

# News snaps

## Free books for primary schools

CHHAGALNAYA. (Feni) Mar 1: Free distribution of books among students of 90 primary schools of the district has been completed recently, reports BSS.

The books were distributed among students reading in government, private and community and NGO run satellite institutions. The subjects covered Bengali, Arithmetic, English and Science. An official source said for class one and class two free books including Arithmetic and English made a set, for class three, class four and class five seven books together made a set. The subjects covered Bengali, Arithmetic, English, Science and Classics. The source said 5,307 students were provided with books for class one, 5,244 for class two, 5,163 for class three, 4,395 for class four and 3,964 for class five.

## Wheat sanctioned for uplift

RANGPUR. Mar 1: The government has sanctioned 1,594 tonnes of wheat and rice for implementation of 1,132 development project in the eight thanas of Rangpur district in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

The projects taken up by district relief and disaster management include repair and renovation work of different roads and roads cum-embankments and earth work in different educational and religious institutions. Over 65 per cent work has already been completed.

## Human religion confere

MYMENSINGH. Mar 1: State Minister for Religious Affairs Moulana Nurul Islam said welfare of the people is the main objective of all religions, reports UNB.

He said every religion stressed the need for achieving peace and happiness here and hereafter through extending helping hands to the welfare of others. He was addressing the inaugural session of the eight-day 'Human Religion' conference here organised by Lord Jagatbandhu Ashram on Wednesday.

'Religion is for human and human is not for religion' said the minister adding, 'every one should abide by the rules and teachings of his own religion and in doing so there will be no hostility, enmity and differences in the world.'

## Price of onion up

JHENIDAH. Mar 1: Price of onion registered a sharp rise in the district during the last few days and almost doubled in just one week, reports UNB.

Local people and businessmen said onion in various markets of the district is now being sold between Tk 36 and Tk 40 as Tk 20 last week. The abnormal and sharp rise is reportedly due to shortage of supply to the markets from onion producing belts during the last few days. Businessmen involved in onion trading said the price is now being smuggled out to India aggravating the situation. Earlier, it was the normal practice to smuggle onion into the country from bordering areas of India.

## 5,250 certificate cases against farmers

NETRAKONA. Mar 1: Different banks have filed some 5,250 certificate cases against the farmers in the district to realise the outstanding loan, reports UNB.

According to official sources, Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB), Sonali, Uttara, Pubali, Rupali, Agrani and Janata Banks disbursed a huge amount of loan among the farmers earlier but a total of Tk 10,30,72,000 have been lying unrealised for long. Of the cases, BKB alone has filed 699 cases while the rest cases were filed by the other commercial banks. Meanwhile, farmers said that they could not repay the loan due to crop loss caused by natural disasters like recurrent flooding, drought and cyclone. They said at present they are facing food crisis and quite unable to repay the loan due to financial hardships.

## Agri-fair in Jhalakati

JHALAKATI. Mar 1: A three-day agricultural fair has begun in Kathalia thana on Friday, reports UNB.

Communications Minister Anwar Hossain Monju inaugurated the fair, organised by the Agricultural Extension Department, to inspire the farmers to boost production. More than a hundred varieties of different high quality agricultural products and technologies are being exhibited in the total 12 stalls. Another message adds: District Shishu Academy organised a day-long 'Winter Pitha (cake) Festival' here on Friday. Some 130 kinds of cakes were displayed in the festival which drew attraction of a large number of visitors. Later a cultural function was also held.

## Jail's foundation stone laid

RAJBARI. Mar 1: Environment and Forest Minister Sayeda Sajeda Chowdhury said the main objective of the development activities of the present government is to ensure welfare of all strata of people living in the society, reports UNB.

The minister was laying foundation stone of the district jail here on Friday. Terming the social stability as the pre-condition of development, Sajeda said the government is determined to maintain the existing stable and congenial atmosphere in the country achieved by signing water sharing treaty and CHT Peace Treaty. She said people's expectation and desire could be reflected through playing effective role in the Parliament as it is the best forum for discussing and criticising different activities of the government.

She said the main objective of the consensus government under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is to ensure the balanced development of the country.

## Mustard farming facing setback

NARSINGDI. Mar 1: Mustard cultivation in the country is facing a serious setback as the cultivable lands are continuously shrinking due to lack of farmers' interest, reports UNB.

According to an estimate, only 1.5 lakh metric tons of mustard oil are produced every year in the country against the demand of 19 lakh metric tons edible oil, forcing the traders to import edible oil from abroad. Agriculture Extension Department sources said mustard oil contains toxic acid which is harmful for human body, so growers have lost their interest to cultivate the crop. Now a days, the farmers have become interested to cultivate paddy on their lands instead of mustard to meet the food deficit. Moreover, mustard cultivation is not possible during the intervening period of Aman and Boro farming. So land for mustard is reducing day by day.

## Loan disbursed among farmers

TANGAIL. Mar 1: Livestock Department, Tangail disbursed Tk 1.41 lakh among 25 marginal farmers for small scale dairy and goat farming in Tangail sadar thana recently, reports BSS.

Official sources said, the amount was disbursed as the interest-free loan for the economic upliftment of the poor class of people of the society, reports BSS.

Dr Tulsi Das, assistant director of Artificial Insemination Department distributed the amount among the recipients.

## Oath taking ceremony of UP chairmen

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA. Mar 1: The oath-taking ceremony of newly elected Union Parishad (UP) chairmen and members of Sripur thana was held at Sripur Thana Parishad auditorium recently.

Md Nuruzzaman Khan, Deputy Commissioner (DC), Magura and Md Shafiqul Islam District Election Officer, Magura were chief and special guests respectively while Md Jahangir Molla presided. Six chairmen, 54 members and 18 female members took oath from the Deputy Commissioner. Officials and employees of the thana and 6 Union Parishad administration, journalists and others were present.

## Training course for engineers

COMILLA. Mar 1: A two-month long basic training course for engineers of Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) began on February 22 at the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development here, reports BSS.

Akter Hossain, Director General of BARD inaugurated the training course. Thirty-four engineers of LGED posted in different districts are participating in the course.

## Agri-fair at Ishurdi

ISHURDI. Mar 1: A three-day agriculture fair was held here Ishurdi Thana Parishad premises on February 23, reports BSS.

The fair was organised by the Agriculture Extension Department of Pabna. Md Kazi Ataul Haque, Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Department of Pabna inaugurated the fair as chief guest. About 30 stalls were set up in the fair.

## Blankets distributed among poor men

NETRAKONA. Mar 1: Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, Netrakona district unit distributed 465 pieces of blankets among the poor people of different remote areas of the district during the last one week, reports BSS.

A mobile team of Netrakona district unit of Red Crescent Society headed by Fazlur Rahman Khan, MP, who is also the general secretary of the unit reached at the doorsteps of the poor people and distributed the blankets. The team distributed blankets among the distressed in different remote areas of Netrakona sadar, Barhatta, Purbodhala, Durgapur and Kalkamanda thanas of the district.



Chief of the Naval Staff Rear Admiral Mohammad Nurul Islam gave away the trophy to the best all round new entry sailor at a passing out parade held at BNS Shaheed Moazzam at Kaptai on Wednesday.

# Need for expansion of Scout movement underscored

MOULVIBAZAR. Mar 1: Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad said members of the Bangladesh Scouts had been able to earn the confidence of the common people by implementing various social development programmes in the country, reports BSS.

He was addressing as the chief guest the inaugural ceremony of a five-day first regional rally of Sylhet region of Bangladesh Scouts at the local government high school field here.

The inaugural function was also addressed, among others, by whip and Vice-Principal

Mohammad Abdus Shahid, Sultan Mohammad Mansur Ahmed MP, Shahbuddin Ahmed MP, Begum Hosne Ara Wahed MP, former MP Azizur Rahman, local pourasava chairman Sayed Mohsin Ali, and the district Awami League general secretary Abdul Wadud.

The foreign minister went round various tents before taking salam from the scouts. He also distributed certificates among the participants.

Over 1000 scouts of the Sylhet region are taking part in the rally.

Deputy Commissioner of Moulvibazar district presided over the inaugural function.

## RU Syndicate election

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI. Mar 1: Rajshahi University (RU) Syndicate and Finance Committee (FC) elections were held on February 26.

In the Syndicate election, Prof Julfikar Matin, backed by Awami League, BNP and left alliance, has won the post defeating Prof Moklesur Rahman of Jaamat party by 353-134 votes.

In the FC election Prof AB Siddiqui of the same panel has secured the chair getting 338, 208 votes defeating Jaamat candidate.



## Pabna Bar Assoc executives

From Our Correspondent

PABNA. Mar 1: The annual general elections of Pabna District Bar Association was held on Thursday.

The following office-bearers and members were elected, to the new Executive Committee of the Association for the next one-year term.

President — Advocate Abdur Razzaq (I), Vice-Presidents — Advocate Mirza Azizur Rahman and Advocate Syed Mohammad Shariful Islam; General Secretary — Advocate Md Abdul Maitur Miah; Treasurer Advocate Md Abdus Sattar; Joint Secretaries Advocate Khondker Md Shafiqul Islam; Advocate Md Abdur Rashid (I) and Advocate Md Sahidullah Biswas Helal, Auditor — Advocate Khondker Maghsudur Rahman, Members — Advocate Md Makhtar Hossain, Advocate Md Saiful Islam Choudhury, Advocate Md Shariful Islam Selim and Advocate Md Abdul Awal.

The election was held under secret ballot system and the elections were contested by two panels.

## Acute loadshedding in 21 S-dists

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL. Mar 1: Acute loadshedding has gripped 21 southern districts in Barisal and Khulna divisions including greater Faridpur district.

According to Power Development Board (PDB) sources of Barisal and Khulna only 170 megawatt power was supplied on Saturday against the demand of nearly 365 MW for these districts.

The 110 MW power station of Khulna remained closed for maintenance work, it is learnt. Now, two large-mounted power plants, TG-35, GT-14 of Khulna, two gas turbine power stations of Barisal and some other small power generation projects, units of the southern region are supplying nearly 90 MW while more 80 MW is being added with it from Iswardi-Bheramara point through national grid-line.

Barisal PDB zone is also suffering heavy loadshedding having only 14 MW power supply against the demand of 38 MW. As a result out of 18 feeders at least 6 to 8 feeder areas are remaining under more than two hours alternative loadshedding.

Power supply in some southern districts like Barguna, Jhalakati, Pirojpur, Patuakhali and Bhola is being disrupted for hours together.

Power generation is also decreasing in some old power generation plants regularly.

# Husband gets life-term for killing wife

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA. Mar 1: Alhaz Md Ainul Huq, Additional District and Sessions Judge, First Court, convicted accused Monirul Islam of village Belghoria under sadar thana on charge of killing his wife Saleha and sentenced him to suffer life imprisonment and a fine of Taka five thousand, in default, to suffer rigorous imprisonment (RI) for another six months.

The judgement was delivered on February 15. The case in brief is that on October 9, 1994, the accused killed his wife by strangulation when she failed to bring dowry from her father and kept her hanging in his room and left for unknown place. The next day when mother of the victim did not find them for taking breakfast she opened door of the room. She and other relatives found Saleha in hanging condition. Father of the victim who hails from village Baital under Jagoti union of sadar thana filed a case with Kushtia police station in this connection accusing Monirul for killing his daughter.

# Smuggled goods recovered : 2 held

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA. Mar 1: Two people were arrested and smuggled goods worth over Tk three lakh recovered from different parts of the district on Saturday, reports UNB.

Police said Iqbal of Alipur of Sadar thana and Sanoy Mitra of Baniakhamar of Debhata thana were arrested from Boira of Debhata thana with 24 bottles of phenidyl syrup.

They were sent to Jail Hajat. Meanwhile, Bangladesh Rifles seized smuggled Indian goods worth Tk 3.1 lakh from various border areas. The goods included saree, sugar, onion, salt and bicycle spare parts.

The seized goods were deposited with the local Customs godown.



TANGAIL: A German parliamentary mission led by Wolfgang Krause (Christian Democratic Union) along with the German Ambassador in Bangladesh recently visited the main inlet regulator, IDC, agricultural and fisheries activities of Compartmentalisation Pilot Project (CPP) here.

# Transport workers clash leaves 10 hurt in Rajshahi

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI. Mar 1: At least 10 people were injured in scattered clashes between the Track and Motor Sramik Union workers in and around the bus terminal area on Monday evening.

Chase and counter-chase and innumerable bomb blasts created panic in the area.

According to police, newly formed Rajshahi district Truck

# Road accidents increasing in northern districts

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI. Mar 1: Road accidents have been increasing in the northern districts of the country.

According to concerned sources, more than 1,092 persons were killed and some other 4,000 injured in road accidents last year in different areas of northern districts.

Police and Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) sources, however, confirmed 511 deaths and 1195 injured victims last year. Many accident are not recorded, sources say.

According to BRTA and police sources, the main reasons behind road accidents are violation of traffic rules by the

drivers and passers-by, unfitness of drivers and bad condition of vehicles.

Rate of accidents are more in highways, sources say. Drivers run their vehicles at a very high speed as the roads are now in good condition.

Other reasons behind road accidents are use of drugs by the drivers, carriage of excess number and amount of passengers, goods and mechanical unfitness of vehicles.

Sources say that most incidents are not recorded. Only 326 cases were filed in 122 thanas last year. Of the total, all the cases were released without punishment for lack of evidences.

It is alleged, the owners of vehicles made unofficial adjustments either with the victims or police on both.

As a result, most cases are not recorded and some other incidents cannot be proved before the court.

In most incidents, victims are deprived of compensation.

Meanwhile, most vehicles run on roads in the northern districts in very bad condition. But the owners manage to get the fitness certificate by adjustments with some of the officials of BRTA, it is alleged.

Many drivers also get licenses without having required skill in the same way.

## BCL-Shibir clash leaves 20 hurt in Natore

From Our Correspondent

NATORE. Mar 1: At least 20 persons were injured, four of them seriously, in a clash between the workers of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) at Boraigam Degree College in Natore on Tuesday.

Four seriously wounded student leaders, two from both the parties were admitted at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH).

The clash erupted following a dispute between the two parties over appointment of a lecturer who was reportedly a candidate of a ruling party's MP.

Both sides used bombs and other lethal weapons during 15 minutes' clash which left 20 persons injured.

## 10 passengers stabbed Valuables worth Tk 3 lakh looted from bus

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE. Mar 1: A gang of armed dacoits looted valuables worth Taka three lakhs and stabbed 10 passengers in a Dhaka-bound night coach at Basundia on Jessore-Khulna highway on Monday night.

According to police and passengers, the gang, who were traveling in the disguise of passengers from Phulata suddenly raided the passengers when the coach of Eagle paribahans reached Basundia point. They held the passengers hostage on gun-point and robbed them serially.

Those who tried to resist the dacoits, have been stabbed. Dacoits replaced the driver and took the coach towards Benapole by changing Dhaka-route.

Passengers in a body captured one of the dacoits. Other dacoits sensing the situation dangerous decamped at Malunchi. All the injured passengers have been admitted to General Hospital, Jessore. A case has been recorded with Kotwali thana.

However, the captured dacoit is in police custody.

## Holiday home opens at Kuakata

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL. Mar 1: The 'holiday home' has been opened for the tourists at Kuakata sea beach under Patuakhali district after two decades of in dependence.

A decision was taken to start a tourist centre at Kuakata during the Bangladesh regime in 1972. But after the sudden change of government in 1975 the proposed project was almost abandoned for long 18 years. In 1993 an endeavour was taken to continue and resume the project and 5 acres of land was requisitioned.

But due to various reasons works of the project has been delayed.

Later Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation took the initiative to make Kuakata a sea resort and started construction of a 'holiday home' there with other facilities for the tourists with an initial expenditure of 1.18 crore taka. Now construction of the motel has been completed, official sources said. The two storied building of 'holiday

home' has 50 seats, kitchen and a canteen for 60 persons who can take tea and food at a time.

Rent of each room has been fixed at Taka 500. There are 20 beds in 10 rooms at the first floor of the 'holiday home'. For each 30 economy bed rent has been fixed at Taka 150 at the ground floor.

Furniture of about seven lakh taka have been provided there for the tourist. Twenty seven officials and employees have also been appointed in this motel to run the entire project smoothly. Kuakata, so far has the longest sea beach from where sunrise and sunset can be seen in sunny day. In the 17-kilometre long sea beach of Kuakata of Kalapara thana in Patuakhali district tourists can enjoy the natural beauty.

Meanwhile, a two-crore taka project has also been taken up by the Roads and Highways (R&H) Department for the development of roads from Patuakhali to Kuakata, an official source said.

## Mymensingh Newsletter

From Our Correspondent

4 killed in road mishaps

MYMENSINGH. Mar 1: Four persons were killed and at least 15 others injured in two separate road accidents recently at village Bharaduba under Bhaluka thana in the district.

In the first accident, 15 passengers of a tempo were injured when a Mymensingh-bound bus from Dhaka dashed it from behind at about 11 am. Seriously injured Abdul Matin, 40, was rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) where he succumbed to his injuries.

In another accident, three persons including a rickshaw-puller were killed on the spot when a Dhaka-bound speedy bus dashed the rickshaw from behind.

The dead were identified as Azizul Hoque, 25, Taizuddin, 30, and rickshawpuller Tofazzal Hossain, 35.

Two separate cases were filed with Bhaluka police in this regard. The bodies were sent to MMCH morgue for autopsy.

## Agri-loan distributed

Different banks of Mymensingh district separately distributed agri-loans worth Tk 270.21.39,000 among the farmers of 12 thanas of the district recently.

According to an official source, the loan was given for Boro, Aman, wheat, vegetables, pisciculture, purchase of agricultural equipment and rearing of poultry birds and cattlehead.

Of the total Tk 129,23,25,000 was distributed by Bangladesh Krishi Bank, Tk 121,57,86,000 by Sonali Bank, Tk 10,16,79,000 by Agrani Bank, Tk 7,95,16,000 by Janata Bank, Tk 62,13,000 by Rupali Bank and Tk 36,20,000 by Pubali Bank.

## Property worth Tk 8 lakh burnt

Property worth about Tk eight lakh were burnt to ashes in a devastating fire at Haluaghat Bazar under Haluaghat thana of the district recently.

According to local people and police sources, the fire originated from an electric short circuit and soon engulfed the adjacent areas. The loss was estimated to be more than Tk 8 lakh.

## One commits suicide

One person allegedly committed suicide by taking poison in Phulbaria thana of the district recently.

Iqbal Hossain, son of Rustom All of village Radha Kanal committed suicide by taking poison.

Cause of the suicide could not be known. A case was filed with Phulbaria thana in this connection.

## Physicians asked to improve service standard

GAIBANDHA. Mar 1: State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed called upon the physicians to improve the standard of health services through their sincere and dedicated service to the distressed humanity, reports UNB.

He was inaugurating the 31-bed Fulchhari Thana Health Complex on Friday.

Public Works Department constructed the health complex, costing Tk 5.5 crore, with the financial assistance of the World Bank on four acres of land.

Referring to the voting rights of the people achieved by prolonged struggle, Sayeed said, 'we are now working for economic emancipation of common people.'

He also said the government is pledge-bound to implement balanced uplift programmes in every region of the country for the overall socio-economic development of the masses.

## Scarcity of water

The inhabitants of Mymensingh municipality are facing acute scarcity of drinking water supply for about a month.

It is learnt that one water tank out of seven is out of order for about a month. The water tank contains 1 lakh and 50