. They are Bablu, 32, Marium, 20, and Jarina, 16. Seven houses of the area were also gutted. The fire brigade team from Rajshahi rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control.

Teen raped in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Feb 27: A teenage girl was gang raped allegedly by 10 young men at Deobhog area under Fatullah thana on Saturday.

The victim, a 17-year-old girl, filed a case with Narayananganj Sadar thana on Tuesday night. The girl, daughter of a rickshawpuller, resides in Shashongon area in Fatullah, police said.

The identities of the 10 accused persons could not be known immediately. Police said the attackers were youngsters in Deobhog and Kashipur localities.

Police quoting the FIR said a gang of about 10 young men in a microbus kidnapped the girl when she went to Chashara area under Sadar thana at about 2 pm on Saturday.

The attackers took the girl to Deobhog area and confined her in a house there. Later, they raped the girl in turn till 8 pm on the day.

About two hours later, the youngsters freed the girl in Fatullah area.

The victim was quoted by police as saying, the girl lodged the case on Tuesday as she fell sick following the rape.

Indefinite strike by Sona Mosjid LC station development body

From Our Correspondent

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Feb 27: Strike called for an indefinite period by Sona Mosjid LC Station Development Committee has been going on since February 21. The committee wants implementation of their 10-point demand including declaration of Sona Mosjid LC Station as a full-fledged land port and stoppage of harassment made by the BDR.

The committee informed the district administration about their demands previously and gave ultimatum of stoppage of all functions of Sona Mosjid LC Station from February 21 in case their demands are not fulfilled before this.

BSF takes away Bangladeshi trader

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Feb 27: Indian BSF took away a Bangladeshi trader from across Jakiganj border on February 24 afternoon.

Shahin Miah, a ginger importer took some papers of his LC from the Jakiganj Customs office and crossed the river Kushiara on way to Kariganj Customs Office in the Indian territory.

The BSF men caught him before he reached the Customs office. They did not even pay heed to his version.

BDR has protested the incident and asked for immediate release of the Bangladeshi importer.



Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Muhammad Mustafizur Rahman, Bir Bikram addressing the Commanding Officers Conference at the Armoured Corps Centre and School at Bogra Cantonment on Wednesday.

Steps taken to modernise armed forces : PM

BOGRA, Feb 27: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said her government has taken the initiative to tread the path of development and prosperity by maintaining peace and stability at all levels, reports UNB.

"I believe you all will perform your duties with utmost sincerity, dedication and efficiency to achieve that goal," she told officers and troops of the armoured corp at Bogra Cantonment on Thursday.

The Prime Minister attended a ceremonial parade of the armoured corp marking the presentation of National Standards to two senior most units of the corp — Bengal Cavalry and Four Horse.

Hasina handed over the National Standards to the Bengal Cavalry and Four Horse in recognition of its meritorious

services to the nation. The National Standards were adorned with military decoration and Arabic inscriptions of the holy Kalima-e-Tayyeba.

Addressing the ceremony at Shaheed H Badiuzzaman parade ground, the Prime Minister said after assuming power her government took massive programmes to modernise the armed forces and increase its skill and equipment.

"The government is working with determination for further development of the armed forces," she said, adding that "we want to build up a modern and progressive armed forces."

She said steps have been taken to raise a new support battalion and an engineering construction battalion for the army, to purchase frigate and other equipment for Navy and

to procure MIG-29 jet fighters, C-130 transport plane and helicopters for the Air Force.

The work for establishing National Defence College, Military Medical College and Military Engineering College is in progress and courses will soon start in these colleges, she added.

Lauding the role of the armed forces in establishing peace in Chittagong Hill Tracts region, Hasina hoped that alongside protecting the country's independence and sovereignty they would also work for the development and welfare of the people and the country.

Earlier, the Prime Minister reviewed a parade presented by the members of the Corps and took salute at the impressive march past.

Ten telephone exchanges in pitiable condition in M'bazar

From Our Correspondent

MOULVIBAZAR, Feb 27: The telephone service of Moulvibazar district is now in a very pitiable condition due to apathetic activities of concerned officials, lack of maintenance, and corruption of T and T staff members. As a result, subscribers are suffering a lot.

There are 10 telephone exchanges in Moulvibazar district under T&T Department. Of these, six telephone exchanges of six thana headquarters and four others are situated at different places.

Telephone exchange in Moulvibazar district headquarters is a digital one. Srimongal telephone exchange is an analogue one. Telephone exchanges of Baralekha and Kulaura Thana headquarters are operated in CB system. Rest six telephone exchanges including thana headquarters exchanges are in traditional magnetic system.

Juri and Kajaldhara telephone exchanges, of the district are being operated without any operator of T&T Department.

Private telephone operators to run these exchange by local subscribers for their convenience. Government property including valuable machinery of lakhs of takas are now under control of these private telephone operators.

There are no statements of income and expenditure of this two telephone exchanges. On the other hand, Shamsernagar Telephone Exchange under Kamalganj thana has been closed down for the last six months, it is learnt.

A total of 16 posts of telephone operators in different telephone exchanges of Moulvibazar district are lying vacant since long. According to the source of T&T, of these vacant posts of operators 3 posts each in Moulvibazar, Srimongal and Baralekha telephone exchanges, 4 posts in Kulaura, 2 in Rajnagar and 1 post in Kamalganj telephone exchange.

Telephone exchanges of different thana headquarters are closed at 7:30 pm every day. So after 7:30 pm people of thana

headquarters cannot communicate with the people of other places over telephone. Shortage of telephone operators is the main cause of this phenomenon.

Besides this, in 1995 10 card-phone booths were set up in different places of the district. Of these six card-phone booth went out of order for a long time and there are no initiative by the T&T authority to repair these booths. Now these card-phone booths are lying abandoned at different places.

In absence of proper planning of appointment, a mentionable number of apprentice telephone operators, who got training on telephone exchange operating are waiting for assimilation. For silence of the authority since long in this regard, age limit of some apprentices has crossed.

People of different thanas of Moulvibazar district are demanding installation of modern telephone exchange in all the thana headquarters.

Many ponds yet to be brought under pisciculture scheme

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, Feb 27: Many ponds of Shahzadpur union of Sarial thana in the district have remained derelict for a long time due to lack of maintenance and dispute among owners.

A devastating flood in 1988 inundated a vast tract of land of low lying Shahzadpur union and damaged the banks of ponds. Again in 1993, many ponds of the union especially of village Shahzadpur were flooded and the banks were eroded due to torrential rain and downpour in the rainy season.

As a result, all fish and fish fries went out of pond creating heavy loss of the ponds owners.

Meanwhile, many natural calamities swept over the areas. A few days back, the cold wave also hit the production of the late harvesting Aman paddy, mustard and IRRi seedlings. Due to frequent natural calamities the backbone of farmers have been broken. Now they are facing a lot of financial loss from both agriculture and

pisciculture sectors. They have no abilities to renovate the derelict ponds for pisciculture again.

A large number of these ponds are silted and completely dried up in the dry season. Some old ponds are also seen covered with water hyacinths making them unsuitable for pisciculture.

Owners of the ponds have alleged they are not getting any financial aid or loan from government or other organisations.

Meanwhile, some of the ponds remain abandoned or inoperative due to dispute among the selfish owners of the ponds. They try to establish their own supremacy over the ponds and remain locked in clashes.

Another report says: Due to indiscriminate fishing of fries using current nets, fish production in the water bodies of the district has come down.

Despite government ban on current nets these are being used by unscrupulous people in

the district.

To do brisk business greedy fishermen buy current nets violating the government ban. Due to their indiscriminate fishing the open sale of fish measuring less than nine inches long is going on unabated in the markets on the district.

The law-enforcing authorities do not take any positive steps to stop the illegal practice of fishing by current nets, local people alleged.

Local leaders have urged the authorities to step up mobile courts to punish those who use current nets in fishing fries.

Moulvibazar College teachers boycotting classes

From Our Correspondent

MOULVIBAZAR, Feb 27: Teachers of Moulvibazar Government College have been boycotting classes in protest against attack on a teacher of the college.

A silent procession was also brought out by the teachers of the college on Tuesday. They submitted a memorandum to the Principal seeking expulsion of a student from the college who made attack on the teacher at the classroom.

It is worth mentioning here, Md Mainul Haque, a student of BA (Pass) 2nd year attacked Md Mizanur Rahman, Lecturer of Islamic History Department in the classroom on Monday.

When the student came to the class late, the teacher Mizanur Rahman was teaching Islamic History refused to give him permission to join the class. After refusal, the student became very furious and attacked the teacher and beat him.

Unfavourable weather

Mango trees yet to blossom in 4 dists

NATORE, Feb 27: Owners of the mango garden here and the adjacent districts are worried as most of their mango trees are yet to blossom due to unfavourable weather, reports UNB.

Normally mango trees begin to bud from the beginning of the Bengali month Magh (mid January to mid February).

But most of the trees are yet to blossom this year. Budding of mango trees has not yet been reported in the district. An owner of mango garden of Bilmaria village under Lalpur thana said the production of mango may face setback this year.

A mango researcher said, bumper production of mango occurs every alternative year and this is an off year.

S M Iqbal, chief scientific officer of Mango Research Institute in Chapainawabganj told that mango trees did not bloom due to continuous cold wave

sweeping through the northern region of the country.

At least 20 to 30 degree Celsius temperature is required for budding. Of course, he added, trees of foreign varieties at the institute campus are already in full blossom while the local varieties like Gopalbhog, Khirsapath, Langra have not yet blossomed.

About the new varieties like Mohanandha, he said, it is a regular variety and it is normally produced every year. Dispelling the anxieties of the mango growers, he said that mango trees are expected to blossom within the last week of Bengali month Falgun (2nd week of March).

Mentionable that about 20,000 hectares of land are being used as mango gardens in Chapainawabganj, Rajshahi, Naogaon and Natore districts and more than 2 lakh metric tons of quality mangoes are produced here every year.

In Sherpur

Rural girls attending schools in large number

From Our Correspondent

SHERPUR, Feb 27: Involvement of rural women in education as well as in socio-economic activities, has increased to a great extent throughout the district in these days.

Women are coming out of the four walls of their houses seeking employment. A good number of girls are attending schools. Many illiterate women are engaging themselves in various sectors, according to a survey conducted by BRAC regional office, Sherpur.

Md. Ashrafuzzaman Khan, Senior Area Manager, BRAC-RDP, Sherpur region told to The Daily Star, BRAC initiated the Non-Formal Primary Education (NFPE) programme, in 1985 with only one class room and 33 learners from landless poor families. Now BRAC has more than 35 thousand school going children, 90 per cent of whom are girls.

Md Moinuddin Ahmed of Madaripur and a farmer of Sribordi thana in Sherpur district, told this correspondent, he has six daughters, of whom the eldest one has become a

profession in a college, while his second daughter has been working in a pre-cadet school, the third one Mohsena Begum joined in a government primary school as headmistress in the Sadar thana and two others passed the BA examination.

Zillur Rahman, a shopkeeper of Sherpur town said, I have two sisters, Zarina Begum and Shelina Begum. They have already joined the government primary school in the Sadar thana of the district as headmistress and assistant teachers respectively. Zillur Rahman said both his sisters have completed the MSc from Dhaka University.

Increased facilities for women education, employment income generation work, steps for deterrent punishment to torturers have encouraged the women folk to break the age-old social barriers.

The survey report also revealed, men have changed their attitude towards women. Parents are now quite eager to educate their daughters side by side their sons.

Rangpur Newsletter

From Our Correspondent

School student dead

RANGPUR, Feb 27: Sayeedur Rahman, a student of Class-X Pirgachha High School of the district died of hydrophobia disease recently.

The victim was severely injured by a mad dog about 8 months back. But due to non-availability and high prices of anti-rabies medicine, his poor father failed to collect it from black-markets at high rates. His father, however, provided him some medicine; from quack doctors, which did not cure him.

The victim died a few days back.

One succumbs to injuries

Noor Baksh, 50, a pharmacist of Badarganj thana health complex succumbed to his injuries at the Rangpur Medical College Hospital (RMCH) recently.

The ill-fated Noor Baksh, on the fateful day while returning to his residence riding on a bicycle after duties at the thana health complex, fell down from a bamboo bridge and seriously injured.

He was immediately removed to the RMCH where he succumbed to injuries after fighting for life for about a week, his family sources said.

He left behind wife, 2 sons, 4 daughters and a host of relatives, friends and admirers to mourn his death.

Gamblers arrested

Pirgachha police arrested 3 gamblers red-handed from a place near Chowdhurani railway station recently.

Police said, the arrested persons along with others were regularly playing gambling and taking drugs for long ago. But police could not arrest them earlier as they fled away before arrival of police. However, on that day the miscreants were engaged in gambling and taking drugs almost openly at 12 noon. Police rushed to the spot and succeeded in arresting 3 of them while others escaped.

Pipe gun recovered

Pirganj police recovered a locally made pipe-gun and some ammunition and arrested one person in this connection recently.

Acting upon a secret information, a police patrol team led by officer-in-charge (OC) of Pirganj thana Haider Ali Molla raided a tailor's shop at Baradargah bandar and recovered the 2-barrel pipe gun and three live ammunition and arrested the tailor of the shop.

A case has been started

against the arrested person under arms act.

Educationist dead

A reputed educationist Khatib Uddin Ahmed, and ex-headmaster of Rangpur Zila School died at RMCH recently.

He was 75. His namaj-e-zanaj was held at local Gupatara mosque and buried at Noorpur graveyard. He was suffering from different diseases due to old age. He left behind many relatives and friends and admirers to mourn his death.

Property worth Tk 40,000 gutted

A fire was broke out at a private poultry farm at Peer village under Mithapukur thana recently. The fire originated from kerosene lamp completely gutted two poultry sheds and other property and a large number of poultry birds roasted alive causing loss of property worth over Taka 40,000. Reason of the fire could not be known.

Anti-crime demonstration

The people of Taraganj bazar brought out a huge processions protesting anti-social activities and staged strong demonstrations across the bazar and demanded immediate halt to it.

They alleged that a section of anti-social elements are almost openly committing various offences which include gambling, kidnappings, lootings, hijackings and taking of drugs for a long time. The local people on many occasions urged the local authorities to crackdown on the criminals, but none paid heed to them, it was further alleged by the agitators.

Killers yet to be nabbed

The killers of two brothers of Badarganj thana have not yet been arrested after elapse of three and a half months, it was alleged.

Family sources of the victims alleged, on October 31, '97, Ayub Ali, 50, and Afzal Hossain, 35, both were sons of one Alan Uddin of Kutubpur union while guarding their own banana garden near their house were killed in the midnight by some unknown assailants. Bodies of the deceased were recovered by the police on the following day from a paddy field.

The guardians of the deceased lodged cases with the Badarganj thana and names of the assailants were written on the FIR, but yet police could not arrest the criminal due to reasons best known to them, it was alleged.